

Agricultural Education, Communications, and Technology
AEED BS Assessment Report, 2024-25

Contact Name:

George Wardlow, Professor and Head
(479) 575-2035
wardlow@uark.edu

Department Mission:

AECT prepares people with the technical expertise in agricultural science and technology-related disciplines with the human science skills necessary to provide transformational leadership in the agricultural industry and within their local communities. Specifically, we prepare educators for both formal and non-formal teaching roles in agriculture, communications specialists for diverse agriculturally related disciplines, agricultural technology managers, and rural community leaders.

Program Goals:

To be the premier agricultural education, communication, and technology (AECT) program in Arkansas, and among the top non-doctoral degree producing programs in the US, to provide concentrations and specializations that are responsive to the needs of both students and industry stakeholders, and to prepare students for success in the global marketplace.

Key Expected Outcomes for Students, 2024-25:

Assessment efforts in 2024-25 focused on student competencies related to **problem solving and critical thinking** in the ACOM/AGLE/ASTM/EXED 4750V Internship course for non-teacher education students as well as in the AGED 475V Internship course for teacher education students.

Student Learning Outcome 1. Students should be able to define a problem, examine alternative solutions, and select the best solution for solving the problem.

Assessment Measure 1

Complete a supervised professional internship involving work responsibilities that include an independent project or projects for which students are primarily responsible.

Acceptable and Ideal Targets

- Acceptable: 70% of students will successfully identify a problem, examine alternate solutions, and select the best solution toward solving the problem (score 70% on the internship supervisor's rubric—Appendix A).
- Ideal: 100% of students will successfully identify a problem, examine alternate solutions, and select the best solution toward solving the problem (score 70% or better on the supervisor's rubric).

Key Personnel

- Jill Rucker, associate professor; Chris Estepp, associate professor; Will Doss, assistant professor

Summary of Findings

Ninety-three percent of the student groups enrolled in the non-teacher education internship courses scored higher than 70 (out of 100) on their supervisors' evaluations, with an average score among 14 student interns of 90.39. In comparison to similar data from 2022-23, this represented a decrease from 95.5. Though all but one of the evaluations were positive and above the stated assessment goals, item scores were lowest (sometimes in the 7s and 8s out of 10) in relation to the students' technical skills and critical thinking abilities. These observations are in line with (and are more prominent than) comments and scores related to critical thinking and initiative scores in previous years' assessments of interns. The group's overall average scores were pulled down significantly by scores received by a single student who, according to their supervisors was not a strong fit for their internship, receiving a score of 65.5.

Seven pre-service school-based education students were placed by the program in 2024-25. Their average final supervisor's evaluation score was 94.71, and all were well above the assessment goal of 70. Problematic areas (with multiple single-item scores below 90, ranging in this case from 5 to 8 out of 10) for the pre-service teachers were critical thinking, technical skill, and ability to meet deadlines.

Recommendations (not required for indirect measures)

It is evident now with both a baseline evaluation in 2019-20 and two further evaluations in 2022-23 and 2024-25 that AECT undergraduate students are thriving in their internship roles but may be slipping slightly in their technical skills, critical thinking skills, and (for the pre-service teachers) ability to meet deadlines.

For AGED, ACOM, and AGLE students, pre-internship instruction in the ACOM/AGLE 39403 Professional Development course should continue to emphasize professionalism and awareness of technical skills and application of critical thinking skills. The same can be said for AGED students in the AGED 42303 Teachers as Professionals course as well as the block courses. Additionally, experiential learning activities in all AGED, AGLE, ASTM, and ACOM courses before the required internship should continue to be emphasized and strengthened.

Action Plans for Outcome 1: Continue to emphasize competencies related to professionalism, problem solving, and critical thinking in the ACOM/AGLE/ASTM/EXED/AGED 4750V Internship courses as well as in the ACOM/AGLE 39403 Professional Development course and the AGED 42303 Teachers as Professionals course. Time management and ability to meet deadlines should also become a more prominent topic in these courses.

Supporting Attachments

- Appendix A: Internship supervisors' rubric for evaluation of AGED 475V Internship students
- Appendix B: Internship supervisor's rubric for evaluation of ACOM/AGLE/EXED/ASTM Internship students

Appendix A
Example of internship supervisors' rubrics for evaluation of AGED 475V Internship students

Performance Factors	Outstanding 9-10	Very Good 7-8	Good 5-6	Fair 3-4	Poor 0-2	Score
1. Quality of work	Student's work exceeded expectations and mimics that of a permanent employee	Student's work was of high quality and with more training the student will be a successful professional	Student's work was of average quality and prospect for future employment in the field are good	Student's work was of below average quality; student needs further development before entering the field	Student's quality of work was unacceptable; student's potential for success in the field is not strong	
2. Cooperative spirit	Student was an ultimate team player and cooperated willingly	Student cooperated enthusiastically in most situations but needed motivation to cooperate occasionally	Student cooperated well but required motivation to cooperate in several instances	Student required mentoring in order to learn to cooperate better	Student was uncooperative in many instances	
3. Contribution to the organization	Student's work was a significant asset to the organization	Student's work was helpful in most instances	Student's work was helpful in some instances	Student's work was not helpful in several instances	Student's work was a detriment to the organization	
4. Care/proper use of equipment/material	Student always treat used and maintained equipment properly	Student usually used and maintained equipment properly with a few exceptions	Student sometimes required extra training/mentoring in use and care of equipment	Student did not use and care for equipment properly in several instances	Student often did not use and care for equipment properly	
5. Response to supervision	Student always responded well to constructive criticism and maintained good relationships with supervisor(s)	Student usually responded well to constructive criticism and in most instances maintained good relationships with supervisor(s)	Student occasionally had difficulty accepting constructive criticism and sometimes struggled to maintain good relations with supervisor(s)	Student struggled to accept constructive criticism and had major difficulties maintaining good relations with supervisor(s)	Student failed to accept constructive criticism and had a poor relationship with supervisor(s)	
6. Punctuality	Student was early or on time for all appointments	Student was early or on time for almost all appointments	Student was late for appointments occasionally	Student was late for appointments on a regular basis	Student was almost always late for appointments	
7. Initiative	Student took initiative in every possible instance	Student showed strong initiative throughout the internship	Student showed initiative on some projects but needed guidance and motivation for others	Student showed initiative only occasionally and required guidance and motivation most of the time	Student showed a lack of initiative and required constant guidance and motivation	
8. Critical Thinking	Student consistently demonstrated creative thinking and problem solving	Student demonstrated creative thinking and problem solving in several instances	Student occasionally demonstrated creative thinking and problem solving	Student often needed assistance with thinking creatively and solving problems	Student struggled to think creatively and solve problems independently	
9. Technical skill	Student's technical skills were at a professional level	Student's technical skills were strong in almost all instances	Student's technical skills were adequate but still need some improvement	Students' technical skills need much improvement	Student lacked the technical skills to succeed in this position	
10. Ability to meet deadlines	Student met all work deadlines	Student met almost all work deadlines	Student missed deadlines occasionally	Student missed deadlines on a regular basis	Student missed almost all deadlines	

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Total _____/100

Comments from Supervisor:

Supervisor Signature: _____

Date: _____