

# Teacher Induction Programs in Agricultural Education: Description of the Role of AAAE Higher Education Teacher Preparation Programs

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*The purpose of this study is to report findings from a survey of AAAE-member colleges and universities' involvement in professional induction activities of agricultural education teachers. The basis for this research comes from five teacher induction program goals proposed by Johnston and Kay (1987) that serve as a context for presenting the data. Responses were obtained from 62 AAAE-member institutions representing Puerto Rico and 37 states. Beginning teacher induction activities are conducted by 66% of AAAE-teacher preparation institutions. The majority (73.3%) conduct workshops targeting beginning teachers. Slightly more than half (55.1 %) indicated that no other faculty besides agricultural education faculty are involved in induction activities, and 18.4% conduct induction activities as part of a formal agreement with school districts. The institutions participate through collaboration with state departments of education and state teachers associations; provide mentoring to new teachers, and consultation. Teacher induction is generally not counted in the faculty workload and is recognized as a service to the profession. Finally, the total number of student teachers prepared, the total number accepting teaching positions, participating in teacher induction activities and the number not returning after their first year is reported.*

Keywords: teacher-induction; mentoring; beginning teachers; university role; agricultural education

## Introduction/Theoretical Framework

One role of colleges and universities is to prepare students to be classroom teachers. Traditional secondary teacher education programs include a combination of coursework and experiences designed to provide preservice teachers with content knowledge and instructional delivery skills. Typically, this culminates with an off-campus multi-week student teaching field experience under the joint supervision of university teacher preparation program (TPP) faculty and an experienced secondary classroom teacher. At some institutions, this experience is completed during the student's graduating year. At other institutions, the student teaching experience occurs during a *fifth-year*, following the awarding of a baccalaureate degree (CSUC, 2009). At the completion of the capstone classroom field experience or internship,

students make the transition from preservice teacher to professional educator as they enter the teaching profession. After the graduating preservice teacher leaves the university to take a teaching position, what is the role of the university in the growth of the new teacher?

As preservice teacher preparation and inservice professional development are closely related (Edelfelt & Ishler, 1987; Odell, 1989), TPP faculty members take an interest in the performance of beginning teachers, especially program graduates. By examining what transpires in the secondary agricultural education classroom, teacher educators are able to make changes to teacher preparation curriculum to better prepare future teachers for the classroom environment. As a result, TPP faculty work to develop partnerships with local school districts in assisting beginning teachers (Edelfelt & Ishler, 1987). A variable affecting faculty decision-making regarding participating

in secondary-level teacher induction activities is the process of tenure and promotion (Kotrlik, Bartlett, Higgins, & Williams, 2002). Responsibilities related to teaching and research may supersede service activities (Johnson & Kay, 1987). "Many teacher education faculty find themselves facing higher standards of performance in the area of scholarship, with no corresponding consideration for work requirements in the other two areas (instruction and service)" (1987, p. 12). For faculty involved in teacher induction-related activities, how is this accounted for in their position description?

Teacher supply and demand information reveals not every college student receiving an agricultural education degree enters the classroom (Kantrovich, 2010). Historically, placement of agricultural education teachers' nationwide has fluctuated. In 1985, an estimated 40.8% of new qualified individuals entered the agricultural education profession. This was the lowest reported figure. However, the number has increased. In 2004, it was estimated that 73% of qualified agricultural education graduates entered the teaching profession (2010, p. 12). However, Kantrovich (2010) noted, "We again are seeing a drop in newly qualified teachers that is disturbing due to the Demand study response there 165.7 new positions added with a loss of 86 positions for a net gain of 79.7" (p. 13). Historically, of those teachers who take teaching positions, many do not stay in the profession for more than a few years. According to the literature, approximately 15% of new vocational teachers leave after their first year of classroom teaching (Heath-Camp & Camp, 1990) and nearly half of all new teachers entering the classroom leave the profession within the first five years (American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASC&U), 2006).

Teachers leaving the classroom result in a negative impact in student learning, a financial cost to local districts due to teacher turnover, and an impact on available resources (AASC&U, 2006). When the quality of teaching is questioned, local school districts and state departments of education are pressed to find solutions. One such proposed solution is to reduce the attrition rate in the form of assistance provided to beginning teachers. This assistance is referred to as *induction*.

