

**Letting The Old Dog's Teach The Pups Their Tried-And-True Tricks**

Emily A. Sewell  
Oklahoma State University  
458 Agriculture Hall  
Stillwater, OK 74078  
(918) 606-4310  
easewel@okstate.edu

Tyler J. Price  
Oklahoma State University  
459 Agriculture Hall  
Stillwater, OK 74078  
(405) 714-8289  
tyler.price@okstate.edu

Emily O. Manuel  
Oklahoma State University  
458 Agriculture Hall  
Stillwater, OK 74078  
(337) 526-8234  
emily.manuel@okstate.edu

Ryan W. Best  
Oklahoma State University  
459 Agriculture Hall  
Stillwater, OK 74078  
(254) 459-9221  
ryan.best@okstate.edu

Kristopher R. L. Rankin III  
Oklahoma State University  
458 Agriculture Hall  
Stillwater, OK 74078  
(573) 808-1855  
kris.rankin@okstate.edu

Robert Terry Jr.  
Oklahoma State University  
448 Agriculture Hall  
Stillwater, OK 74078  
(405) 744-8036  
rob.terry@okstate.edu

### Introduction/Need for Idea

Increased opportunities to create mentoring experiences and build self-efficacy among SBAE teachers are needed within our discipline (Lamm et al., 2017; McKim & Velez, 2015). The ongoing teacher shortage has been challenging for decades (Eck & Edwards, 2019), yet effective characteristics and longevity in the profession appear to be promising (Eck et al., 2021). Specifically, McKim and Velez (2015) recommend vicarious and social persuasion experiences to build self-efficacy among early career teachers. These experiences facilitate opportunities for early career teachers to observe effective teachers in action and be positively mentored by experienced teachers (McKim & Velez, 2015). Vicarious experiences allow for observers to obtain skills through modeling behavior (Bandura, 1977). These experiences increase career commitment by creating confidence that challenges can be overcome. In addition to observing effectiveness, preservice teachers need positive reinforcement provided through social persuasion experiences.

Social persuasion can be something as simple as hearing “*you can do this*” before you engage in a given task. Developing a mentor system in which early career agriculture teachers are paired with more experienced teachers may increase the amount of positive social persuasion received by early career teachers. (Bandura, 1977, as cited in McKim & Velez, 2015, p. 136).

Fortunately, creating experiences for teachers to interact and observe each other doubles as an opportunity to create mentoring relationships. Many factors influence the success of a mentoring relationship such as personality, community and access, and trust and communication (Jones et al., 2014). Consequently, these relationships can be developed in either a structured format or develop organically. Lamm et al. (2017) found relationship history influenced both the structure and outcome of mentoring relationships. She recommended participants establish mentoring relationships with individuals with whom they do not have previous connections to expand their network with new relationships. Nevertheless, “long-standing SBAE teachers need to mentor aspiring and early-career SBAE teachers on the benefits of their chosen career, providing an enhanced outlook on SBAE as a career choice instead of a short-term job” (Eck et al., 2021, p. 304). These findings and recommendations confirm the need to develop opportunities that not only build self-efficacy among preservice teachers, but also provide a diverse network for building relationships among all SBAE teachers.

### How it Works

During the fall of 2021, graduate students at Oklahoma State University sought to facilitate monthly sessions aimed at preservice SBAE teachers that would include opportunities to learn from and interact with in-service SBAE teachers throughout the 2021-2022 academic year. In-service SBAE teachers were identified based on their proximity to Oklahoma State University, previous interaction with pre-service teachers, and differences in teaching styles and content areas taught. Selected teachers were asked to present a lesson of their choice in a format blending classroom teaching and professional development. The format allowed for different teaching styles while providing content knowledge and resources. Tuesdays were chosen for consistency; however, times varied to meet students’ and teachers’ class schedules. During the monthly sessions, preservice teachers interacted with in-service teachers, expanded their content knowledge, obtained resources, and provided feedback for future sessions. In addition to in person attendance, sessions were streamed and recorded via Zoom using a Swivl robot and iPad for those unable to attend. Recordings were uploaded to a OneDrive folder and shared with undergraduate and graduate students.

**Results to Date/Implications**

Two sessions, held in September and October, were successfully developed, and implemented. The 2 sessions included 4 in-service SBAE teachers and 26 preservice SBAE teachers on the campus of Oklahoma State University. In total, 3 undergraduate freshman, 3 undergraduate sophomores, 9 undergraduate juniors, 10 undergraduate seniors, and 1 graduate student attended the two sessions. Data were collected from participants regarding what they enjoyed, what they gained, and what they hoped to see in the future. Responses indicated students enjoyed the enthusiasm, uniqueness, and content shared by the presenters as well as gained confidence to pursue educational topics about which they are passionate (see table 1). Results support the recommendation of McKim and Velez (2015) that experiences with in-service teachers can in turn build self-efficacy of preservice teachers.

*Table 1: Responses from Preservice SBAE Teachers on In-service SBAE Teacher Presentations*

ENJOYED	GAINED
“It was a great opportunity to see different teaching styles”	“I gained knowledge on how to go about getting curriculum even if I don’t know anything about the topic”
“The energy from the teacher, excited to share info”	“Information on how to teach bees to students and how to get started”
“I really enjoyed him sharing a real lesson that he teaches his students”	“Use your resources and reach out to people”
“I really enjoyed hearing the difference in her experiences at multi-teacher and single teacher shop programs”	“Find what you’re passionate about and run with it”

**Future Plans**

We plan to continue implementing *Teach Ag Tuesday* throughout the remainder of the school year. Feedback gathered from the September and October sessions are currently being analyzed and plans are being made using the feedback for January and February sessions. The continual evolution of this innovative and inaugural program will yield a format that is practical for future use. Additionally, we intend to conduct an evaluation of the impact of the series on preservice SBAE teachers’ self-efficacy.

**Resources**

All preservice SBAE teachers were encouraged to attend at no cost. Swivl products, Zoom subscriptions, and cloud storage were provided by the department to livestream and record sessions. Presenters were not compensated nor were their expenses reimbursed, but they were provided apparel from the department as a token of appreciation. The locations for each session were reserved through university scheduling. Snacks and refreshments provided were donated from Chick-fil-a and the Collegiate FFA Chapter. Anticipated future resources will include supplies needed for livestock management and career development event training. Organizers will continue to seek avenues to provide a low-cost experience that is free for participants.

## References

- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191-215. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191>
- Eck, C. J., & Edwards, M. C. (2018). Teacher shortage in school-based, agricultural education (SBAE): A historical review. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 60(4), 223–239. <https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2019.04223>
- Eck, C. J., Robinson, J. S., Cole, K. L., Terry Jr, R., Ramsey, J. W. (2021). Identifying the characteristics of effective school-based agricultural education teachers: A national census study. *Journal of Agricultural Education*. 62(3), 292-309. <https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2021.03292>
- Jones, C. K., Kelsey, K. D., & Brown, N. R. (2014). Climbing the steps toward a successful cooperating teacher/student teacher mentoring relationship. *Journal of Agricultural Education*. 55(2), 33-47. <https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2014.02033>
- Lamm, K. W., Sapp, R., Lamm, A. J. (2017). The mentoring experience: leadership development program perspectives. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 58(2), 20-34. <https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2017.02020>
- McKim, A. J., & Velez, J. J. (2015). Exploring the relationship between self-efficacy and career commitment among early career agriculture teachers. *Journal of Agricultural Education*. 56(1), 127-140. <https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2015.01127>