

THE STATUS OF TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN
AGRICULTURE

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A 1970-71 survey of 78 institutions in the United States that prepare teachers of vocational agriculture indicates that teacher education programs continue to change. The major changes reported include internships, certification in a specific taxonomy of agriculture, pass-fail marks for student teaching, coordination of work experience with industry, more flexibility in certification requirements and more clinical experience prior to student teaching. The 78 institutions included 12 in the Atlantic Region, 34 in the Southern Region, 20 in the Central Region and 12 in the Western Region.

Some observations revealed by the survey are:

1. Ninety percent of the institutions reimburse cooperating teachers about seventy dollars per student teacher. Approximately 30 percent of the schools provided fee waivers to the cooperating teachers.

2. One-third of the institutions pay mileage to the student teachers for occupational experience program visitation. The specific source of the mileage funds are about evenly divided with one-half of the students reimbursed from University or department funds and the other half reimbursed by the local cooperating school.

3. The selection of students for student teaching on the basis of accumulated grade average is reported as a common practice. The average of all the institutions shows a cut-off point at 2.15 where 4.00 equals a grade of "A".

4. Two-thirds of the teacher preparation programs emphasize student teacher participation in community agricultural agencies and organizations. The experiences are with such agencies as agricultural credit, Farm Bureau, Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Stabilization Committee, Agricultural Extension and other agricultural services. About four days of the student teaching program are used by student teachers for community organization activities.

5. The Atlantic Region reported issuing more specific teaching certificates in the various taxonomies of agriculture than did the other regions. There was considerable interest in this practice and several departments indicated they were moving toward specialized teaching certificates in agriculture.

Summer Experience

About one of every seven departments indicated summer experience was a part of the student teacher preparation program. This experience generally encompassed about two weeks. An additional ten percent of the departments reporting indicated summer experience was optional. Many departments indicated some type of internship or summer experience was being considered in the teacher preparation program.

College Affiliation

Departments of agricultural education are predominately in the College of Agriculture. About one-third are located in the College of Education with six departments having joint appointments in agriculture and education. The departments of the northeastern and the western states were almost always in the College of Agriculture. The departments in the Central and Southern Regions were about equally divided between Colleges of Agriculture and Education.

Grades

Approximately twenty-eight percent of the departments give pass-nonpass marks for student teaching. A few departments indicated they would be changing from letter grades to pass-nonpass within the next few years. Letter grades are still used by approximately seventy percent of the departments for student teaching.

Weeks of Student Teaching Required

The four regions were very close in the average number of weeks required for student teaching. Only three departments placed student teachers for less than a full day during the student teaching period.

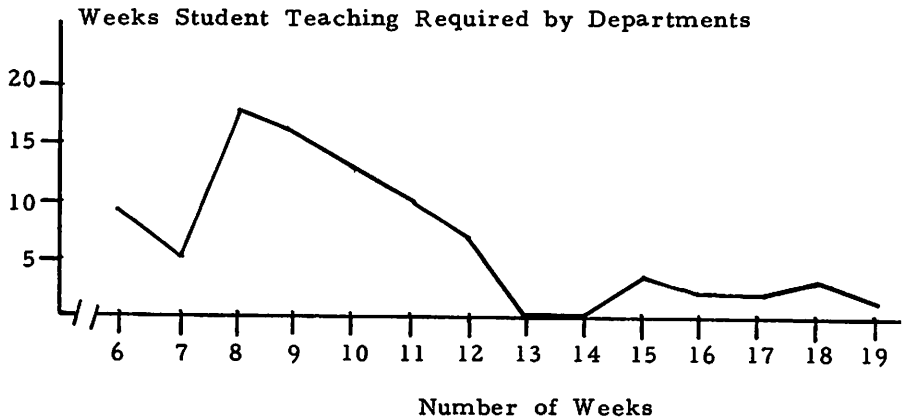
The least amount of time reported in student teaching by any department was six weeks. The average of all departments was

nine and one-half weeks. Sixty percent of all departments required eight to ten weeks of student teaching.

Figure I indicates the number of departments requiring specified weeks for student teaching.

N=78
Number of
Departments

FIGURE I



Credit Hours for Student Teaching

Departments on the semester system have more variation in hours required for student teaching than departments on the quarter system. Although the Southern Region required the most quarter hours for student teaching, they reported the lowest average hours required in the semester program when compared on an equivalent base. The schools on the quarter system in the Southern Region are requiring thirty percent more hours in student teaching than schools on the semester system. A summary of the credit hours for student teaching is summarized in Table I.

TABLE I
CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED IN STUDENT TEACHING

Region	Quarter			Semester		
	Number of Schools	Average Hours	Range	Number of Schools	Average Hours	Range
Central	8	12	9-16	12	7.3	5-10
Southern	7	14	9-16	27	6.5	6-9
Northeast	0	--	----	12	7.5	5-12
Western	4	10.5	9-12	7	8	6-10 ¹
Total	19	12	9-16	58	7.3	5-12

¹One school did not respond.

Technical Agriculture Required

The heavy concentration of departments appears in the 66 to 80 quarter hour range which is comparable to the 45-56 semester hour range. The departments on the semester system average a few more hours of technical agriculture than departments on the quarter system. Table 2 summarizes the technical agriculture required.

In Table 3, the hours of technical agriculture required in the Atlantic Region is less than that required in the other regions. The Western Region departments require about as many semester hours of technical agriculture as quarter hours.

Be Open Minded - Try New Ideas

Many ideas are being tested in teacher preparation programs in agricultural education. We do injustice to our own minds if we do not examine the views of others. We should not assume that all who have views different than ours are foolish or wrong. Be open-minded, try the ideas of others and keep the best for a dynamic program of teacher preparation in agriculture.

A summary of practices has been prepared in mimeo form and is available from the Agricultural Education Department, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210.

TABLE 2
HOURS OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE REQUIRED BY
DEPARTMENTS ON QUARTER AND SEMESTER SYSTEMS

Quarter		Semester	
Technical Agriculture Hours Required	Number of Departments	Technical Agriculture Hours Required	Number of Departments
36-40	2	25-30	3
41-45	1	31-35	4
46-50	1	36-40	8
51-55	0	41-45	7
56-60	2	46-50	12
61-65	1	51-55	11
66-70	7	56-60	7
71-75	4	61-63	3
76-80	3		
81-85	2		

TABLE 3
HOURS REQUIRED OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE BY
GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS

Regions ¹	Quarter System			Semester System		
	Number of Schools	Average Hours	Range	Number of Schools	Average Hours	Range
Central N=20	8	74	62-85	12	50	40-62
Southern N=34	7	63	40-75	26	50	34-63
Northeast N=12	0	--	-----	10	38	25-55
Western N=12	5	55	36-76	6	51	44-58
Total N=78	20	65	36-85	54	48	25-63

¹Four schools did not indicate hours.

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