Wong (2005) defined teacher induction as "a comprehensive, coherent, and sustained

professional development process that is organized by a school district to train, support, and retain new teachers, which then seamlessly progresses them into a lifelong learning program" (2005, p. 43). According to Huling-Austin (1987) "... a necessary step toward increasing teacher retention is to provide induction programs tailored to meet the specific needs of beginning teachers in their specific setting" (p. 9). The time period between student teaching and becoming an instructional leader in the classroom is a crucial transition (Fessler & Christensen, 1992) where young teachers may as result of their classroom experiences begin to experience self-doubt, disillusionment, and stress (Moir, 1999). When young teachers feel a lack of support and face challenging conditions in their work environment they are likely to leave the classroom. The type of induction program is characterized by the sponsoring organization. Odell (1987) suggests that induction programs mandated by state agencies with authority to grant teacher licensure are designed to act as gatekeepers, screening and removing undesirable teachers. Local level induction programs are developed to orient teachers to procedures of the school environment and tend to be shorter in duration. School sites rely on veteran teachers to guide new teachers through the orientation process and rely on evaluative measures. University sponsored programs focused on professional development, are not associated with licensure and tend to be less evaluative. As universities are not the employers of the teachers, they have to focus on the broader picture and less on the unique teaching environment associated with a school district and the needs of the community it serves.

Several studies emerging from the field of agricultural education have examined the challenges and professional development needs of beginning teachers (Bennett, Iverson, Rohs, Langone, & Edwards, 2002; Birkenholz & Harbstreet, 1987; Garton & Chung, 1996; 1997; Joerger & Boettcher, 2000; Myers, Dyer, & Washburn, 2005), and the environmental factors influencing beginning teachers (Grieman, Walker, & Birkenholz, 2005). A few studies discussed the role of teacher preparation programs in beginning teacher induction (Barrera & Finley, 1992; Joerger & Boettcher, 2000; Mundt, 1991; Nesbitt & Mundt, 1993;

Talbert, Camp, & Heath-Camp, 1994; Waters & Yoder, 1986) from the view of capturing and describing teacher reactions to participation in teacher induction activities. One study reported that less than 40% of new teachers participated in local teacher induction programs (Joerger & Boettcher, 2000).

Universities and their TPPs share an important responsibility for the professional induction of new teachers (Johnston & Kay, 1987). In some states, beginning teachers' assistance is mandatory for teachers seeking certification and licensure. In Oklahoma, the Entry Year Assistance Program (EYAP) was mandated by the state legislature (HB 1706) in 1980 for the purpose of establishing a process to develop teachers of demonstrated ability (Barrera & Finley, 1992; Peiter, Terry, & Cartmell, 2005). The law requires that every *entry year teacher* (teacher with 0 years experience) be supervised by an *entry year assistance committee* composed of a *teacher consultant* (classroom teacher), principal, and a teacher educator from a teacher preparation program of a college or university. Barrera and Finley (1992) examined perceptions of the program from entry year teachers, teacher consultants, administrators, and teacher educators. Entry year teachers indicated receiving the most assistance from their teacher consultant (veteran classroom teacher).

In Idaho, teacher educators make classroom visits two to three times during the school year of the beginning agricultural education teacher (Nesbitt & Mundt, 1993). Faculty members observe classroom teaching, listen, give advice, provide support, and help solve problems. A second component of the Idaho program is the participation in professional development seminars where teachers gather and share their experiences, discuss problems, and listen to professional speakers on topics ranging from classroom management to the FFA organization. Teacher participants are offered university credit for completing specific assignments related to their first-year experiences and responsibilities.

In Colorado, the University of Northern Colorado's Teacher Induction Partnership (TIP) Program model is similar to the Oklahoma Entry Year Assistance Program. The TIP program involves a three-person support team consisting of a university representative, an on-site mentor teacher, and the principal. The mentoring

component focuses on *assistance* rather than *assessment*. Supportive data has shown that teachers in the program rated the support provided by university consultants superior to the support provided by the mentor-teacher or the principal (Jacobsen, 1992). Teacher induction is said to have a positive effect on keeping teachers in the classroom. According to Jacobsen (1992), "Follow-up studies reveal that approximately 85 percent of teacher participants continue to teach in the year following their induction experience" (p. 140). However, not all efforts have garnered positive results. A study conducted in Pennsylvania (Waters & Yoder, 1986) revealed that teacher participation in a university administered induction program had no significant affect upon teacher's perceived level of job satisfaction.

