

# The Role of Ph.D. Agribusiness Curriculum in Addressing Faculty Needs: My Experience from the University of Illinois

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By

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# Outline

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- Background
    - Brief Biography
    - Ph.D Curriculum
  - Teaching Needs
    - Flexibility of Ph.D Curriculum
  - Research Needs
    - Dissertation versus Paper Option
  - Obtaining Grants
  - Conclusion
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# Background

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- **Brief Biography**

- **Completed Ph.D in the Spring of 1998 from the University of Illinois.**
  - **Emphasis Areas: Agribusiness Management and Agricultural Finance.**
  - **Dissertation Title: “Assessing the Impact of Mandatory HACCP Systems on the Efficiency and Profitability of the U.S. Meat Processing and Packing Sectors.”**
  - **Started Work at North Dakota State University (NDSU) in October of 1998 with a 50/50 research and teaching appointment.**
  - **Teaching at NDSU: Teach an undergraduate Agribusiness Finance Course, co-teach a graduate Agribusiness Finance Course, and co-teach two Capstone Economics of Food Safety Courses.**
  - **Research Areas at NDSU: Food Safety Cost-Benefit and Efficiency Analysis, food and crop quality insurance, and other risk management issues**
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# Background

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- **Ph.D Curriculum Completed**
    - **Completed 18 Units (1 unit is equivalent to 4 credit hours. Only 16 units were required) of coursework and 8 units of research.**
    - **Core Courses (10 units): Advanced Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Mathematical Programming, Statistics, Econometrics, Risk and Information, Two Agribusiness Management Courses, and two Agricultural Finance Courses.**
    - **Electives (8 Units): Financial Institution Management and Investment Management (College of Business), Strategic Marketing and Decision Making in Agribusiness (Agribusiness Courses), Two Applied Econometric Courses, Production Economics, and other Independent Studies and Seminars.**
    - **An Agribusiness Person is defined as someone who completes a major in Agribusiness Management and one other field (Agricultural Finance, Marketing, etc.)**
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# Teaching Needs

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- **Comprehensive and Flexible Program at the University of Illinois.**
    - Electives can be designed to suite specific dissertation research area of interest.
  - **Mandatory two weeks teaching workshop for TAs.**
    - To equip graduates with Problem Based Learning (PBL) skills and the use of examples.
  - **Very organized mentors (faculty) who provided me excellent teaching styles to mimic.**
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# Research Needs

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- **Dissertation versus Paper Option**
    - It is my bias that the dissertation option does very little to prepare Ph.D graduates to meet the rigorous publishing skills.
    - I will particularly recommend the three paper option and suggest that at least two of the papers be accepted for publication before students are allowed to defend their research work.
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# Obtaining Grants

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- **Obtaining Grants**

- **Major void area in my training.**
  - **Students should be encouraged to attend regional meeting where valuable research need areas are discussed.**
  - **Students and advisor should submit Ph.D research proposal for funding (this maybe particularly appealing to students who wish to have Post Doctoral experience).**
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# Conclusion

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- **Agribusiness is an evolving discipline that embraces new issues in value added to agriculture like food safety and crop quality insurance that are not addressed in the Business Curriculum.**
  - **It maybe be misleading to confined the Agribusiness discipline into a box that will quickly be outdated in the immediate future because of the evolving nature of this discipline.**
  - **My Agribusiness training has been instrumental to my career as a faculty.**
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