

CURRICULUM VITA

M. Edward Rister

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Current Title: Professor, M. Edward Rister
Director, Dianne and M. Edward Rister '74 Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program
Holder, Dianne and M. Edward Rister '74 Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Chair
Department of Agricultural Economics, Texas A&M University

Appointment: 70% teaching, 10% research, and 20% service

Education:

<u>School Attended</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Degree</u>
Texas A&M University	1970-1974	B.S. in Ag. Economics
Senior Paper:	<i>Allocation of Environmental Pollution Control Costs</i> (John A. Hopkins, Professor)	
Texas A&M University	1974-1976	M.S. in Ag. Economics
Thesis:	<i>Capital Gains Tax Treatment and the Cattleman</i> (Ronald D. Kay, chair)	
Michigan State University	1977-1981	Ph.D. in Ag. Economics
Dissertation:	<i>IFLMAPS: An Interactive Farm Level Marketing and Production Simulator Intended for Research, Teaching and Extension Applications</i> (Stephen B. Harsh and Gerald D. Schwab, co-chairs)	

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Professor, and Director, Dianne and M. Edward '74 Rister Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program, Research and Teaching, Tenure Track. Teaching responsibilities include a two-course capstone sequence in economic analysis and financial analysis of agribusiness entrepreneurship-oriented businesses; a junior-level agribusiness entrepreneurship budgeting course, and two introductory seminar-type courses in agribusiness entrepreneurship. He also provides oversight for a minor in agribusiness entrepreneurship accessible to all university students. His applied research is designed to identify and assess economic and financial consequences of decision situations extending from firm-level farm and/or ranch situations to agribusiness situations, with an emphasis on rural and metropolitan start-up businesses.

EXPERIENCE

Areas of Expertise:

Dr. Rister's expertise is in farm management, production, and entrepreneurial economics, with emphasis on applied, problem-solving activities and business planning. His research efforts are focused on investigating the economic feasibility of new technologies and business managers' adoption processes, with the effects of alternative risk management strategies frequently incorporated into his analyses. During the early 2000s, his research projects were concentrated on water economics, including irrigation district operations and capital investments, municipal potable water supplies, rainwater harvesting, and watershed management, as well as energy cane and algae biofuels energy economics. More recently, the focus of his research has shifted to startup business opportunities in rural and metropolitan communities. His agribusiness entrepreneurial teaching strengths include the incorporation of "real-world" experts into the classroom, and interacting with students who are preparing their individual business plans (encompassing extensive budgeting and accounting analyses) for rural and metropolitan ventures of their personal choosing. In recent years, he held administrative responsibilities at both the college and department levels, including development donor engagement and development. On June 1, 2023, he returned full-time to his faculty role in agribusiness entrepreneurship.

Publications and Presentations

51 Refereed Journal Articles	2 Book Chapters
81 Government & Experiment Station Bulletins	125 Published Abstracts
6 Published Proceedings	17 Invited Presentations Not Published
16 Contributed/Submitted Presentations Not Published	47 Poster Presentations
2 Briefing Papers	68 Department, Popular, and Other Articles
27 Microcomputer Software	138 Local Research Presentations
29 Confidential Grant Reports	93 Educational and Research Programs
17 International Presentations	

Professional Experience:

June 2023 - present. Professor, Director, Dianne and M. Edward Rister '74 Agribusiness Entrepreneurship program, and Holder, Dianne and M. Edward Rister '74 Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Chair in the Department of Agricultural Economics, Texas A&M University. Nine-month appointment.

April 2021 – July 2022. Associate Dean, Student Professional Development, half-time, in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Texas A&M University. Nine-month appointment.

September 2019 – May 2023. Associate Head, Professor, and Director, Dianne and M. Edward Rister '74 Agribusiness Entrepreneurship program, in the Department of Agricultural Economics, Texas A&M University. Nine-month appointment.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Agricultural & Applied Economics Association (AAEA) Distinguished Teaching More Than 10 Years Experience Award. 2023. One award annually.