A theoretical framework for research related to teacher induction can be found in Expectancy Theory of Motivation (Porter & Lawler, 1968). Teacher induction is a process with an end goal of minimizing teacher attrition and increasing teacher retention. When an individual makes the decision to leave the profession it is a behavioral choice. Scholl (2002) considers Expectancy Theory of Motivation as a *model of behavioral choice*, suggesting why individuals choose one behavioral option over others. In this case, the decision to leave the profession versus remaining in the profession is a behavioral choice. Three factors make up Scholl's model: *Expectancy*, *Instrumentality* and *Valance*. *Expectancy* is the belief that one's efforts (E) will result in attainment of desired performance (P) goals. For example, if the teacher prepares adequately for the presentation of a classroom lesson, the expectation is that student achievement will occur. *Instrumentality* is the belief that if one does meet performance expectations, he or she will receive a greater reward. An example is if the teacher is successful in preparing students, he or she is rewarded for their efforts. Teachers receiving recognition from peers or superiors for their efforts are an example of Instrumentality. *Valance* refers to the value the individual personally places on rewards. The amount of effort the teacher will put forth is related to how they value success and recognition. The personal feeling a teacher obtains from observing student learning is Scholl suggests that expectancy and instrumentality are related to attitude, and

valance is rooted in the person's value system; what they perceive to be important.

The foundation for this study is based on teacher induction research of Johnston and Kay (1987). The researchers conducted a national study of 716 member institutions of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) to examine the role of higher education institutions in the coordination of teacher induction programs. They argue that teacher education preparation institutions must take an active role in teacher induction beyond preservice training and contribute to the cooperative effort of inducting beginning teachers with teacher groups and agencies. Johnston and Kay (1987) reviewed the literature for existing knowledge regarding four domains of teacher induction programs and activities: local schools, state school systems, professional organizations, and institutions of higher education (IHE). The researchers reported an "almost total lack" of information regarding IHE involvement in teacher induction activities.

Johnston and Kay (1987) identified and proposed five goals of teacher induction programs: (a) orientation, (b) psychological support, (c) acquisition and refinement of teaching skills, (d) retention, and (e) evaluation. According to the researchers, *orientation* is one of the most commonly cited goals of teacher induction programs. The goal was to acclimate the beginning teacher into the professional and social environment of the school, the district and the community. The purpose of *psychological support* is to develop the new teachers' self-esteem and professional well-being. The researchers found the goal *acquisition and refinement of teaching skills* to be emphasized and supported in most induction programs. These goals focus on teaching skills, subject matter, skills and attitudes. The aim is to provide a seamless transition from preservice preparation to everyday classroom management. *Retention* is the goal, which receives the most attention. The primary purpose of induction programs is to increase the likelihood that competent, skilled, new teachers will remain in the teaching profession. The fifth, and most controversial goal outlined by Johnston and Kay, is *assessment and evaluation*. The researchers assert that many induction programs fail to separate evaluation procedures from induction efforts.

Higher education participation in teacher induction was found to contribute to the overall effectiveness of the teacher induction program. When universities are involved in beginning teacher induction programs, faculty representatives contributed to the development and implementation, and provided a resource not found in the local school system (Klug & Salzman, 1991). The American Association of State Colleges and Universities conclude "Mentoring and induction can bridge the gap between pre-service education and the classroom, and higher education institutions must be an important part of this picture" (2006, p. 4).

### Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to describe the role of agricultural education teacher preparation programs (TPP) in teacher induction programs. This study addressed the following objectives:

1. Describe the status of beginning teacher assistance that teacher preparation programs provide to new teachers;
2. Describe teacher education preparation program faculty involvement in new teacher induction activities;
3. Determine how teacher induction activities are accounted for in faculty workload; and
4. Determine the status of student teacher preparation and job placement by teacher education programs.

### Methods

#### *Population*

The population for this study included all agricultural education teacher preparation programs in state universities and land-grant institutions where teaching faculty are members of the American Association for Agricultural Educators (AAAE). Of the 88 member institutions named in the AAAE member list, electronic mail contacts were available for faculty from 83 teacher education programs.

