MERGING TEACHING AND RESEARCH – GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Lisa House
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USDA Funding for Education Programs

• Division of Community Education
  - Challenge Grants
    - [https://nifa.usda.gov/funding-opportunity/higher-education-challenge-hec-grants-program](https://nifa.usda.gov/funding-opportunity/higher-education-challenge-hec-grants-program)
    - Deadline: May 7, 2018
  - National Needs
    - Deadline: Was October 2017 (no RFA yet this year)
  - Multicultural Scholars
    - [https://nifa.usda.gov/funding-opportunity/higher-education-multicultural-scholars-program-msp](https://nifa.usda.gov/funding-opportunity/higher-education-multicultural-scholars-program-msp)
    - Deadline: June 20, 2018
Challenge Grants

• Involve creative or non-traditional approach to education that others can model

• Facilitate relationships between science (research) and education communities or universities and private sector
  • Transcend the life of the grant
  • Planning grant, 2 years, $30K max (bring together people)
  • Regular grant, 2-3 years, $150K max
  • Collaborative 1: 2-3 years, $300K max (2 partners, 50/50 money)
  • Collaborative 2: 3 years, $750K max (at least 3 partners, lead institution must have 30-70% of budget)

• Encourage integrated social and biological sciences, leadership development, and global engagement
Challenge Grants

- Curriculum Development, Instructional Delivery Systems and Expanding Student Career Opportunities
  - New courses of study, degree programs, new approaches, new subjects, hands-on learning experiences, opportunities for student apprenticeships, internships, mentoring, etc.

- Faculty preparation for teaching
  - Self-sustaining model for professional development, gain experience with new developments, expand competence

- Facilitating Interaction with Other Academic Institutions
  - Links between baccalaureate institutions and secondary or post-secondary (2-year)
An Agribusiness Management Simulation Tool for Undergraduates
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OBJECTIVES
• Develop a simulation that can be used to teach basic principles of agribusiness management at the introductory level.
• Build flexibility into the simulation to allow instructors to use from semester to semester with less information transmission between terms.
• Improve the instructional material available to assist educators in effectively using the simulation to address learning objectives.

DEVELOPMENT
• Surveys were conducted with instructors of agribusiness management, marketing, and finance classes to determine preferences for simulations.
• Surveys were conducted with students participating in an older version of the simulation to learn their likes and dislikes.
• Beta versions were developed and tested in multiple formats (large and small classes, weekend learning and semester-long) at the University of Florida, Purdue University and South Carolina State University.

SIMULATION SET-UP
• Two Options:
  - Feed and Fertilizer Supply Store
  - Landscape Farm
• Students run a store with 4 products (either two types of feed and fertilizer or two types of soil and mulch).
• Each “quarter” students must turn in decisions for the firm as to how much product to order, what prices to set, how many people to employ, and make decisions on credit and advertising policies, as well as whether to expand storage and delivery capacity.
• Information is provided on costs (broken into fixed and variable portions) and assets and liabilities of the firm.
• Up to six teams can compete with each other, and multiple “quarters” (each with up to six teams) can be run by instructors.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
1. Conduct break-even analysis and recognize that certain products within a product mix may be losing money, but the loss is masked by other products gains.
2. Develop pro forma financial statements and conduct financial statement analyses.
3. Be able to explain the difference between cash balance (cash flow) and profitability.
4. Forecast sales and recognize the importance of seasonality in agribusiness firms.
5. Recognize the impact of competitor decisions on results from your firm.
6. Assess and critique your performance as a manager or a team member.

IMPROVEMENTS FROM PREVIOUS VERSION
1. Format
   a. Changed from DOS-based to a Windows environment
   b. Maintained non-internet format due to security and upkeep cost.
   c. Software can be installed on any computer by instructor.
2. Change in input mechanism
   a. Students can transmit decision form electronically or handwritten (up to instructor)
   b. Instructor now has an interface that allows them the choice of entering decisions for teams or identifying file to upload decisions.
3. Addition of flexibility
   a. Added landscape firm simulation to increase interest by students not from an agricultural or Midwest background (based on feedback from student survey).
   b. Added 3 interest rate scenarios (selected at the beginning of each term by instructor) with low, medium, and high interest rates to allow for changes term to term, and to keep relevant in the eyes of students (from student feedback).
   c. Added option for emergency orders
4. Addition of Pro Forma Statements
   a. Instructor can choose to have pro forma statements based on student decisions printed. This allows for easier grading if pro forma statements are assigned as homework.
5. Addition of instructor support

INSTRUCTOR SUPPORT
• Student manuals will be provided (one for each simulation) in PDF format.
• Instructor manuals will be provided that will contain instructions on how to run the simulation, as well as instructional support material.
• Support material includes suggested assignments, pre- and post-test questions, and templates for a introductory lecture and a debrief session.
National Needs Graduate and Postgraduate grants

• Support master’s and/or doctoral degree programs (some years post-doctoral fellowships, but not in 2017)
  • Support training of new students (U.S. citizens or nationals) and increase diversity
  • Required to provide leadership skill opportunities; integration of social and biological sciences a plus
  • International activities allowed IF they support domestic program goals
National Needs Graduate and Postgraduate grants

• 2017 areas:
  • Animal production; plant production; forest resources; agricultural education and communication; agricultural management and economics; food science, human nutrition and human sciences; agricultural biosecurity; integrative biosciences for sustainable food and agricultural systems

• Max $262,500 per application
  • MS: $18,500 per year, 2 years plus $4K COE
  • PhD: $24,500 per year, 3 years plus $6K COE
  • IRTA (international travel for research or study abroad): $4,500 for MS or $8,000 for PhD
Multicultural Scholars

• Scholarship program to enhance diversity in undergraduate education

• Priorities:
  - Leadership skills development (internships, workshops, trainings, mentoring, etc.)
  - Incorporation of social sciences with biological sciences
  - Global engagement

• 5 year, max $200,000 scholarships
• 1 year, max $20,000 learning experiences (study abroad, internships, research projects, etc.)
• Limit 2 applications per institution