

Evaluation of an Agriculture and Food Studies Certificate Program: Lessons Learned and Strategies for Improvement

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Purpose and Objectives

- Assist in developing a skilled workforce for agriculture and food related employers.
- Knowledge and skills for advancement of incumbent, underemployed and displaced workers.
- Implement 24 credit certificate in fall 2014.
- Offer agriculture and food related pathways



Needs Analysis

- Forty seven (20.8%) out of 202 businesses.
- Similar response by number of employees or business.
- Hard skills: 1) some knowledge of food and agriculture, 2) food safety and sanitation, and 3) quality assurance.
- Soft skills: 1) writing skills, 2) management, 3) problem solving skills, and 4) applied computer skills.
- Majority (68%) prefer online training but use one-on-one.

The logo for Wegmans, featuring the brand name in a black, cursive script font.The logo for LiDestri, featuring the brand name in a green, cursive font inside a white oval with a green border. Below the oval is the tagline "As good as it gets." in a smaller, italicized font.The logo for Barilla, featuring the brand name in a white, bold, sans-serif font inside a red oval with a white border. Below the oval is the tagline "THE CHOICE OF ITALY®" in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.The logo for Zweigle's, featuring the brand name in a white, cursive font inside a red oval with a yellow border.The logo for Associated New York State Food Processors, featuring the text "ASSOCIATED NEW YORK STATE FOOD PROCESSORS" in a white, sans-serif font inside a red banner. The banner is set against a background of stylized green and yellow hills and a blue sky.

Agriculture & Food Studies Certificate (AG02)

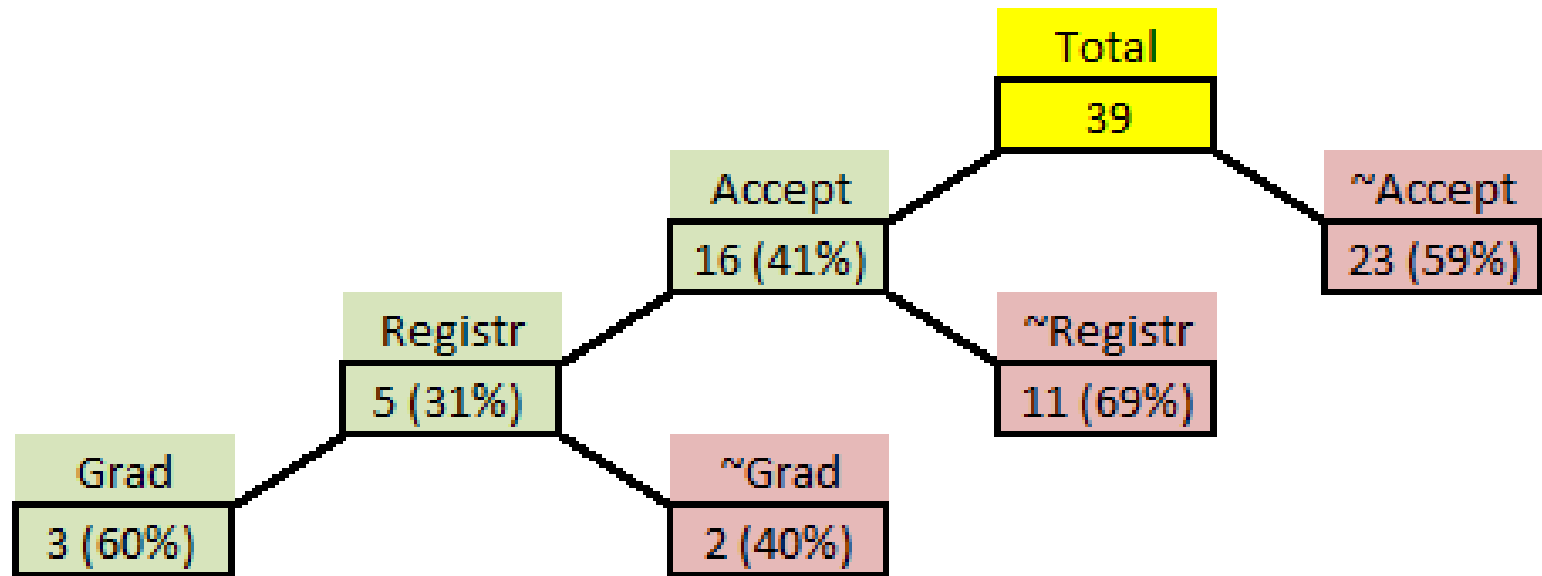
Course	Credit Hours
AGS 150 General Microbiology for Food and Agriculture (new)	4
ENG 101- College Writing	3
BUS 135 - Supervising for the 21st Century	3
CRC 101- Practical Computer Literacy or Software Applications	4
SPC 141- Interpersonal Speech Communication	3
SUS 101- Introduction to Sustainability	3
AGS 101 (Bio 113)- Introduction to Agriculture Studies	1
AGS 200 - Ag Problem Solving - Applications (new)	3
TOTAL CREDITS	24

Data Collection

- Student and registration records (Spring 2014 – 15)
- Advisement – student interviews
- Workforce Improvement Board interviews
- Student exit interviews
- Employer interviews



Results



Source: Angel Andreu, MCC Institutional Research

Percent of those who register given accepted = $31.25\% = (5/16)$

Percent of those who accepted and graduate = $18.8\% = (.6 * .31)$

Percent of those who apply and graduate = $7.7\% = (.6 * .31 * .41)$

Results

- Thirty-nine (39) applications from Spring 2014 – 15
- Demographics:
 - 51 % male, 49% female
 - 41% white, 59% minority
 - 28% over the age of 30
- Applied but not accepted – 59% (23)



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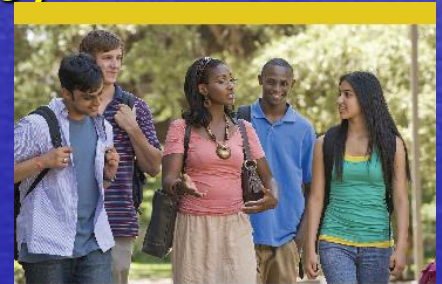


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Results

- Accepted – 41% (16/39)
 - 56% white, 44% minority
 - 56% male, 44% female
- Accepted but did not register – 69% (11/16)
 - Did not shop schools
 - Financial or academic issues
 - Non response
- Accepted and registered – 31% (5/16)
- Graduate – 60% (3/5)



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Results

- Financial aid impacts student certificate/degree status.
- Many traditional and nontraditional students lack academic preparation.
- Traditional students view certificate as emphasis/minor.
- All students interested in career pathway.



Conclusions and Implications

- Family and job issues impact non-traditional students.
- Recruitment, registration and retention.
- Perceptions of agriculture and food related pathways.
- Academic preparation - first time and returning students.
- Financial aid influence.

