The Department of Agricultural Economics engages people in the use of economic analysis for making decisions involving agribusiness (including food and fiber production, supplying inputs, processing products and marketing), natural resources and communities. Students are taught to develop their leadership, analytical and communication skills. Disciplinary research and graduate education enhance the use of economic principles and research methods in solving economic problems facing society. Applied research programs emphasize the analysis of business and public policy issues.

In planning a student's program, the need for broad training, rather than narrow specialization, is recognized. Students (regardless of their primary interests) are encouraged to take not only advanced courses covering various fields within the department but also essential supporting courses in other departments. Students are expected to acquire a knowledge of economic theory, its application to contemporary agricultural production, agribusiness and resource problems, and the ability to employ analytical techniques in making policy and business decisions.

The teaching and research activities are grouped broadly as follows: agribusiness management and finance, production economics, markets and trade, policy analysis, and resource economics. The present and expanding program of research in the department affords the student a wide choice and capable guidance in thesis or dissertation research.

Master of Science (MS) and Master of Agribusiness (MAB) degrees are offered. MS students (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/colleges-schools-interdisciplinary/agriculture-life-sciences/agricultural-economics/ms) may choose between the thesis option (recommended for those students who plan to go on for further graduate studies) and the non-thesis option. Students who choose the MS non-thesis option take a greater number of courses. The Master of Agribusiness degree (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/colleges-schools-interdisciplinary/interdisciplinary/mab) is non-thesis, interdisciplinary and jointly administered by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the Mays Business School. This professional curriculum is designed to provide a broad preparation for economic, financial and marketing analysis of agribusiness, food and fiber industry decisions.

The PhD program (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/colleges-schools-interdisciplinary/agriculture-life-sciences/agricultural-economics/phd) concentrates on the theory, quantitative tools and methodology required of the professional applied economist. Field areas offered within the PhD program include: Markets and Information Economics, Resource and Environmental Economics and Policy and Trade. A PhD in Agribusiness and Managerial Economics (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/colleges-schools-interdisciplinary/interdisciplinary/agribusiness-managerial-economics/phd) is also offered by the Intercollegiate Faculty of Agribusiness. No foreign language is required for students pursuing any of our PhD programs. For more information about program requirements and employment opportunities, contact the department's graduate office.

Faculty

Bessler, David A, Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, University of California, Davis, 1977

Boadu, Frederick O, Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, University of Kentucky, 1981

Conner, James R, Senior Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, Texas A&M University, 1970

Harness, Nathaniel J, Instructional Associate Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, Texas Tech University, 2007

Ishdorj, Ariun, Associate Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, Iowa State University, 2008

Leatham, David J, Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, Purdue University, 1983

Litzenberg, Kerry K, Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, Purdue University, 1979

McCarl, Bruce A, Distinguished Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, The Pennsylvania State University, 1973

Mjelde, James W, Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1985

Ng, Desmond W, Associate Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2001

Penson, John B, Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1973

Price, Edwin C, Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, University of Kentucky, 1973

Richardson, James W, Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, Oklahoma State University, 1978

Rister, M E, Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, Michigan State University, 1981

Salin, Victoria S, Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, Purdue University, 1996

Senarath Dharmasena, Kalu A, Instructional Assistant Professor
Agricultural Economics
PHD, Texas A&M University, 2010
Masters

- Master of Agriculture in Agricultural Economics (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/colleges-schools-interdisciplinary/agriculture-life-sciences/agricultural-economics/agriculture-masters)
- Master of Science in Agricultural Economics (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/colleges-schools-interdisciplinary/agriculture-life-sciences/agricultural-economics/ms)

Doctoral

- Doctor of Philosophy in Agricultural Economics (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/colleges-schools-interdisciplinary/agriculture-life-sciences/agricultural-economics/phd)

Courses

AGEC 601 Commodity Futures and Options Markets
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Price risk management using agricultural commodity futures and options markets, theories of hedging and formulation of optimal hedging strategies, applied hedging strategies evaluated with emphasis on options relative to futures.
Prerequisites: One course in calculus and one course in statistics.
AGEC 613 International Agricultural Development Policy
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Capstone for the certificate in International Agriculture and Nature Resource Management but may be taken by many majors; utilizes real-world examples depicting environments of international development institutions and programs concerning water management, gender, climate change agricultural extension, value chains, agricultural finance, and many other issues in developing countries, with emphasis on smallholder agriculture.
Prerequisites: AGEC 422, AGEC 430, AGEC 452, AGEC 604/PSAA 663, AGEC 606, or other equivalent macroeconomic course.