Honor Professor. 2021. College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. COALS Student Council. One award annually.

Southern Agricultural Economics Association Teaching of a Course Award. 2020. Agribusiness Entrepreneurship: Economic/Financial Analysis. One award annually.

Rister T-Camp. Transition Camp Namesake, Texas A&M University. 2017. Aggie Transition Camps exists to successfully transition new students into the Aggie Family.

Texas A&M Foundation Partner in Philanthropy Faculty Award. 2017. Recognition of faculty members who demonstrate dedicated commitment to philanthropy at Texas A&M University.

MEMBERSHIPS, OFFICES IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, MAJOR COMMITTEES

Honorary Societies:

Alpha Zeta (Chancellor of Texas Alpha Chapter, 1973-74; National All-Chapter Scholarship, 1974)

Gamma Sigma Delta – Texas Chapter (1974-present; Texas chapter officer – Historian, 2010; Secretary, 2011; President-Elect, 2012; President, 2013; Past-President, 2014; Executive Committee, 2015-2017;

President 2021 - present)

Gamma Sigma Delta – International Office (President-Elect, 2012-2013; President, 2014-2016; Past-President 2017-2018)

Phi Kappa Phi (1974-present)

Sigma Xi (1979-present)

Professional Affiliations:

American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA) [1974-present]

Southern Agricultural Economics Association (SAEA) [1974-present]

University Council on Water Resources (UCOWR) [2003-2018]

Western Agricultural Economics Association (WAEA) [1974-present]

National and Regional Activities (since 2015):

2024 Association of Former Students Distinguished Alumnus Award Selection Committee, 2024-2025.

Judge, American Farm Bureau Federation's Business Challenge, 2015, 2016, and 2017.

Facilitator and Instructor, Texas Farm Bureau Youth Leadership Conference, “Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship.” 2014, 2015, and 2016.

Past-President, International Gamma Sigma Delta, 2017-2018; President, 2015-2016; President-Elect 2012-2013.

University Activities (since 2015):

Member, The Path Forward, ‘Elevate Remote Locations, Workgroup 3.’ Implementation Plan for Strategic Restructuring of Texas A&M University. January 2022 - present.

Member, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences representative, University Committee to provide oversight for University Minor in Entrepreneurship, 2019 - present.

Member, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences representative, University Committee to develop and establish University Minor in Entrepreneurship, 2017 - 2018.

Member, Task Force for Texas A&M University School of Innovation’s development, 2016-2017.

2015 Association of Former Students Distinguished Alumnus Award Selection Committee, 2014-2015.

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences/Texas AgriLife Research Activities (since 2020):

Faculty representative on discussions related to enhancing entrepreneurship across the University.

Research Funding:

- **INTERNALLY-FUNDED Contracts and Grants:** \$ 1,102,887 total through December 31, 2023
- **EXTERNALLY-FUNDED Contracts and Grants:** \$ 5,527,401 total through December 31, 2023

Teaching Funding:

- More than \$20 million in Current Programs, Endowed Support, and Planned Gifts since 2004.

RESEARCH

Hussey, Will. 2024 (January). “The Economic and Financial Potential of Vineyards in the Texas Hill Country.” Department of Agricultural Economics, Texas A&M University. M.Sc. Thesis. (Committee chair).

TEACHING

The following excerpts from Dr. Rister’s nomination for various teaching awards provide an excellent summary of current and former students’ appreciation for the breadth and depth of his teaching program:

During the 2015 calendar year, several developments in Agribusiness Entrepreneurship curricula occurred, including the changing of the moniker for the AGEC 424 and AGEC 425 classes from Rural Entrepreneurship to Agribusiness Entrepreneurship, with intentions of being more appealing to the greater diversity in backgrounds and interests of current and future students. Prerequisites for AGEC 424 were changed to facilitate inclusion of non-Department students both College- and University wide. Two seminar classes were approved, AGEC 223 and AGEC 423, allowing both lower- and upper-level students opportunities to engage with external guest speakers, including entrepreneurs and other professionals. A third new class focused on introducing students to enterprise budgeting and Excel spreadsheets, AGEC 324, was also approved. In addition, a Minor in Agribusiness Entrepreneurship was approved, with the first students attempting to earn this distinction doing so during 2016. For AGEC 425, student evaluations have been both of the standard Department format and also of a subjective, open question format, seeking to identify specific areas of improvement needed in the course format and in the instructor's mannerisms.

