

ber to give top priority to his association with students. Too often this is reversed; the person in the classroom considers himself having been hired first as a professional within his discipline and only secondarily, if at all, as a teacher.

The teacher who possesses a high degree of professional aspiration is also actively participating in his professional organizations. Presenting papers, being involved in committee work, and learning from these experiences with his peers improves both the organization and the teacher's own professional growth.

The college teacher is a member of a faculty, and thus has a vital concern with matters of institutional governance that might affect the educational process. Since the faculty is responsible for implementing the institution's educational programs and goals, the individual teacher must be involved in their development.

We know that the teacher can contribute to the shaping of minds and building integrity and character in society's future citizens. Hence, I view the teacher's role as including the need to help the public understand that the educational process and the institution can and should contribute to the wholesome ongoing and improvement of civilized society — that they can be positive factors in preserving worthy social values.

The college teacher is increasingly being challenged to account for his stewardship in the classroom. Needed is a definition of competency that is widely understood and accepted by both the teaching profession and the general public. It is the responsibility of the teaching profession to devise, articulate, and disseminate such a definition. It then behooves the profession to set reasonable standards of both pedagogical and ethical performance for its members and to expect that those standards be met. In its quest for excellence and credibility, any profession must guard against the unqualified, non-performer, and malfasant.

The teacher must defend by his responsible professionalism those essential conditions of excellent teaching — academic freedom and tenure. He needs to perform in an atmosphere of trust and respect, being free to pursue truth in his area of expertise. To do this most effectively, the teacher must have stability of employment and the assurance that he will not be deprived of his means of livelihood because of his discovery and/or espousal of a concept that his training and understanding dictate is true, but which might not be highly popular with segments of the general public at any point in time.

My philosophy of teaching involves not only the teaching of students in the classroom, but includes extending the teacher's influence to his peers, his discipline, the institution, and the public good, as well.

For me, the exhilarating and challenging contact with students provides the greatest personal fulfillment and reward. I take my teaching seriously, viewing it as an activity to be pursued and enjoyed.

LEAD

Leadership Education/ Action Development

James T. Horner

Deans and directors of Agricultural Colleges, along with their faculties have engaged in much discussion about a major concern of people who employ our graduates. The concern often expressed is, "The graduates we hire are unable to relate and to communicate effectively. They do not understand decision making in the 'real world' of business. Graduates from colleges and schools of agriculture should certainly be able to communicate to the public the profound and overriding impact that agriculture has on each phase of our existence in the United States and around the world."

America is a leader in agriculture for a variety of reasons — one is its millions of capable, well-educated farmers and ranchers. Their abilities in agricultural production and management have been honed to a sharp edge. Many display outstanding qualities of leadership, which have not been nurtured or even recognized. Few have been challenged to consider the world beyond the farm and ranch gate and its need for effective decision-makers, spokesmen, and leaders.

Leadership development was a major topic at the 1981 RICOP meeting. Also, a number of institutions have recently announced one or more "leadership" courses. One thing more is needed — a FOLLOW-UP program for the development of new leadership. It is perhaps the most urgent need of agriculture for the 1980's and beyond. One half of the U.S. producers were lost in a generation. In 1940 there were 30 million farmers. Now there are fewer than 8 million.

A year ago a group of outstanding Nebraska farmers, ranchers, and educators formed a non-profit corporation called the Nebraska Agricultural Leadership Council. The Council, in turn, developed LEAD (Leadership Education/Action Development). Its primary mission is to enhance the quality of rural and agricultural life in Nebraska through the development of latent leadership potential of young agriculturalists, while allowing them to continue to manage their farming or agribusiness operations.

This development is being accomplished through a series of intensive leadership seminars. Specifically, 30 young Nebraska agriculturalists, ages 25 to 40, are selected each year to participate in a two-year intensive continuing education program. Three-fourths of the participants are men and women engaged in production agriculture.