AGEC 614 Global Food and Agribusiness Policy
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Public policies and programs affecting agriculture and agribusiness; development of policies and programs, identifying relevant issues, reviewing means to attain desired goals, and development of methods to evaluate the consequences of alternative farm policies on U.S. agriculture, agribusiness, trade and resources.
Prerequisites: AGEC 619 or ECON 607 and MATH 142.

AGEC 619 Managerial Economics in Agribusiness
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Practical application of operational and strategic decision-making tools to agribusiness, focusing on important managerial and economic principles and understanding needed to carry out these functions.
Prerequisites: ECON 323, MATH 142 and STAT 303.

AGEC 620 Food Security, Climate and Conflict
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Economic models of food production and consumption in conflict regimes; the micro-economics of violence; the dynamic relationships of climate and agricultural production; potential impacts of climate change on food and socio-political security; food security among insurgent groups; conflict resistant food systems; and the shifting relationships between poor and rich nations in relationship to climate, food and conflict.
Prerequisite: ECON 323 or equivalent, or approval of instructor.

AGEC 621 Econometrics for Agribusiness
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Econometric application and practice; analysis and interpretation of economic data for decision making and microcomputer implementation.
Prerequisites: MATH 142; STAT 303; corequisite: ECON 323; ECON 311 or AGEC 430.

AGEC 622 Agribusiness Analysis and Forecasting
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Design, construction, use and evaluation of simulation, forecasting and optimization models to solve applied problems confronting decision makers in agribusiness.
Prerequisite: AGEC 621 or approval of instructor.

AGEC 625 Environment of Agribusiness
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Analysis of the economic, social, political, technological and legal forces that impact the way in which global agribusiness firms compete; emphasis on intensive case study analysis.
Prerequisites: AGEC 619 and AGEC 621.

AGEC 629 Strategic Agribusiness Management
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Practical application of operational and strategic decision-making tools to agribusiness; emphasis on problem recognition and economic analysis related to production, marketing and finance decisions facing agribusiness firms.
Prerequisites: AGEC 619, AGEC 621 and AGEC 625.

AGEC 630 Financial Analysis for Agribusiness Firms
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Application of financial planning and analysis to agribusiness firms; capital budgeting and selection of investments; the role of debt structure and liquidity in firm growth and stability; alternatives for gaining control over financial resources; managing risk and maintaining business efficiency over time.
Prerequisites: ACCT 640 and FINC 635.

AGEC 633 Sustainability in World Development
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Economic development defined; economic structure, economic efficiency, equity, conservation and role of sustainability, characteristics of developing countries; problems facing development planners, policy makers, resource managers; role of local, regional and international institutions, policies, civil society, biodiversity, and climate change; economic foundation of project development, design, financing, and implementation issues.
Prerequisites: ECON 607 or equivalent.

AGEC 634 Rural Financial Markets and Financial Planning
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Organization, structure, conduct, and regulation of lending institutions serving commercial agriculture and rural borrowers; financial statement analysis; cash management; investment planning; loan portfolio analysis; management of the lending function of lenders serving rural businesses.
Prerequisite: Graduate classification.

AGEC 635 Consumer Demand Analysis for Food and Agricultural Products
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Analytical and empirical treatments of consumer behavior; use of neoclassical theory and modern adaptations in consumer demand analysis; specification, estimation, interpretation and evaluation of models of consumer behavior with emphasis on food commodities.
Prerequisites: ECMT 676, ECON 629 and AGEC 661.

AGEC 636 Agribusiness Markets and Applied Welfare Analysis
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Theory and practice of consumer and firm behavior in markets; the effects of various policies on markets; welfare measurement applied to problems related to the farm economy; food and resource processing; resource allocations decisions.
Prerequisites: AGEC 635 and 661; ECMT 676; ECON 629 and ECON 630.

