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by degrees

NEW PROGRAM FORM

1. Submitted by: Missouri State University
2. Program Title: Agricultural Communications
3. Degree/Certificate: Bachelor of Science
4. Options: None Click here to enter text.
5. Delivery Site(s): Missouri State University
6. CIP Classification: 01.0000
7. Implementation Date: January 1, 2018
8. Cooperative Partners: None

AUTHORIZATION

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Name/title of Institutional Officer	Signature	Date

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The general agriculture with emphasis in agricultural communications degree has been a part of the School of Agriculture for over 20 years. It has steadily grown in popularity over the years. However, the addition of an agricultural communications instructor in 2014 allowed the program to begin developing additional curriculum and expanding the number and types of courses offered. New curriculum has been developed and an agricultural communications student organization (Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow-ACT), with affiliation to the national organization, has been organized. In many ways, the program now operates as a full degree, except in name. However, this lack of a formal degree hinders our students in the job market compared to students from other out-of-state institutions with full degrees. In addition to students who have career aspirations for the agricultural communications field, we also have a number of students in other areas of agriculture who could benefit from a few elective courses in agricultural communications. For example, several of our animal science students have an interest in raising and selling purebred livestock. The entry-level public relations, graphic design, and/or photography class would provide useful skills for these students in their chosen career field. The agricultural communications degree is designed to meet the employment needs of agricultural companies and interest needs of students. There is currently not a formal agricultural communications degree at any Missouri institution. Students interested in the field must leave the state or major in a tertiary area, adding specialized minors and emphasis areas.

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STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS (Form SE:)

	1	2	3	4	5
Full Time	35	40	45	50	55
Part Time	0	1	2	4	5
Total	35	41	47	54	60

1. Please provide a rationale regarding how student enrollment projections were calculated
 - A. Enrollment has multiplied four times over in the last four years; however, there was a plateau in the last year. We believe this leveling out results from reaching the maximum number of students who were willing to settle for a general agriculture degree.
 - B. The projection for future enrollment is based on the current general agriculture degree. With the implementation of a full degree with the specialized focus and active marketing, we are confident the goal of 60 students will be reached.

2. Provide a rationale for proposing this program, including **evidence of market demand and societal need supported by research** (i.e., please cite sources for evidence used).

a. Market Demand:

According to research compiled by Purdue University and published by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA, 2015), from 2015 to 2020 employment opportunities for agriculture graduates are high. There are projected to be 57,900 job openings annually in the food, agriculture, renewable natural resources and environment fields but only 35,400 graduates in the area. This means qualified candidates in the fields of food, agriculture, renewable natural resources and environment will fill only 61 percent of the available jobs. Of those job openings, 12 percent are in education, communication and governmental services. In addition, students in agricultural communications are not only qualified for a variety of positions in the food, agriculture, renewable natural resources and environmental fields, they are also qualified for positions outside of these fields. The figures below highlight growth opportunities in some of these areas from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Advertising, Promotions, and Marketing Managers

2014 Median Pay: \$123,450 per year, \$59.35 per hour
 Typical Entry-Level Education: Bachelor's degree
 On-the-job Training: None
 Number of Jobs, 2014: 225,200
 Job Outlook, 2014-24: 9% (Faster than average)
 Employment Change, 2014-24: 19,700

Public Relations Specialists

2014 Median Pay: \$55,680 per year, \$26.77 per hour
 Typical Entry-Level Education: Bachelor's degree
 Work Experience in a Related Occupation: None
 On-the-job Training: None
 Number of Jobs, 2014: 240,700

Job Outlook, 2014-24: 6% (As fast as average)

Employment Change, 2014-24: 14,900

Photographers

2014 Median Pay: \$30,490 per year, \$14.66 per hour

Typical Entry-Level Education: High school diploma or equivalent

Work Experience in a Related Occupation: None

On-the-job Training: Long-term on-the-job training

Number of Jobs, 2014: 124,900

Job Outlook, 2014-24: 3% (Slower than average)

Employment Change, 2014-24: 3,900

Technical Writers

2014 Median Pay: \$69,030 per year, \$33.19 per hour

Typical Entry-Level Education: Bachelor's degree

Work Experience in a Related Occupation: Less than 5 years

On-the-job Training: Short-term on-the-job training

Number of Jobs, 2014: 152,000

Job Outlook, 2014-24: 10% (Faster than average)

Employment Change, 2014-24: 5,300

b. Societal Demand (i.e., factors other than employment indicating need for degree)

In addition to career opportunities justifying this degree, there is an established social need, as well. The American Association of Agricultural Educators (AAAE) is an organization that has a mission of improving the teaching and learning process in agriculture. Every five years AAAE establishes research priority areas for the field. Part of the 2016- 2020 National Research Agenda focuses are on the importance of expanding the knowledge of the public and policy makers about agriculture and natural resources, and focusing on better understanding the role communications plays in society.