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Program Schedule

Seven 3-day resident seminars, about one each month, starting in October each year, are conducted on a dozen different college and university campuses and in agribusiness establishments across Nebraska. The content of the seminars centers around basic areas essential to leadership: economics, communication, government, sociology, and culture. In addition to the resident seminars, a two to three week study-travel seminar is held each year — one in the United States, the other abroad. The focus during the first year is on local, state, and national issues. National and international affairs are integrated the second year. The seminars provide information for, and experience in, influencing decisions about fiscal policies, environmental concerns, land and water use, taxes, trade issues, and international relations. Decisions on these matters play a vital role in the future of the agricultural and natural resources industries.

The program emphasizes the use of basic skills in communication, interpersonal relations, economics, social and cultural understanding, and the role of government and business in the decision processes which affect agriculture. Intensive study by small groups on the special problems and concerns of Nebraska agriculture and the nation, as well as development of broad sensitivity to the views and problems of other segments of our society and other countries are included.

Study-Travel Seminars

The purpose of the study-travel seminars is to increase self-confidence and understanding of the views of other people. The two-week United States Study-Travel Seminar provides opportunities for direct observation of the problems facing minorities and the inner city. The decision making environment and processes of labor and large businesses such as Ford Motor Company and the Chicago Board of Trade are studied, as are processes in the federal government.

The study-travel seminar abroad, planned for January 1983, in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Japan is to create an understanding of the interdependence of nations, the problems of other countries, and their relationship to the problems of our country. Comparisons will be made of their political, educational, cultural, religious, and historical backgrounds; and of their technology, trade, food and hunger, art and philosophy. These are integral parts of the total continuing education of all LEAD Fellows.

Participant Selection

After announcements are made and applications are received in the spring, screening committees in each of five districts across the state review, interview, rank, and recommend applicants. Applicants who receive the fellowships must have proven potential for and commitment to leadership, public affairs, and influence on public decision-making on a broader scale.

The 27 male and 3 female Fellows involved in the 1981-83 program were selected from more than one hun-

ded applicants. Twenty-four are engaged in farming and ranching. Six are in agribusiness. All have post high school education. Twenty four are college graduates and four hold master's degrees. Twenty four are over 30 years of age. Their products range from alfalfa to angus cattle; pigs to popcorn; pinto beans to poultry; hay to herefords; milk to milo; sheep to sugar beets; wheat and corn.

Their professional status, individually and collectively, is impressive — ranging from regional farm manager, branch credit manager, bank officer, and national sales director to corporation president, partner, owner and manager in operations ranging from 240 acres to 20,000 acres.

The proven leadership potential of the Fellows is shown by their participation as officers of local civic, church, fraternal, and educational organizations; chairing a college advisory council, county political party, commodity groups; and serving on boards for the Natural Resource District, cooperatives, the State Board of Education, Cattlemen's Association, National Association of Farm Broadcasters, and the National Association of Bank Women, as well as farm organizations at various levels.

Program Direction

The Nebraska Agricultural Leadership Council, Inc., a non-profit corporation composed of recognized agricultural, business, education, and financial leaders, directs the program. It is sponsored and supported by the leading individuals, businesses, and industries of Nebraska and institutions of higher education, both public and private. This is essentially a non-tax supported educational endeavor, so widespread support by individuals, organizations, businesses, and foundations is required. THE KELLOGG FOUNDATION helped get LEAD started, as it has done and is doing in other states. The Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources and other units of the University, as well as other Nebraska institutions of higher education contribute instructional staff and facilities.

One of the major contributions, of course, is the 75 to 80 days of each participant's time over the two-year period, in addition to the time and expense of getting to and from the various seminar sites. They view this as their own investment in a continuing education program, as well as improving the future of agriculture.

Program Status

The first resident seminar, conducted in October 1981, at UN-L began the process for participants to have meaningful interaction among themselves and with non-farm counterparts and to enhance interpersonal skills so very vital in today's complex society.