AGEC 637 Production Economics and Dynamic Optimization in Agricultural Economics
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Production under uncertainty and uncertainty with emphasis on agribusiness firm behavior; economic theory and analytical and numerical methods related to dynamic optimization problems.
Prerequisites: AGEC 661; ECMT 675; ECON 629 and ECON 630.
AGEC 638 Managerial Economics for Regulatory Science  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
Economic and business frameworks within which the regulations and standards governing the production of food operate; economic theories of the firm and fundamental calculations in finance as the foundation for cost/benefit analyses of existing and proposed regulations; applications to U.S. and global regulations and standards.  
AGEC 639/SCSC 635 Comparative Global Standards in Food Systems  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
Laws, regulations and standards governing the production, distribution, processing and marketing of food across regions of the world; international standard setting bodies and risk assessment committees; regulatory equivalency and harmonization; product approval procedures; cost/benefits of global standards and trade agreements.  
Cross Listing: SCSC 635/AGEC 639.  
AGEC 641 Operations Research Methods in Agricultural Economics  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
Theory and practice regarding the application of operations research tools to agricultural economics problem areas. Mainly concentrates on optimization approaches.  
Prerequisite: AGEC 622.  
AGEC 642 Dynamic Optimization in Agricultural and Applied Economics  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
Economics of problems of dynamic optimization, focusing on numerical and analytical methods; applications in a wide range of issues related to agricultural and applied economics are considered.  
Prerequisites: ECON 629 or approval of instructor.  
AGEC 643 Applied Simulation in Agricultural Economics  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
Design, construction, validation and use of Monte Carlo simulation models for risk analysis of economic systems; parameter estimation and simulation of multivariate probability distributions in econometric and behavioral models used for business and policy analysis under risk.  
Prerequisites: AGEC 622 and AGEC 661 or approval of instructor.  
AGEC 645  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
AGEC 652 International Agribusiness Trade Analysis  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
Traditional trade theory encompassing the concepts of comparative advantage, the Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson model, the gain from specialization and trade, partial equilibrium analysis of free trade, violation of the free trade model, welfare effects of trade, trade creation and diversion, introduction to growth and development theories, the relationship between trade and development and related concepts.  
Prerequisites: ECON 607 and MATH 142.  
AGEC 659 Ecological Economics  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
Study of the relationships between ecosystems and economic systems; understanding the effects of human economic endeavors on ecological systems and how the ecological benefits and costs of such activities can be quantified and internalized.  
Prerequisite: Graduate classification.  
Cross Listing: ESSM 671 and RENR 659.  
AGEC 661 Applied Econometric Methods in Agriculture  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
Application of econometric methods in a theoretical framework for the analysis of agricultural markets and farm firm behavior; emphasis on specifying and estimating agricultural production and demand functions and agricultural sector models; selected topics according to student needs.  
Prerequisite: ECMT 676.  
AGEC 661/SCSC 635 Comparative Global Standards in Food Systems  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
AGEC 670 Fundamentals in Agricultural Markets and Information Economics  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
Application of information economics theory for analysis of vertical and horizontal relationships between firms along the supply chain.  
Prerequisites: AGEC 636 and 661; ECMT 676; ECON 629 and ECON 630.  
AGEC 672 Fundamentals in Agricultural Markets and Information Economics  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
AGEC 673 Fundamentals in Resource and Environmental Economics  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
Economic theories and empirical regularities related to the use and management of the environment and natural resources; valuation techniques, externalities, and intertemporal resource management.  
Prerequisites: AGEC 635, AGEC 636, AGEC 637; ECON 629 and ECON 630.  
AGEC 674 Food and Agricultural Trade and Policy Analysis  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
Trade policy, farm policy, macroeconomic policy, resource policy and development policy; analysis of policy impacts outside perfect competition and free trade assumptions.  
Prerequisites: AGEC 614 and AGEC 652 or approval of instructor.  
AGEC 676 Frontiers in Markets and Information Economics  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
AGEC 681 Seminar  
Credit 1. 1 Lecture Hour.  
Objectives are to define research problems, develop research problem statements with objectives and hypothesis and specify relevant models to accomplish the objectives and develop the skills in written communication.  
AGEC 684 Professional Internship  
Credits 1 to 3. 1 to 3 Other Hours.  
Pre-professional experience within department guidelines conducted in the area of the student's field of interest.  
Prerequisite: Graduate classification.  
AGEC 685 Directed Studies  
Credits 1 to 4. 1 to 4 Other Hours.  
Directed individual study of a selected problem in the field of agricultural economics.
AGEC 689 Special Topics in...
Credits 1 to 4. 1 to 4 Lecture Hours.
Selected topics in an identified area of agricultural economics. May be repeated for credit.

AGEC 691 Research
Credits 1 to 23. 1 to 23 Other Hours.
Thesis or dissertation research.

AGEC 693 Professional Study
Credits 1 to 9. 1 to 9 Other Hours.
Professional paper undertaken as a requirement for the Master of Science Non-Thesis or as an elective for the Master of Agribusiness. May be taken more than once, but not to exceed 3 hours of credit towards a degree.

Prerequisite: Approval of instructor.

AGEC 695 Frontiers in Agribusiness and Managerial Economics
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Exploration of advanced topics in the field of agribusiness and managerial economics. May be taken two times for credit.

Prerequisite: Graduate classification.