This capstone course in Farm and Ranch Management was revised in 1985 and has filled a critical gap in COALS curricula. Emphasis on microcomputer entrepreneurial management- oriented software in a personalized-student case business-planning context is the focus of the course. Steady improvement in meeting students' needs has been observed over the last five years, with many of Dr. Rister's students noting the course is among the best, if not the best, they have taken at Texas A&M University. The course is recognized among students as being rigorous, applied, and filling an important niche in their training. Dr. Rister's input into the course and his concern for students' welfare are highly regarded by past students.

Anonymous Comments:

- "The amazing thing about Dr. Rister is that even those students that tell you how hard his class is still recommend that you take it."
- "I have to credit most of where I am today to Dr. Rister's counsel and class he taught. By now being on both sides of the lending table, I honestly believe that if anyone who has ever borrowed or loaned money for the production of agriculture products had taken Dr. Rister's Economics class, the farmer and the loan officer would not be confronted with a lot of the problems they are currently facing today."
- "... I have used many of the classroom principles taught to me by Dr. Rister and others, but probably most importantly, I have utilized the strong work ethic and the commitment to excellence fervently stressed by him to each of his students."
- "... Dr. Rister's main concern was for the welfare of his students, for despite his very busy agenda, he always seemed to have time for us, whether it be to explain complicated theories or just to act as a sounding board for a young undergraduate like myself."
- "Dr. Rister has a way of taking the most abstract economic principle and applying it to everyday life on a farm and ranch. He requires more of a student than anyone I have ever worked under; however, if the student shows an interest and willingness to learn, he also gives more in return than any one Professor I have ever met."
- "Outside of the classroom, Dr. Rister was quite willing to work with any student. There were no gifts in his class, but he was willing to work just as hard as you were to help you. This one-on-one consultation often stretched beyond immediate classroom issues, as long as you were learning."
- "One of the reasons I distinctly remember his class was his attitude. Dr. Rister portrayed an eagerness, true interest and excitement for the subject in which he seemed to be putting over a 100% effort. I felt compelled to find out what was so interesting and to do my best, otherwise I would be cheating myself."
- "Dr. Rister organized the course in a way that made people take accountability for their own selves. His course utilized a lot of economic concepts and principles that I learned over my time as a student. I learned a wealth of knowledge that will be useful for many years to come."

Attributed Comments:

- Kelsea Vaughan '15 noted, "In 2014, after graduating from A&M and completing Dr. Rister's course, I was in the real world. Thanks to Dr. Rister and the lessons I learned in AGEC 425 I was able to open my business with full confidence in its viability. After 6 months my business turned a profit and has ever since. I'm so thankful for the lessons learned. . .not only about business, but about life. I'm thankful for Dr. Rister and the mentor that he has been to me and my husband over the last 4 years." <https://letsgetwhimsical.com/>
- Reo Pritchard '02, R.E.O. Insurance Agency, credits much of his success to the agribusiness entrepreneurship program, in particular AGEC 424 and 425. "Dr. Rister's entrepreneurship class was hands-down the most impactful during my time at A&M. You don't realize what you're learning until you're in a business. You don't have your 'ah-ha' moment in class. These courses helped me to be ready for challenges when they come." <https://www.reoagency.com/>

