What we do & Why it matters

Agricultural Education | aged.illinois.edu

The Agricultural Education Program prepares students for careers that help develop other people, organizations, and communities to solve real-world problems. Our graduates work with people in a variety of settings from high school classrooms to corporate-office training to workshop facilitation.

PRASANTA KALITA (professor and director)
Dr. Kalita leads the Agricultural Education Program in the College of ACES. He oversees the budget, hires faculty and staff, oversees promotion and recognition, recruits students, and manages educational programs within the unit.

JASON EMMERT (professor and associate director)
Dr. Emmert provides leadership and mentorship for faculty, staff, and students, and assists with development of additional financial support for the agricultural education program. He also helps the program provide support to local, regional, and statewide agricultural education-related organizations, which also offer opportunities to students in the program.

LISA BURGOON (adjunct lecturer)
Ms. Burgoon collaborates with faculty on research and activities in leadership development and teaching and learning strategies to create a positive and engaged learning environment for students. She also directs the Minor in Leadership Studies program.

JASMIN COLLINS (assistant professor)
Dr. Collins applies critical theories and methods to examine college student awareness and advocacy around contemporary social issues. Through her research, teaching, and service, she develops agricultural leaders who are self-and-socially aware, multiculturally competent, and unafraid to tackle big issues.

KARI KEATING (teaching assistant professor)
Dr. Keating grows students’ potential for professional leadership roles. Her teaching focuses on leadership communication, collaboration, and professional development in organizational contexts. She advises and mentors students and coordinates the internship program with industry partners.

DEBRA KORTE (teaching assistant professor)
Dr. Korte prepares teachers and leaders to address a variety of needs in classrooms and corporations. She structures in-class and outreach experiences for future educators to apply instructional techniques and develop self-efficacy, and supports professional development for current educators. She studies the psychological elements that impact teacher retention, attrition, and career choice, in addition to applied research for student-centered teaching and learning strategies.

GARY OCHS (instructor)
Mr. Ochs utilizes formal and nonformal education to help develop students’ identity in regards to agricultural education careers. He works with students to obtain teacher licenses and plan coursework, and coordinates outreach to new or potential students. Student rapport is the backbone of what he does, as he’s working with students inside and outside the classroom.

DAVID ROSCH (associate professor)
Dr. Rosch explores ways to help high school and college students develop leadership skills to help set them apart from their peers and distinguish themselves as future leaders in the job market. He helps students build their confidence in serving as a leader of their peers and motivates them to become more engaged in their communities.

ERICA THIEMAN (assistant professor)
Dr. Thieman identifies stress and resilience factors that impact teacher development, performance, and reflection. She studies the current U.S. supply and demand crisis to fill secondary education and agricultural education teacher positions. Thieman helps professionals in high-stress careers understand how their lifestyle choices affect their performance and recovery.