

Agriculture Practicum Pick 10

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Introduction/Need for Idea

Historically beginning teacher content knowledge, classroom management, student motivation and curriculum development remained atop the list of professional development needs of beginning secondary school agriculture teachers (Duncan, Ricketts, Peake, & Uessler, 2006; Myers & Dyer, 2004; Joerger, 2002; Rice & Kitchel, 2016; Shulman, 1986). Due to the complexity of secondary school agriculture programs (Duncan et al., 2006), it became apparent during the development of the teacher education program at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College that additional content should be provided to include topics not currently addressed in many teacher preparation programs due to the limited credit hours and prescriptive state requirements in the categories of curriculum, pedagogy, and early field-experience courses. Based on the literature and in-service teacher (advisory) feedback, the need for additional content evolved into the development of an agriculture practicum course that has become a highlight of the degree program. This course approaches school-based agricultural education through a meaningful real-life experiential learning lens that is scaffolded by current in-service teachers.

How It Works

The class was developed based upon the experiences and suggestions of in-service secondary school agriculture teachers. Initial development and review of content was done by program faculty. The list of desired content proved to be too much to cover in a 15-week course. Following the initial brainstorming phase, the list was revised and divided into individual constructs. The following constructs emerged: facilities and equipment, recordkeeping, CDE preparation, managing livestock programs, educational technology, professional associations, working with administration, edTPA preparation, experiential FFA opportunities, and school visits. In addition, students were required to “Pick 10.” The “Pick 10” assignment allowed students to experience the extra events that define agricultural education. Students were provided a list of 20-plus experiential opportunities from which to select the ten most relevant events for them to participate in to meet their educational and professional development needs. Following their participation, students reflected upon their experience utilizing a reflection journal prompt.

Results to Date/Implications

This course has proven successful in the areas of increased preservice teacher content knowledge, classroom management, and school-based agriculture concepts (FFA and SAE advisement/components). The course has also been popular among preservice teachers as students state they appreciated the experiential opportunities and relevance to their future careers in an applied fashion. Figure 1 represents fall 2019 “Pick 10” opportunities and example reflection journal prompts.

Figure 1

Fall 2019 Course Summary

Pick 10

The extra events are what helps to define an Ag program. The same is planned for this course! We must get out of the walls of the classroom to experience agriculture education. We also understand your schedules may not allow you to attend all the listed events below. From the list of events, you must select a minimum of 10 to participate in this semester. Following each event, you must complete a reflection paper on your experience. Additional details of paper will be discussed in class.

1. August 21- Ms. Cook virtual visit
2. August 24- Ms. Gibbs virtual visit
3. August 21-22- [redacted] Farm Livestock Show
4. August 26- Ms. Pope and Camp John Hope virtual visit and leadership activities
5. August 31- Ms. Harrison virtual visit
6. September 7- Mr. Anderson virtual visit
7. September 9- Ms. Steinkamp virtual visit
8. September 14- Ms. Golden virtual visit
9. September 17- Teach Ag Day events
10. September 18- Assist South Region Office with FFA Creed Judging
11. September 21- Mr. Beacham visit
12. September 22- Assist South Region Office with FFA Quiz]
13. September 23- Assist South Region Office with FFA Quiz Finals
14. September 28- Dr. Claxton visit
15. September 29- Assist South Region Office with FFA Creed Finals
16. October 1- Assist South Region Office with Creed Finals or Employability Skills LDE
17. October 13- FFA Day at the Fair events
18. October 14- Ms. Tomlinson virtual visit
19. October 19- Mr. Johnson virtual visit
20. October 26- Mr. Drew virtual visit
21. October 27- Assist South Region Office with South Region Ag Comm or Employability Skills LDE
22. October 28- Participate in the National FFA Convention online
23. November 2- South Region YF Caucus
24. November 12 and 13- Assist South Region Office with Extemp. Speaking
25. Private pesticide applicators license
26. Pre-approved Ag Education based event by Mrs. McHugh

Additional opportunities will be posted throughout the semester

AGED 3390 Experiential Learning "Pick 10" Reflection

Pick 10 Event #: _____

Name:

Directions- After participating in a Pick 10 Event complete the following reflection. Be sure to answer questions completely and practice good grammar and writing quality. See scoring rubric for details on development and mechanics scoring. When finished, submit in Georgia View in assigned Drop Box.

Event Summary

Title of Event (guest speaker, event attended, etc.):

Date of Event:

Location:

What occurred at the event? What role did you have in event?

Personal Component

Provide your personal perspective of this event. Like it or not? Your thoughts? Changes you would make?

Total Program

Identify the Total Program component this event related to (can be multiple parts if needed) and explain.

Future Application

What will you take away from this event into your future? Lasting impact? Tip or trick you want to remember?

Question: What did you like most about this course?
School visits were helpful and informational- a great learning experience
Great opportunities
The Pick 10 Events
Pick 10s are great experience. Field trips are fun!
The preparedness I feel as a future educator!

Future Plans

The Agricultural Practicum Course Pick 10 assignment will remain an experiential learning component of our senior agriculture education fall coursework. Student feedback and faculty review indicated the importance of these opportunities. Anecdotally, it is believed that preservice teachers having been guided through this experiential learning and having the opportunity to engage where they believe they need more professional development promotes an environment and mindset that promotes them to seek specific professional development in areas of weakness when an in-service teacher. Therefore, future plans are to research this effectiveness and perceptions of the success in developing a felt need for target professional development that is identified by the teachers. In the future, this course will continue to evolve to provide a greater variety of experiences and diversity. A future goal is to create a Tour de Georgia Agriculture Education and take students on a trip across our state to see the various agriculture programs.

Costs/Resources Needed

During the fall 2020 COVID semester, the cost of completing the Pick 10 events has been low. Teachers have completed program visits virtually utilizing Zoom. In a traditional semester, costs would include school activity bus mileage and possible driver. Recommendation is to begin planning for the semester in early August to get on agriculture teacher's busy fall calendar.

References

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