In November, "Leadership Through Communication" was the theme at Kearney State College. "Issues Affecting Agriculture" was the thrust in December at Concordia College. In January, "Fiscal Policy and Economics" and "Political Processes" (including a session with the governor) were emphasized at Peru and Nebraska

Wesleyan, respectively. Creighton University conducted the March seminar on "Urban-Agricultural Interface." In April, "Social and Environmental Concerns Affecting Agriculture" was the topic at Doane College, concluding the first year. Second year seminars are scheduled at Chadron, Hastings, Union, and York Colleges, UN-O and UN-L.

During the study-travel seminar in Chicago, Detroit, Kansas City, and Washington, D.C., the Fellows experienced "jaw-boning" with the presidents and top executives of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, Farmland Industries, and the Detroit AFL-CIO. High-calibre fiscal policy seminars were conducted by top-level officials in the Northern Trust and the Federal Reserve Banks, as well as the President's Council of Economic Advisors. Highlight sessions were also held in the Board of Trade, the Detroit mayor's office, a metropolitan "Crime Watch" community, and the Ford world headquarters. A wide variety of experiences was provided in Washington, D.C., including visits with congressmen and officials of the USDA, Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Trade Commission, and various embassies. Cultural activity included a play at the Kennedy Center.

Participant Reaction

These few selected comments by LEAD Fellows seem to reflect the views of the initial group of participants:

Kathy Votaw, one of three female Fellows in the first program and a correspondent bank officer from Lincoln, Nebraska, said, "The LEAD program is proving to be even more worthwhile than I anticipated, and I had high expectations of it. Our seminars cover a wide variety of topics, Interpersonal Relationships, Communications, Issues of the '80's, including Energy and Fiscal Monetary Policy and Procedures and the Political Processes. The 30 Fellows are growing not only through the speakers but from each other. This program is proving to be one of the most significant and rewarding experiences of my life, and I am proud to be a part of it."

Randy Bruns, a rancher from Chappell, Nebraska, said, "For me the program is even better than I hoped it could be. I intended to sit back and soak up everything that I could. I am soaking up a lot, but I am unable to sit back! I am learning that I can contribute as well... the broad issues that impact agriculture are no longer shapeless forces, but are coming into focus as events, people, attitudes, facts and figures, all understandable and maybe even manageable to a degree. The dialogue among farmers, ranchers, businessmen, professors, administrators, professionals and politicians has been most positive... fertile ground for the push and pull of ideas... because of my involvement with LEAD, I am developing a different attitude about the frustrations of farm life, and feel a renewed sense of responsibility to agriculture."

Dick LeBlanc, a Scottsbluff, Nebraska farm management executive, said, "It is the personal growth experience that surpasses any classroom or travel program that I have ever done. It helps me to better understand

the people around me both in business and in my family, in agriculture and the nonagriculture world. Several programs include our spouses. This means a lot to my wife and me as she now has a feeling of being a part of LEAD by knowing the participants and our programs. We have learned how to present our ideas effectively and concisely; to develop self-confidence; to understand different points of view; and to observe leadership styles of others. Each seminar is a new and different learning experience; especially since we have the opportunity to have a different roommate at each session. The seminars are extremely helpful in items of interest that are not common, in-depth topics among other farmers and businessmen. We are constantly looking forward to the next get together."

Gerald Clausen, 41, the oldest Fellow, a farmer from Bloomfield, Nebraska, said, "LEAD is the best thing that ever happened to me. It gives me the opportunity to express my feelings and ideas in a receptive and positive learning atmosphere, where outstanding presentors give sound, informative, and provocative material. I have the freedom to think out loud and receive constructive criticism — not just criticism. LEAD has provided me with friends and associates in every corner of the state. The most important thing, in my opinion, that LEAD has provided for me is newer and higher horizons in thinking and the ability to base my conclusions on a much broader base of knowledge. The state of Nebraska will gain immensely in years to come."

Conclusion

A recent evaluation of a similar agricultural leadership program, begun in California in 1970, showed that the leadership process is definitely speeded up by the program. Eight hundred and forty policy-making roles in the state were held by 260 of their past participants — an enviable result.

Agricultural schools/colleges could follow the above model and be the prime-movers, working with others to accomplish such a program.

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