- **Jose Contreras '22** wrote, “Dr. Rister has played a monumental role in my life as a professor, mentor, and guide. Dr. Rister has mentored me in preparation for the real world more than any other class I have taken at Texas A&M. Whatever our goals or business plans may be, Dr. Rister has always reminded us to count the cost. If I wanted to have an “A” in his class, I had to give up some of my weekends and free time to deliver quality work. At the time, it may have seemed like a burden; but, looking back Dr. Rister has taught me a very valuable lesson that I can apply to my everyday life. His words of wisdom have helped me develop and strengthen my character. He has inspired me to work harder in school, and it is no surprise that I have jumped from a 3.2 GPA to a 3.7.” <https://agecon.tamu.edu/contreras-designs-arenas-to-build-world-champions/>

To provide a perspective of the diversity of the program’s impacts, a sample of students who have launched business ventures or engaged in family businesses upon completion of AGECE 425 include the following:

- Ryan Schronk, AGECE Class of 2023, Planting Seeds Farm: corn, cotton, wheat, and sunflowers (Hillsboro, TX). <https://agecon.tamu.edu/ryan-shronk-sixth-gen-legacy/>
- Alex Valicek, AGECE Class of 2023, NOCO Services: land clearing, road construction, and site development in rural and metropolitan areas (Sealy, TX). <https://agecon.tamu.edu/valicek-noco/>
- Cullen Sherrill, AGECE Class of 2023, Strike3Farms: whitetail sheep – breeding stock, exotics for game ranches, and consignment purchases/sales (Cypress, TX). <https://agecon.tamu.edu/sherrill-strike3farms/>
- Maggie Branch, AGECE Class of 2019, The Branch Coffeehouse – coffee, made-from scratch breakfast and lunch (Jim Ned Valley, Tuscola, TX). <https://thebranchcoffeehouse.com/>
- Ryan Drapela, AGECE Class of 2019, Drapela Woodworks: wooden gift products (El Campo). <https://drapelaworks.com/>
- Benjamin Billings, AGECE 425 Class of 2018, American Ranchscapes: design, land clearing, pond and road construction in rural areas (Cypress, TX). <https://agecon.tamu.edu/billings-crafting-landscapes/>
- Colton Bubela, AGECE 425 Class of 2017, Bubela Tree Farm & Arbor Care LLC: tree farmer, arbor care (Schulenburg, TX). <https://bubelatreefarms.com/about-us/>
- Alex Schulman, AGECE 425 Class of 2016, Schulman Entertainment: three entertainment venues (movie theaters, bowling allies, restaurants) (Bay City, TX). <https://www.moviebowlgrille.com/>
- Heather Salopek, AGECE 425 Class of 2015, Legacy Pecans: pecan grower and merchandiser (Las Cruces, NM). <https://legacypecans.com/>
- Taylor Dacus, AGECE 425 Class of 2010, Principal – Troy Construction: pipeline construction (Houston, TX). <https://thetroycompanies.com/>
- Ben Paschal, AGECE 425 Class of 2010, Laguna Madre Outfitters: fly fishing outfitter; outdoor sports (Rio Hondo, TX). <https://lagunamadreoutfitters.com/>
- Derek Kothmann, AGECE 425 Class of 2008, Principal – Ingram ReadyMix: concrete sales and production (New Braunfels, TX). <http://ingramreadymixinc.com/>
- Benton Kirk, AGECE 425 Class of 1997, Principal – CampoRico International: fertilizer sales and delivery and grain exports (Sao Paulo, Brazil). <https://br.linkedin.com/in/benton-kirk-aa61937>

A long-lasting impact of AGECE 425 in the Agribusiness Entrepreneurship program is evident in the number of former students who are thriving as entrepreneurs, utilizing the skills and tools they gained while in AGECE 425. Many of the AGECE 425 former students return as mentors to current program students throughout the year and/or during the year-end Entrepreneurial Dreams Symposium.

<https://agrifetoday.tamu.edu/2022/05/12/symposium-lets-students-spread-their-entrepreneurial-wings/>