#### *Instrumentation*

The instrument was a modified version of the Johnston and Kay (1987) instrument used in their research to gather data for the Association

of Teacher Educator's National Commission on the Induction Process. The original questionnaire was comprised of eight questions designed to describe teacher education programs involved in new teacher professional induction activities and was self-administered by mail to 716 members of the American Association of College for Teacher Education (AACTE). The questions were of yes/no type and categorical. Where additional information was sought, open-ended questions were included and respondents were asked to provide elaboration and clarification. For this study, the questionnaire was adapted for members of the American Association for Agricultural Educators (AAAE).

The first series of questions focused on the status of an existing teacher induction program. Respondents were asked to select one choice from the following: (a) *in the planning stage*; (b) *in the pilot stage*; (c) *implemented*; or (d) *no*. If the answer was *no*, respondents were asked to indicate (yes or no) if plans existed for the development of such activities in the following two years. A list of five examples of existing induction activities was presented. Respondents were asked to check those activities their department/school/college was currently engaged in. A series of yes/no questions focused on faculty participation in induction activities and if a formal agreement existed with local school districts regarding induction activities. Open-end questions focused on faculty workload and faculty assignments regarding induction activities. Additional questions were added requesting TPPs to provide the number of student teachers prepared in the previous year by their institution, the number of their student teachers accepting teaching positions, and the number of first-year teachers in their state not returning to teach. The questionnaire was adapted to be conducted on-line by a web-based data gathering service.

#### *Data Collection*

In 2005, one faculty representative of each teacher preparation institution was identified and sent an electronic mail message informing them of the research project and inviting their participation. Respondents were asked to forward the e-mail request to a more appropriate faculty member if the recipient was not knowledgeable of the content required to answer the survey questions.

Faculty members from 23 of 83 AAAE institutions responded in the first two weeks following the survey announcement for a response rate of 27.7%. A second email was sent to non-responding faculty members three weeks after the initial invitation. Thirty-nine additional responses received raised the response rate to 62 of 83 (74.6%). Subsequent attempts by electronic mail to non-responding faculty resulted in no additional responses. To control for non-response error, a comparison was made between early and late respondent's responses to determine if significant differences existed between the two groups (Lindner, Murphey, & Briers, 2001). Respondents who responded in the first two weeks were identified as early respondents. Late respondents were all responses received after the follow-up email. An independent samples *t*-test was performed on the construct induction activities. No differences were found among early and late respondents.

#### *Data Analyses*

The study used a descriptive design. The collected data were downloaded from the commercial web-based survey collection service and transferred from MS Excel<sup>®</sup> to SPSS<sup>®</sup> version 16.0 for analysis. Frequencies and percentages were reported. Findings were limited to the 62 responding programs representing 37 states and Puerto Rico.

### **Findings**

#### *Objective One: Status of Beginning Teacher Assistance*

The first objective was to determine the number of institutions with programs in place for providing support for beginning teachers. Responses were obtained from 62 teacher education programs. The question asked respondents to indicate if their institution currently has a program or activities designed to assist beginning teachers. They were asked to check one of the following: (a) In the planning stage; (b) In the pilot stage; (c) Have implemented a program or activities; or (d) No, they do not have a program in place. Respondents were given an opportunity to provide an alternate response under *Other*. Responses were obtained from 61 institutions. Three institutions (4.9%) were presently in the planning stage, 40 (65.6%) have already

implemented such programs or activities, and no institution reported to be in the process of piloting a new program. Two institutions (*Other*, 3.3%) reported that a lack of funding or funding that was no longer available for an existing program were reasons for no program in place. One institution provided detailed information about the nature of an annually conducted professional development program for new teachers called the *New Professionals Conference*. Of the 16 (26.2%) institutions responding *no* to the question, 13 (68.4%) indicated they did not have plans for beginning an induction program of some type within the next two years.

#### *Common Beginning Teacher Activities.*

The second question was asked to obtain a frequency count of the number of teacher preparation programs involved in specific types of teacher induction activities. A list of six common induction activities conducted by teacher preparation institutions (Johnston & Kay, 1987) was provided. Respondents were asked to check all activities that apply to their program. The majority of teacher education programs indicated their institution conducts workshops for beginning teachers ( $f = 40$ , 72.7%). Over half of the programs provide on-site supervision of beginning teachers ( $f = 32$ , 58.2%), or offer courses specific to the needs of beginning teachers ( $f = 31$ , 56.4%), and consult with others about professional development activities for beginning teachers ( $f = 31$ , 56.4%). A smaller number of institutions offer alternative certification ( $f = 21$ , 38.2%) or serve

as members of beginning teacher support teams ( $f = 20$ , 36.4%).

