

impact

of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences



Society-Ready Graduates

Tri-University Distance Education Partnership

Issue

Arizona's three public universities are located in Phoenix, Tucson and Flagstaff, leaving rural areas of the state unserved for academic programs in agriculture unless students matriculate to the University of Arizona. Distance education allows students to complete a bachelor's degree without leaving their home towns.

What has been done?

Interactive television courses are offered in Yuma, Coolidge and on the University of Arizona campus as part of a collaboration between the UA College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Central Arizona College's Signal Peak campus near Coolidge, and Arizona Western College in Yuma,

using microwave television technology provided by Northern Arizona University. Specially equipped classrooms in all three locations enable students to interact with the teacher and each other simultaneously. Live class sessions are transmitted from Tucson to Yuma and Coolidge, and also from Yuma to Tucson. Students enroll at the community colleges for lower division coursework and then take the distance courses through NAU and the UA to complete their degrees.

Impact

In the year 2001, this cooperative inter-institutional arrangement enabled more than 70 students to take agricultural courses from the

University of Arizona without leaving their home towns. The program fulfills one of the Arizona Board of Regents priorities: to expand access to the university. These are nontraditional students, and in the case of those in Yuma, nearly all work full time. The program enabled the cooperating institutions to arrange their curriculum to include each other's courses and thus expand their programs without hiring extra faculty to teach duplicate courses on each campus. As a result of this program, Northern Arizona University has accepted several agricultural science courses from the University of Arizona as electives for their general education requirements.

Funding

University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Northern Arizona University
Arizona Western College
Central Arizona College

Contact

David E. Cox, associate dean and director
Academic Programs, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
The University of Arizona
PO Box 210036
Tucson, AZ 85721
Tel: (520) 621-3612, FAX (520) 621-8662
Email: dcox@ag.arizona.edu