



# West Virginia

## AG ED NEWS and VIEWS

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Harry N. Boone, Jr., Ph.D., Editor

### *Editorial: Variability - The Spice of Teaching*

Harry N. Boone Jr.

In 1971, Rosenshine and Furst published the results of their meta-analysis research of teacher performance criteria. They identified eleven characteristics/behaviors that had been shown to be related to student achievement. The behaviors included: clarity of the teacher's presentation, teachers use of variability during the lesson, teacher enthusiasm, degree the teacher was task-oriented and businesslike, relationship between the materials covered in the class and the class criterion score, teacher's use of student ideas, use of criticism and /or control behaviors, teacher's use of "structuring" comments, teacher's use of "higher cognitive level" questions, probing or encouraging students to elaborate on their answers, and the level of difficulty of the instruction. In the next few paragraphs I would like to focus on my views on one of the eleven characteristics, teacher variability.

As Rosenshine and Furst explored the research on teachers' use of variability during the lesson, they focused on four studies. Anthony's research (as cited in Rosenshine & Furst, 1971) concentrated on the variety of instructional materials, types of tests and types of teaching devices. Lea (as cited in Rosenshine & Furst, 1971) focused her investigation on the number of different activities and materials used during the lessons. Studies by Furst and Thompson and Bowers (as cited in Rosenshine & Furst, 1971) explored the level of classroom discourse and found that more cognitive variation resulted in higher scores. To summarize, Rosenshine and Furst (1971) found variability to be an array of instructional materials, instructional activities, types of tests, types of teaching devices, and higher order thinking skills.

On numerous occasions I have heard the comment that you need to use the overhead projector (instead of a PowerPoint presentation) to add variability to your presen-

tations. While the teaching devices are a part of teacher variability as defined by Rosenshine and Furst, it is a small and maybe insignificant portion. If a teacher is using the PowerPoint to support an illustrated lecture, s/he will continue to lecture with an overhead projector, the chalkboard, or without a visual component to the presentation. In my opinion, variability is using an array of teaching methods, incorporating an assortment of instructional materials, and challenging your students to develop and utilize higher order thinking skills.

In my "teaching methods" course I expose the preservice teachers to a variety of teaching methods. There are the basic methods such as discussions, illustrated lectures, problems solving approaches, problems solving alternatives, and demonstrations. We also discuss individualized instructional methods such as the jigsaw, scripted cooperative dyads, reciprocal peer tutoring, structured controversy, round robin/round table, team stand n share, numbered heads together, mind mapping, and nominal group discussion procedure. In addition we study laboratory teaching techniques, field trips, supervised study periods, independent study periods, resource persons, role playing, skill/information/assignment sheets, experiments, and student notebooks as instructional methods. We also discuss the role of supervised experience programs and the FFA as "teaching methods." Students leave the teaching methods course with a toolbox filled with instructional choices. I am sure that each of you received a similar assortment of tools.

Incorporate an assortment of instructional materials in your lessons. While you are incorporating a variety of instructional materials, you may want to consider techniques that will obtain and hold student interest. Include multi-sensory aids use as pictures, graphs, slides, electronic presenta-

tions, and novel objects in your teaching strategy. Include items that will have the students smell, touch, and taste. Use instructional materials that appeal to human interests such as newspaper clipping, journal articles, personal stories, and experiences of students. Don't be afraid to use novel items such as poems and quotes. By varying the instructional materials you will become a better teacher and your student achievement will improve.

The final component of variability is the development of higher order thinking among our students. I am sure that everyone has heard of Benjamin Bloom and his hierarchy of cognitive thinking. Include activities in your lessons that require students to grasp the meaning of the topic, apply the material in new situations, break the information into parts, put the parts together to form new concepts, and use the information to judge value. It's not enough to include these activities in your day-to-day lessons; you need to evaluate your students in a similar manner.

In the limited space I have available, I have only touched on the highlights of teacher variability. Using the teaching techniques I discussed earlier you could go a full month and not repeat a teaching method. I challenge you to explore other ways to incorporate variability into your day-today lessons. Search for new and varied instructional aids to use in the classroom. Demand that your students use higher order thinking skills. First you will become a better teacher, but more importantly, student achievement will be enhanced. You owe it to your students to be the best you can be.

Rosenshine, B., & Furst, N. (1971). Research on teacher performance criteria. In B. O. Smith (Ed.), *Research in Teacher Education: A Symposium* (pp. 37 - 55). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

# WVU's High School ACCESS Program

Do you have high school students that are interested in getting an early start on their college education? If so, you may want to share the following information about the West Virginia University ACCESS program with them. The program gives high school students the opportunity to take West Virginia University courses and earn college credit. Advanced high school students must meet the following criteria to be eligible for admission to the WVU ACCESS program:

- High School cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater on a 4.0 scale
- Completion of the junior year of high school
- Permission of parent or guardian
- Permission of high school principal, vice principal or guidance counselor

Credit for coursework taken will be recorded on an official WVU transcript. This college credit applies to a student's academic progress at WVU or may be transferred to other institutions of higher education. Whether these credits count toward high school graduation is a decision of the Board of Education of the county in which the student resides.

## ACCESS Program Courses

Freshman level courses are most appropriate for ACCESS students. These courses are designated with course ID numbers between 100 and 199. A listing of recommended courses has been compiled although other courses may be considered ([http://www.arc.wvu.edu/AdmissionServices/access\\_recommended.html](http://www.arc.wvu.edu/AdmissionServices/access_recommended.html)). These courses have been identified by WVU faculty as appropriate options for advanced high school seniors who have met the pre-requisites.