Respondents were requested to identify beginning teacher induction activities in which their department, college, or university was conducting or participating in other than the six examples illustrated in Table 1. Universities reported working in collaboration with their state department of education and their state agriculture teachers association to provide activities and programs for their beginning teachers. The collaborative groups report having made presentations on campus to preservice student teachers to discuss beginning teacher programs. Faculty members serve on local program review committees, make visits to beginning teachers, and serve as consultants to new teachers as requested. Indirect induction activities mentioned included a website designed specifically for new agricultural education teachers, use of email communication, a teacher listserv, newsletters, and a listing of teaching materials. Five institutions cited mentoring activities occurring with veteran agriculture teachers and beginning teachers. Two institutions indicated that their participation with beginning teachers in their state was part of a state mandate. A *new professionals* program for beginning teachers is coordinated in cooperation with the state department of education, the state agriculture teachers association, and several universities with teacher education programs in one state. Teachers are invited to attend each year during their first three years. Another institution conducts research regarding beginning teachers' assistance.

Table 1

*Additional Teacher Induction Activities As Reported By Teacher Preparation Institutions (n=20).*

Activity	<i>f</i>	%
Collaborative activities with state department and state teachers' association	5	25.0
Mentoring teachers	5	25.0
University faculty visits & consultation	4	20.0
State dept and/or university faculty make visits	3	15.0
Formal mandatory program	2	10.0
Seminars, workshops new teacher orientation	2	10.0
Indirect activities such as website, email, listservs, newsletter	2	10.0
Statewide program for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year teachers	1	5.0
Research regarding beginning teachers assistance	1	5.0

*Objective Two: Faculty Involvement in Induction Activities*

In response to the question regarding faculty involvement, half of the programs ( $f = 30$ , 50%) indicated that additional faculty outside of their department or unit were involved in teacher induction activities. Other *faculty* was interpreted by TPP institutions as the supervision of beginning teachers was a responsibility of state department personnel, an adjunct faculty, and/or veteran teachers from the state teachers association serving as mentors.

To the question of whether the beginning teacher activities were part of a formal agreement with local school districts, 11 (18.6%) teacher education programs indicated the existence of such an agreement, while the majority, ( $f = 45$ , 76.3%) said they had no such agreement. Two programs indicated that a formal agreement did exist between their institutions and area school districts, a third TPP reported their participation was part of a grant administered by their state. Informal agreements between local districts and university programs were more frequently indicated in the open-end response.

*Teacher Induction Activities and Faculty Workload*

Faculty members were asked to respond to an open-ended question of how teacher induction activities are accounted for in regards to faculty workload in their department, school, or college. According to 19 of 51 (37.2%) respondents, induction activities are not counted toward faculty workload. Some view it as overload or service not accounted for. There was no information provided as to whether overload assignments were provided additional compensation. Fourteen institutions view the activity as a service component (27.4%). Some institutions treat beginning teacher assistance as a teaching activity and award credit to the faculty members' teaching load (27.4%). An institution that offers a beginning teacher course counts the full time equivalent (FTE) as part of the instructors teaching load and is considered the same as an on-campus course. A smaller percentage of the institutions reported teacher induction activities as part of non-faculty support (14.6%). A class may be taught by an adjunct faculty member, or release time is provided to a statewide program coordinator. In the smallest cases, teacher induction activities are counted as part of scholarship or research (4.8%).

Table 2

*How Teacher Induction Activities Were Accounted For As Part of Faculty Workload (n=51)*

Faculty workload	<i>f</i>	%
Not counted toward workload (overload, or service not counted for)	19	37.2
Counted as a service component	14	27.4
Considered a teaching activity or credit to teaching load	14	27.4
State-provided funding or stipends, or non-faculty support	6	14.6
Part of scholarship or research	2	4.8

*Objective Three: Status of Student Teacher Preparation and Job Placement By Teacher Education Programs.*

The final objective of the study was to determine the status of student teacher preparation and job placement by reporting teacher education programs. A series of four questions asked the respondents to report the number of student teachers enrolled in their preservice program in 2004-05, the number of those student teachers accepting teaching positions, the number of teachers that accepted

positions and did not return in 2005, and the number of teachers involved in teacher induction programs.

