Undergraduate Program Review
Agribusiness
2003-2004

I. Strengths

1. Well-developed program for evaluating teaching effectiveness and good feedback system

2. Second largest program in Agronomy and Resource Sciences

3. Strong SCH record

II. Weaknesses

1. Declining SCH towards the end of the study period (especially for some classes in 2003-04) needs monitoring. It may be an indicator of the start of a declining trend

2. 50% loss in faculty FTE over the study period

3. Much of the required program courses, presumably, offered by only one faculty

III. Recommendations

1. Since several required courses for the program are offered through the College of Business Administration, a joint program coordinating committee from the Colleges of Agriculture and Business Administration should perhaps monitor the program

2. FTE strength should be enhanced as quickly as possible

3. Program should continue

IV. Dean’s and Department Chair’s Comments

1. "Department of Agribusiness" - Agribusiness is not a department but rather a program. The agribusiness program is located in the Department of Agronomy and Resource Sciences.
2. “50% loss in faculty” – I assume this refers to one faculty member (Gary McBryde) leaving the university. While technically accurate, using the phrase “50% loss” can give the impression of a major exodus of faculty when, in fact, only one faculty member left the program. This vacancy has been filled with Barry Dunn, a professor of Ranch Management. Ranch Management is not identical to Agribusiness but it is similar. Additionally, a search is underway to fill another position in Natural Resource Economics, another similar discipline. Both positions carry significant administrative responsibilities so teaching assignments are limited. Both positions are being filled with experienced personnel.

3. The shift in disciplinary emphasis, from traditional Agribusiness to Ranch Management and Natural Resource Economics, is in response to industry trends. Adapting to shifting industry needs is a positive program attribute which should be reflected in the program review.

4. The newly formed King Ranch Institute for Ranch Management is closely associated with the Agribusiness program. Formation of this new Institute is expected to significantly strengthen the Agribusiness program. The King Ranch Institute is well funded and has a new endowment of approximately $7.3 million (pledged plus received funds). This institute has received significant positive national attention.

5. The Natural Resource Economics position includes a ¼ FTE research appointment in the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute. This joint appointment brings an exciting new dimension (and new resources) to both programs.

One-Year Follow-Up

V. Accomplished/Resolved Recommendations

1. A faculty vacancy has been filled

2. External funding for the program has been increased through the King Ranch Institute endowed funds

3. Recruitment of more graduate students to the program has improved

VI. Pending/On-going Recommendations

1. Implementing of the program’s comprehensive examination policy

2. The use of TTVN in instruction

3. Recruiting international students