Last Friday I attended a workshop for department heads related to the new online course evaluation system, IDEA. The system is still in pilot phase, but the results are encouraging. While the percent completions may decline in the beginning, the additional amount of information related to course outcome, learning objectives and other metrics increases significantly. There is also the flexibility to add questions related to our own programs. Results at other institutions indicate that after a semester or two the completion rate increases, and may even eventually exceed the rate of paper evaluations. Faculty are the key to having a good response rate: if we stress the importance of responding, it gets done. IDEA seems to have much merit and discussion/consideration by the Faculty Senate will likely determine whether or not it’s adopted.

Sunday evening I had dinner with Bo Reagan and John Patterson of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA). They were on campus for a meeting to discuss the future of the industry and the role that animal science and agricultural economics can have in shaping that future. We had some very good discussions Monday morning about a series of papers on things such as competitiveness, new technology, product quality and policy. Thanks to David Anderson for leading the Department’s effort on this important task. Thanks to Russell Cross who organized this event.

Tuesday morning I had breakfast with some of the 4-H Roundup participants. It was a great kick-off to a critically important program for Texas and the nation. I had the opportunity to visit with former student Casey Oldham and thank him for all he and his company do for 4-H and the community. The Department also had the opportunity to have promotional materials at the College booth and took full advantage of that. Thanks to Donna Chester for organizing this and for taking the time to represent the Department at this important event. I hope we see many of these young people in one of our programs in the near future.

I’m in Savannah, Georgia for my final SAEA Executive Committee summer meeting. This is where we plan the upcoming annual meetings, lay out our plans for the next year and finalize the slate of officers for the fall election of President – elect and Director. We also discussed Invited Papers and moving forward to have the JAAE certified in ISI.

Have a great weekend and enjoy the summer weather!
Congratulations

Andrew Leidner, 2012 Ph.D. Graduate of our department, was recognized this week at the University Council of Water Resources annual meeting for the Outstanding Dissertation in Water Policy and Socioeconomics. Andrew is now working with the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia! Well done, Andrew!

New Publication


Upcoming Birthdays

- Richard Conner, 6/22
- Dean McCorkle, 7/3
- Shelly Peacock, 7/4
- Ron Knutson, 7/12
- Caroline Gleaton, 7/14

Position Announcements

**Assistant Extension Professor**, Mississippi State University. This is a 12-month, 100% Extension appointment in the Department of Agricultural Economics. A Ph.D. in agricultural economics or economics, preferably with specific training in agricultural marketing, production economics, or agricultural finance. Applicants should submit a letter of interest, a curriculum vitae, official transcripts of all college and university work, and have three professional letters of reference sent to: Mrs. Debra Price, Department of Agricultural Economics, Box 5187, Mississippi State, MS 39762 (or by email to price@agecon.msstate.edu). Applicants must complete the Personal Data Information form found at www.jobs.msstate.edu. (Search postings for PARF #XXXX). For more information about this position and the Department of Agricultural Economics contact Steve Turner (turner@agecon.msstate.edu, 662-325-2750) or visit the departmental website at http://www.agecon.msstate.edu. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Initial screening will begin on August 12th, 2013.

The Department of Agricultural Economic, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas has the following positions open:

**Assistant/Associate Professor – Economics of Energy, Water and Food Systems**

**Assistant Professor – Industrial Organization, Markets and Quantitative Analysis**

**Lecturer**

To view the position descriptions and for application instructions, go to: http://www.agecon.tamu.edu/department/department_faculty_positions_announcement.html

Click here for more position announcements

Faculty, staff, and graduate students are encouraged to submit articles and photos on current events. Deadline for all submissions is noon, Thursday. Please send your information to valnoyes@tamu.edu