According to the 57 responding TPP, a total of 895 student teachers were enrolled in agricultural education programs in 2004-05. The range of responses was from 1 to 65. Of the 895 reported student teachers, 483 (54%) accepted teaching positions. Teacher educators were asked of their knowledge of new teachers participating in teacher induction activities ( $n = 58$ ). A reported total of 360 (74.5%) teachers

participated in local or state-level teacher induction activities. Four respondents commented 0 (zero) or *none* and six responses were *don't know* or *unsure*. The final question was to determine the number of first year teachers hired in 2004-05 who did not return to their position the following year. Of the 59 respondents to the question, 46% said none of the teachers hired in their state left after their first year. Fourteen respondents (26%) indicated

between one and five teachers in their states did not return for their second year, and one respondent indicated that 6 teachers in their state did not return. A total of 34 teachers did not return after their first year, which equates to a loss of 7%. Fifteen of the 59 (28%) respondents replied "don't know" to the question. Table 3 presents the responses, total numbers, ranges, and percentage for each question.

Table 3  
*Status of Teachers Being Prepared By Teacher Preparation Programs*

Activity	Percentage	Responses	Total	Range
Student teachers enrolled	100.0	60	895	1-65
Student teachers accepting teaching positions	53.9	59	483	0-37
Number of new teachers participating in teacher induction activities	74.5	58	360	0-37
Number of new teachers not returning	7.0	59	34	0-6

### Conclusions/Implications/Recommendations

#### *Objective One: Status of Beginning Teacher Assistance*

Beginning teacher assistance is provided by 65% of AAEE-affiliated teacher education preparation institutions. The most common types of beginning teachers assistance provided by university TPP was conducting workshops targeted for beginning teachers (72.7%). More than half of TPP are making on-site visits (58.2%), offering courses designed for beginning teachers (56.4%), collaborating with state department personnel and/or state agriculture institutions to provide internships or alternative certification (37.7%), and serving on beginning teacher support committees (37.7%). Other beginning teacher activities reported were a statewide-conference designed especially for young teachers and teacher leaders, and more informal types of assistance such as a website for new agricultural education teachers, the use of email communication, new teacher listservs, and new teacher newsletters.

#### *Objective 2: Faculty Involvement in Teacher Induction*

Universities view faculty member work with teacher assistance activities differently. It is considered as a service-related activity in some cases, and in others faculty count it in their teaching class load. In most cases, university

faculty members are not provided credit toward their workload for participation in teacher assistance activities. Some faculty members use their work with teacher assistance as the basis for their research focus. Most institutions do not have formal agreements in place with school districts to provide teacher assistance. Budgetary cutbacks and limited resources play a role in the ability of universities to provide assistance to new teachers. Departments with higher faculty numbers are more likely to provide some type of assistance than departments with smaller faculty numbers.

#### *Objective 3: Accounting of Teacher Induction Activities in Faculty Workload*

Agricultural education faculty members have diverse responsibilities that include classroom teaching, conducting and publishing research, and providing service or involvement with extension activities, depending upon the individual faculty members' appointment. The pressure to publish research as a means of obtaining tenure and promotion at a college or university (Kotrlik, Bartlett, Higgins, & Williams, 2002) may pressure an agricultural education faculty member to elect not to readily partake in such a service-related activity due to its relative value as perceived by a college promotion and tenure committee. The researcher sought to determine how teacher induction activities are accounted for in faculty workload



and appointment.

*Objective 4: Status of Student Teacher Preparation and Job Placement*

Teacher education programs in agricultural education ( $n = 62$ ) prepared a total of 895 student teachers for classroom teaching, however 483 reported having accepted classroom teaching positions. A placement rate of 54% is an indicator that students graduating with degrees in agricultural education are seeking employment in areas other than the teaching of agricultural education. This is a phenomenon that continues to challenge the agricultural education profession and needs to be researched. Teacher educators report that 74% of new teachers are participating in some level of teacher induction activities. It is noted that teacher educator responses to the question of participation in teacher induction activities tended to be unsure of their figures and were *suggesting* that these were the number of teachers participating. A better source would be the teachers themselves. The reported number of first-year teachers not returning for a second year was 34 of 483, or an attrition rate of 7%.

### Implications

Given the limitations of this research study, the following view of TPP involvement in beginning teacher induction begins to take shape. Beginning teacher induction activities are treated by most AAEE-colleges and universities as a collaborative responsibility between the university, state department of education, and the state agriculture teacher's organization. The role of the university is to provide professional development activities while the veteran agriculture teachers serve as mentors to the new teachers. State departments assist with funding in the form of grants.

