



Click, Learn, Complete?

Examining who persists in online agricultural literacy training

Dr. Michelle S. Burrows, Madison J. Law, Dr. Rose Judd-Murray, Dr. Brennan L. Bean, Kenna Kesler

Utah State University

Module 1: Introduction & Background

- Agricultural literacy training helps educators of all types bring **accurate, relevant agricultural content** into their classrooms.
- The Agricultural Literacy Certification course is online, **self-paced, and low-cost** (\$25 as of 2025).
- Access alone doesn't guarantee completion — **engagement, motivation, and participation** patterns shape outcomes (Kizilcec et al., 2013; Xie et al., 2006).

This study asks: *Who completes the course, how long does it take, and does completion time affect learning?* We grouped participants into professional and student categories to spot shared patterns in how they engaged with the course.

Module 3: Results

Fastest vs. slowest groups

13 vs 74 days

College students vs.
Extension & 4-H ($p = .025$)

Learning gain, 2024 vs. 2025

1.42 → 2.06

+0.64, statistically significant
improvement ($p = .004$)

Time spent in course vs. learning gain



No significant correlation found
($p = .41$)

Completion rate, 2024 vs 2025

39.3% vs 39.9%

Stable across both years

Group most likely to complete course

Extension & 4-H

Least likely: Secondary teachers,
Volunteers

⚠ Stalled before Module 1

1 in 6 enrollees

Never reported their profession or
moved beyond login ($n = 61$ of 358)

Module 2: Conceptual Framework



Self-Regulated Learning Theory (Zimmerman, 2002) and **Community of Inquiry** (Garrison et al., 2000) frame this study's central question: does persistence in an online course come from the learner, the course design, or both? Together, these lenses treat completion as a joint outcome of individual motivation and environmental support.

Module 4: Conclusions & Implications



Prioritize learning quality over rapid completion — faster completion didn't produce stronger learning gains ($p = .41$), so course design should optimize for depth of engagement, not speed.



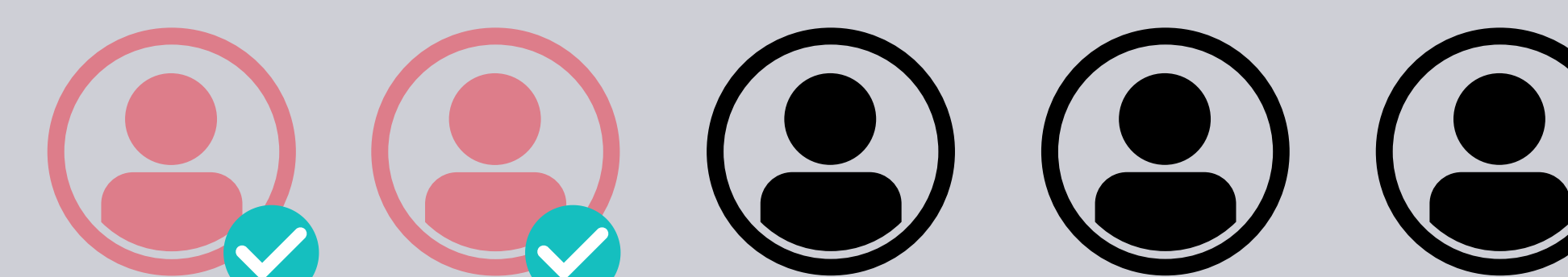
Course operators should target supports for low-completing groups — such as secondary teachers and volunteers, who may need role-specific examples and reminders to sustain self-regulation and motivation throughout the course.



Reduce early-course barriers to ensure strong and deliberate initial engagement — nearly 1 in 6 enrollees stalled before finishing Module 1 and future research should examine if this is due to the course environment itself (Community of Inquiry) and not learner motivation.



Only 2 in 5 who started the course finished it



↑+0.64 avg. learning gain for those who finished ($p = .004$)



References