- Priority 1: public and policy maker understanding of agriculture and natural resources
- Priority 2: adopt new technologies, practices and products relevant to the communications industry

These two priorities lead one to understand the importance of agricultural communications in society.

(source:http://aaaeonline.org/resources/Documents/AAAE_National_Research_Agenda_2016-2020.pdf)

COLLABORATION (FORM CL):

Does delivery of the program involve a collaborative effort with any external institution or organization? : No If yes, please complete the rest of this section. If no, state not applicable and go to Program Structure (Form PS).

Sponsoring Institutions: N/A

Degree Program for Collaboration N/A

Length of agreement (open-ended or limited): N/A

1. Which institution(s) will have degree-granting authority?

N/A

2. Which institution(s) will have the authority for faculty hiring, course assignment, evaluation, and reappointment decisions?

N/A

3. What agreements exist to ensure that faculty from all participating institutions will be involved in decisions about the curriculum, admissions standards, exit requirements?

N/A

4. Which institution(s) will be responsible for academic and student-support services (e.g., registration, advising, library, academic assistance, financial aid, etc.)?

N/A

5. What agreements exist to ensure that the academic calendars of the participating institutions have been aligned as needed?

N/A

6. In addition to the information provided by each participating institution regarding Financial Projections (below), please address the following items:

a) How will tuition rates be determined if they differ among the institutions?

N/A

b) Has a formal agreement been developed regarding cost-sharing policies? If yes, please include it as part of the proposal. If no, please summarize the current understanding between all parties and the plans for developing a formal agreement.

N/A

c) What arrangements, if any, have been made for exchange of money between participating institutions?

N/A

7. What commitments have been made by all participants to evaluate the program systematically?

N/A

8. If one institution wishes to discontinue the program, what agreements exist for terminating the offering?

N/A

PROGRAM STRUCTURE (FORM PS):

1. Total credits required for graduation: 125
2. Residency requirements, if any: N/A
3. General education: Total credits: 45

Courses (specific courses OR distribution area and credits):

Distribution Area	Credit	Course Title
Foundations	2	First-Year Seminar
	3	Writing I
	3	Writing in the Applied Sciences
	3	Fundamentals of Public Speaking
	3	Contemporary Mathematics
Natural World	3-4	Life Sciences
	3-4	Physical Sciences
Human Cultures	6	Social and Behavioral Sciences
	3	Humanities
	3	The Arts
Public Affairs	6	US & MO Constitutions/American History and Institutions
	3	Cultural Competence
	3	Public Issues

4. Major requirements: Total credits: 53

Course Number	Credits	Course Title
AGS 101	4	Animal Science
AGN 115 or AGP 103	3	Sustainable Agriculture and the Environment or Plant Science
AGN 215	3	Soils (Lab not required)
AGB 144	4	Agricultural Economics I
AGR 490	1	Senior Seminar
AGS Course	3	Recommended Elective: AGS 306 Veterinary Science
AGB Course	3	Recommended Elective: AGB 594 Agricultural Entrepreneursh
AGP/AGN Course	3	Recommended Elective: AGP 303 Suburban Horticulture
COM 209	3	Survey of Communication Theory
AGC 183	3	Intro to Agricultural Communications
AGC 293	3	News Writing in Agriculture
AGC 313	3	Feature Writing in Agricultural Publications
AGC 343	3	Agricultural Photography
AGC 333	3	Layout and Design for Agricultural Publications
AGC 323	3	Media in Agriculture
AGC 393	3	Public Relations in Agriculture
AGR 499	2	Internship in Agricultural Communications
AGC 493	3	Capstone in Agricultural Communications

5. Free elective credits: 27

Students use electives to emphasize in a particular area of communications, which creates great partnership opportunities across campus. Possible emphasis areas are journalism, public relations, interpersonal communications, etc. At least 16 hours of electives must be 300-level or above. All electives must be approved by the student's advisor.

6. (Sum of C, D, and E should equal A.)

$45+53+27=125$

7. Requirements for thesis, internship or other capstone experience:

Internship (AGC 499): Submit weekly logs reflecting relevant communications learning experiences, write a 5-page reflection paper on learned experiences and present information to one class of their choosing upon return to Missouri State.

Capstone (AGR 493): Create and present portfolio containing all relevant work completed in courses and internship experiences.

8. Any unique features such as interdepartmental cooperation:

Students cooperate with agricultural organizations and businesses throughout the state in coursework and Internship experiences. In the Event Communications course (AGC 303), students collaborate with agricultural organizations such as Missouri FFA Association to work the media room at the annual Missouri FFA Convention. In addition, with two courses geared toward publication production, students gain relevant experience to enter the agricultural communications field.

PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE GOALS (FORM PG):

Institution Name: Missouri State University
Program Name: Agricultural Communications
Date: 01/01/2018

(Although all of the following guidelines may not be applicable to the proposed program, please carefully consider the elements in each area and respond as completely as possible in the format below. Quantification of performance goals should be included wherever possible.)

1. Student Preparation

- a) Any special admissions procedures or student qualifications required for this program which exceed regular university admissions, standards, e.g., ACT score, completion of core curriculum, portfolio, personal interview, etc. Please note if no special preparation will be required.
No special preparation required
- b) Characteristics of a specific population to be served, if applicable.
No specific population served

2. Faculty Characteristics

- a) Any special requirements (degree status, training, etc.) for assignment of teaching for this degree/certificate.
Master's degree in area of instruction
- b) Estimated percentage of credit hours that will be assigned to full time faculty. Please use the term "full time faculty" (and not FTE) in your descriptions here.
100% for two full time faculty members
- c) Expectations for professional activities, special student contact, teaching/learning innovation.
Faculty are expected to meet the departmental guidelines for reappointment and tenure/promotion, when appropriate

3. Enrollment Projections

- a) Student FTE majoring in program by the end of five years.
57 to 58, depending on extent of enrollment by part-time students
- b) Percent of full time and part time enrollment by the end of five years.
92% full-time; 8% part time

4. Student and Program Outcomes

- a) Number of graduates per annum at three and five years after implementation.
Three years: 45
Five years: 55
- c) Special skills specific to the program.
Proficient in Adobe design software

Video production
Photography
Digital media marketing
News and feature writing
Formulation and implementation of public relations plans

- d) Proportion of students who will achieve licensing, certification, or registration. There is no associated credential for this degree.
- e) Performance on national and/or local assessments, e.g., percent of students scoring above the 50th percentile on normed tests; percent of students achieving minimal cut-scores on criterion-referenced tests. Include expected results on assessments of general education and on exit assessments in a particular discipline as well as the name of any nationally recognized assessments used.

An assessment of the program clearly tied to the objectives of the program is developed. The objectives of the program are to provide 1) advanced knowledge of technical skills in agricultural communications, 2) knowledge in current industry practices and trends, and 3) knowledge in communication including oral and written communication. At the end of the program students will be required to pass a comprehensive capstone to receive the degree. The capstone includes full production of the Darr Difference, a feature magazine. The capstone will assess Objective 1 by requiring students to design a layout, provide photographic services, conduct interviews, and compose a compelling feature story. Objective 2 will be assessed by requiring students to use specialized software to create a layout and advertisement in line with current aesthetics. In addition, completion of an internship experience will help meet objective two. Objective 3 will be assessed through the completion of successful interviews for a feature story, and the final written feature.

Additionally, the University develops proficiency profile scores from an annual exit survey. Data from this survey will be examined at the College level to continuously improve the degree program including new course development and delivery to meet industry needs.

- f) Placement rates in related fields, in other fields, unemployed.
100% placement in agricultural communications-related careers
- g) Transfer rates, continuous study.
25% of graduates continue for degree advancement via graduate school.

5. Program Accreditation

- a) Institutional plans for accreditation, if applicable, including accrediting agency and timeline. If there are no plans to seek specialized accreditation, please provide reasons. There are no plans to seek specialized accreditation at this time. The cost of accreditation is not in our start-up budget, and agricultural communications is a broad field that would require multiple accreditations within specified fields.

Agriculture programs currently are not accredited.

6. Alumni and Employer Survey

- a) Expected satisfaction rates for alumni, including timing and method of surveys. 75%. Follow up with alumni 6-12 months post-graduation to evaluate career placement and program effectiveness with satisfaction surveys. Alumni surveys will be conducted every five years using an online survey tool (e.g. survey monkey) to solicit feedback from them regarding the value of the degree in meeting their short term and long term goals. Survey results will be used to continuously improve the degree program including new course development and delivery to meet industry needs.

The University collected NESSE data on seniors every 3 years. A portion of the survey includes questions regarding satisfaction. This data will be examined at the College level to continuously improve the degree program including new course development and delivery to meet industry needs.

- b) Expected satisfaction rates for employers, including timing and method of surveys. Every 3 years, employers will be invited to complete a survey during the annual agriculture industry study in either St. Louis or Kansas City to solicit feedback regarding the value of the degree in meeting their short term and long term employment goals. Survey results will be used to continuously improve the degree program including new course development and delivery to meet the industry needs.

7. Institutional Characteristics

- a) Characteristics demonstrating why your institution is particularly well-equipped to support the program.
Programs in Agriculture have been established for years, and there have been communications courses within the unit since 1983. As a well-established agricultural program, the Darr College of Agriculture has seen growth and expansion in students, faculty and facilities. The Agricultural Business, Communications and Education unit specifically is the largest within the College and already has two faculty to oversee the major. The strong collaborative relationship with the MSU Department of Communication also provides opportunities for student learning.