With the exception of universities with formal beginning teacher courses, most universities view their faculty members' role in new teacher induction as a service-related activity. The instructors with the most interest or those whose responsibility is teacher education are more likely to be involved in teacher induction. Unless the teachers have incorporated a research interest in their work with beginning teachers, voluntary participation by faculty is considered as *the right thing to do*. For the

institutions that treat teacher induction as overload, no mention was made of additional compensation. This was consistent with previous research (Johnston & Kay, 1987).

In land-grant institutions research productivity and the ability to bring in grants is given higher consideration in terms of tenure and promotion (Kotrlik et al., 2002). Teacher education faculty who find their time dominated by classroom teaching, student advising, and making off-campus supervision visits to student teachers and new teachers face an uphill battle and are at a disadvantage. A service appointment that purports to take 10% of the instructor's professional time may realistically consume 25-30%. The stress associated with this situation may result in re-assignment of responsibilities or a turnover in personnel involved with induction activities (Johnston & Kay, 1987). Long-term support and program growth often wanes. For these individuals, a research focus of teacher induction-related activities needs to be developed.

Teacher education preparation programs with multiple faculty members have the advantage of shifting and sharing responsibilities among faculty based on personal or professional obligations. To the smaller institutions where the responsibility of the preservice training and student teacher supervision falls on the shoulders of the same one or two individuals, it may be a hardship and a responsibility that fails to receive adequate attention. A lack of funding or budgetary cutbacks usually results in travel restrictions. When the choice is made between supervisory visits to student teachers who are currently enrolled in university courses in a four-year TPP, and visits to beginning teachers (who may be graduates, or who may have no affiliation to the university, including alternatively certified), the needs of the enrolled student will take priority. This would account for programs that formerly participated in teacher induction activities outside of the university but are no longer active. If support for new teachers is a philosophical belief of a state's teacher association, then support for university faculty to make on-site visits should come from the association.

One teacher induction activity that was discussed in this research as well as others in the literature (Danin & Bacon, 1999; Jacobsen, 1992; Johnston & Kay, 1987, Peiter et al., 2005)

is mentoring. Jacobsen's (1992) study of university involvement in mentoring teachers found that the mentoring component as a form of "assistance" is more effective than "assessment" (p. 141). This suggests that university personnel, who normally assume the role of an evaluator in the beginning teacher classroom, should take the position of a mentor to provide assistance. A problem from the perspective of this research is the amount of time required to provide "one-on-one" assistance to each teacher could better be invested by university faculty to train teacher mentors. Johnston and Kay (1987) suggest that a *one-to-many* model makes better use of limited time and resources.

In California, a program called the *New Professionals Institute* targets young agricultural educators in the first three years in the classroom. "It was designed to present those topics to first year teachers that most relevant to them now that they are in the field: classroom management, FFA advisement, record keeping, motivation, etc. The second tier is for second year teachers moving into departmental management, alternative funding ideas, professional obligations, etc." (K. Bellah, personal communication, July 11, 2011). The program is funded through a professional development contract from the state's Department of Education with the purpose to provide inservice and preservice activities on an annual basis for high school agricultural educators. The program is facilitated by a coordinator in resident at one of the state's higher education institutions.

Another area to examine is the situation of the alternatively-certified teacher in the

agricultural education classroom. Are teachers who are alternatively certified likely to not participate in university-conducted teacher education activities and programs than teachers who were prepared by universities?

### Recommendations

Twenty-one of the 83 institutions identified as AAAE-member institutions did not respond to the survey. Does non-participation in this study indicate no involvement in teacher-induction activities within institution's state? If so, are there barriers that prevent institutions from participating in teacher induction programs? Further research should be conducted to examine the role of the university in new teacher assistance as long as secondary agricultural education teacher retention is an issue. For example, research should examine the long-term effectiveness of programs such as California's *New Professional Institute*; are participants of the three-year program more or less likely to remain in the profession than their peers that do not participate?

The perceptions of new teachers entering the profession (as well as teachers leaving the profession) toward continued university support should be examined, as well as of teachers who have remained in the classroom up to and beyond the five year mark. Were activities conducted that were effective in keeping teachers in the classroom, or did a lack of activities contributed to a teacher's decision to quit their position? The question should be asked, do teachers perceive universities should play a continuing role in their induction experiences?

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