

Institutional Representation at AAAE Conferences

Christopher M. Estep
University of Arkansas
1120 W. Maple
Fayetteville, AR 72701
479-575-2037
estep@uark.edu

Sarah F. James
University of Arkansas
1120 W. Maple
Fayetteville, AR 72701
479-575-2035
sfjames@uark.edu

Lauren L. Cline
Oklahoma State University
444 Agricultural Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078
405-744-8138
lauren.l.cline@okstate.edu

Will Doss
University of Arkansas
1120 W. Maple
Fayetteville, AR 72701
479-575-2035
wd009@uark.edu

Donald M. Johnson
University of Arkansas
1120 W. Maple
Fayetteville, AR 72701
479-575-2035
dmjohnso@uark.edu

Institutional Representation at AAAE Conferences

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) have become important topics in agricultural education (Estep et al., 2022). In the context of DEI, diversity represents the different types of identities present in a group or organization (Abernethy et al., 2020). While much of the DEI conversation in our profession has centered around race/ethnicity, culture, and gender identity, little has focused on the diversity of higher education institutions involved in the American Association for Agricultural Education (AAAE). Estep et al. (2022) identified a need for AAAE to increase diversity by broadening scholarly opportunities for institutions that may not identify research as their top priority. To identify the barriers for institutional representation at AAAE research conferences, the current state of institutional representation must be determined. Guiding this study was the conceptual framework provided by the 2017-2020 AAAE strategic plan goal one, to “build a more inclusive culture within the society” (AAAE, 2017, p. 1).

The purpose of this study was to describe the diversity of institutions represented at regional and national AAAE research conferences. The study was guided by the following objectives: (a) determine the representation of universities on research manuscripts at regional and national AAAE conferences; and (b) determine the representation of various groups on research manuscripts at regional and national AAAE conferences.

Methods

For this descriptive study, we examined all national and regional AAAE research paper proceedings from 2012-2022. Proceedings were retrieved from the AAAE website; however, the 2014 and 2015 Southern Region paper proceedings were not available online. We attempted to retrieve them from the corresponding research chairs listed online, but the documents were unattainable. All manuscripts ($N = 1,458$) were reviewed, and a count was made of each university or entity’s representation on each paper. If a single university or entity had multiple authors on a manuscript, the university or entity was only counted as being represented once. If multiple universities or entities were represented on a manuscript, each university or entity was counted once. For objective one, frequencies were calculated for each university represented at the national and each regional conference. To meet objective two, categories were created based on authors’ affiliations, which consisted of: 1862 Land-Grants, Non-Land-Grants, 1890 Land-Grants, community colleges, K-12 education, FFA, industry/NGOs, federal/state governments, extension/experiment stations, and international institutions. Frequencies were calculated for representation of each group at the national and each regional conference.

Results

The results for objective one showed that out of 651 research papers in the proceedings for the National AAAE Research Conference, the following universities were most represented: Oklahoma State University ($f = 85$), Texas Tech University ($f = 81$), University of Florida ($f = 79$), Louisiana State University ($f = 46$), and Iowa State University ($f = 45$). Among all papers ($n = 246$) in the North-Central Region proceedings, the universities with the most representation were: Iowa State University ($f = 44$), The Ohio State University ($f = 37$), University of Missouri ($f = 33$), Pennsylvania State University ($f = 28$), Kansas State University ($f = 21$) and Purdue University ($f = 20$). Out of the 301 papers in the Southern Region proceedings, the following universities had the most representation: University of Florida ($f = 77$), Oklahoma State University ($f = 49$), Louisiana State University ($f = 36$), University of Georgia ($f = 32$), and Texas A&M University ($f = 26$). Lastly, the Western Region proceedings had 260 papers, and the

most represented universities were: Texas Tech University ($f = 71$), Oklahoma State University ($f = 44$), Oregon State University ($f = 28$), Texas A&M University ($f = 26$), and University of Idaho ($f = 26$).

Objective two was to determine the representation of various groups at AAAE conferences. Results revealed that 1862 Land-Grant institutions had the most representation across all conferences ($f = 1,683$). Non-Land-Grant institutions were represented on 340 papers across all conferences, while 1890 Land-Grants were represented on 22 papers. Among all conferences, the following groups were also represented: community colleges ($f = 10$), K-12 education ($f = 76$), FFA ($f = 9$), Industry/NGO ($f = 10$), government ($f = 8$), extension/experiment stations ($f = 11$), and international institutions ($f = 5$). Table 1 provides a breakdown of various groups' representation across each region and at the national conference.

Table 1

Frequency of Various Groups' Representation at National and Regional AAAE Conferences

Group	Frequency			
	North-Central	Southern	Western	National
1862 Land-Grant	319	352	237	775
Non-Land-Grant	24	39	114	163
1890 Land-Grant	2	8	0	12
Community College	1	2	2	5
K-12	11	11	13	41
FFA	0	5	1	3
Industry/NGO	1	0	7	2
Government	1	1	1	5
Extension/Experiment Stations	3	3	1	4
International Institutions	3	0	1	1

Conclusions/Implications/Recommendations

Results of objective one indicated a small group of universities compromised a large portion of manuscripts presented at AAAE conferences. At the national level, five universities were represented on just over half of conference papers, while a small group of universities were represented on between 66% to 75% of regional conference papers, with two universities in the top five for two regions. Results of objective two suggested most (77.4%) AAAE conference papers were from 1862 Land-Grants; non-Land-Grants were represented on 15.6% of conference papers and 1890 Land-Grants were represented on only 1% of papers. Combined, all other groups were represented on almost 6% of AAAE conference papers. No 1994 Land-Grant institutions were represented at any AAAE conferences. Diversity of institutions involved in AAAE conferences is lacking. Intentional efforts from the AAAE Leadership Team and members should be made to recruit more diverse institutions with related programs to participate. Additionally, AAAE conference paper submission requirements and procedures should be analyzed to identify any systemic barriers that may impact the inclusion of diverse institutions at our conferences.

References

- AAAE. (2017). *American Association for Agricultural Education 2017-2020 strategic plan*.
<http://aaaeonline.org/resources/Documents/National/AAAE2017-2020StrategicPlan.pdf>
- Abernethy, E. F., Arismendi, I., Boegehold, A. G., Colon-Gaud, C., Cover, M. R., Larson, E. I., Moody, E. K., Penaluna, B. E., Shogren, A. J., Webster, A. J., & Woller-Skar, M. M. (2020). Diverse, equitable, and inclusive scientific societies: Progress and opportunities in the Society of Freshwater Science. *Freshwater Science*, 39(3), 363-376.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/709129>
- Estep, C. M., Cline, L. L., & Rodriguez, M. T. (2022). Members' perceptions regarding diversity and inclusion within the American Association for Agricultural Education. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 63(2), 186-202.
<https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2022.02182>