Math, Chemistry and Foreign Languages have placement exams that students may need to take to assess their preparation. (ACT/SAT scores may be used for placement in Math courses.) Check with the ACCESS academic advisor for information on these tests. Write "ACCESS student" in the subject line of your email.

The complete WVU course schedule for the upcoming semester (<http://www.arc.wvu.edu/courses/>) is posted on the Internet where you can search for courses by academic discipline or check for enrollment capacity. Be sure to download the WVU undergraduate course catalog (<http://coursecatalog.wvu.edu/>) to review course descriptions and pre-requisites. Although your academic advisor can assist you, reading the catalog will provide you with valuable information regarding the tremendous scope of course offerings at WVU.

## ACCESS Program Application

To Take WVU Courses On-Campus or On-Line, follow these steps to apply to the WVU ACCESS program.

**1 Download** an ACCESS WVU undergraduate application/registration form ([http://www.arc.wvu.edu/AdmissionServices/access\\_app.pdf](http://www.arc.wvu.edu/AdmissionServices/access_app.pdf)). The forms are stored in Adobe's portable document format (PDF). To view and print them, you will need an Adobe Reader. Please staple the two application/registration pages together before sending to the Admissions office.

**2 Complete** and obtain the required signatures. Be sure that your guidance counselor includes your cumulative HS GPA and indicates the scale (4.0 or other). Refer to the list of recommended courses and the WVU on-line course schedule.

**3 Send** the application/registration form with a check for \$25 payable to **West Virginia University** to cover the application fee to.

ACCESS Program  
Admissions and Records  
PO Box 6009  
West Virginia University  
Morgantown, WV 26506-6009

**4 Once you are registered** for your course, you will be billed for undergraduate tuition and fees.

**5 Attend** your class(es) and enjoy all that WVU has to offer.

## Taking Courses

Many high school students take WVU courses during the regular terms.

**On-Campus** - Whether on WVU's Downtown or Evansdale campus, these courses will be filled predominantly with traditional age college students. These classes will give you the realistic experience of a college classroom environment, expectations, and discussions. You must be granted 'College Release' from your high school to attend WVU classes during the public school day.

**On-Line** - Self-motivated ACCESS students are welcome to try web-based courses. Reliable Internet access and basic email capabilities are essential. Review the list of on-line courses.

**After School** - With high school usually dismissed by 3 PM, late afternoon classes are also an option.

**In the Summer** - You may wish to consider a summer University experience. A semester long course is condensed into only six weeks. These courses usually meet for an hour and a half each day. **Note:** College release from the high school is not needed in the summer but guidance counselor permission is still required.

**In the High School Setting** - WVU offers a very limited number of courses in a few high schools. Check with your guidance counselor to learn if this option is available at your school. Special admission and registration procedures for the group of students enrolling in this course will be arranged by high school and WVU personnel.

## Academic Advisor

What college classes are best suited for high school students? Academic advising is provided to accommodate the unique needs of high school students. The High School ACCESS academic advisor is Gregory Farris. You may make an advising appointment by sending an e-mail message to [Gregory.Farris@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Gregory.Farris@mail.wvu.edu), or you can phone 304-293-5805 ext 32325. **Be sure to write "ACCESS student" in the subject line of your email.** Patrick will help you select WVU courses that will meet your academic goals.

## ACCESS Program FAQs

**What is ACCESS?** The WVU ACCESS program offers academically ad-

(Continued on page 3)

# ***Global Food and Agricultural Industry (AGEE 101)***

## ***Offered as a Web Based Course***

Agricultural and Extension Education will offer AGEE 101, "Global Food and Agricultural Industry" as a web based course for the Spring 2007 semester. The course would be an ideal selection for a student interested in the WVU ACCESS program. In addition to providing an overview of global agriculture, the course will satisfy WVU's General Education Curriculum (GEC) objective 4 (Issues of Contemporary Society) or objective 9 (Non-Western Culture).

The course is designed to examine the history and current developments, structures, functions, issues, concerns, and importance of the international food and agricultural industry and evaluate their impacts on American agriculture and society. Each week the students explore a different topic as it relates to agriculture. Topics include:

- The History of Agriculture - United States and the World
- The Future of Agriculture - World Population Growth
- Agriculture and the World - World food and fiber production
- Farming the Oceans - Fisheries/Aquaculture
- Agriculture's Most Limiting Resource - Water
- Preserving the Primary Growth Medium - Soil Conservation/Reclamation
- The Role of Forests in the Agricultural Industry
- The Environment and Agriculture - Global Warming/ Pollution/ Acid Rain/ Sustainable Agriculture
- Is Our Food Supply Safe?
- Threats to the Agriculture Industry - Animal Welfare/Animal Rights Issues/Waste Disposal
- Threats to the Agriculture Industry - Limited Resources/ Urban Expansion/ Petroleum Supply
- Threats to the Agriculture Industry - Natural Disasters
- Planning for the Future - Agricultural Research/ Biotechnology and Agriculture/ Genetic Engineering
- Planning for the Future - Agricultural Policies/ Subsidies

All reading assignments, weekly study guides, quizzes, and tests are administered through WVU's Web CT-VISTA. Reliable Internet access and basic email capabilities are essential. For additional information on the course you may contact Dr. Harry Boone at (304) 293-4832 ext. 4481 or email him at [hboone@wvu.edu](mailto:hboone@wvu.edu).

## ***Agriculture and Resource Economics Offers Two Web Based Courses***

The Agricultural and Resource Economics (ARE) program also will be offering web based courses during the spring 2007 semester that are available to students interested in the WVU ACCESS program. These courses are: ARE 110, Agribusiness Accounting; and ARE 150, Introductory Agricultural and Agribusiness Economics. Both courses are three credit hours and provide an excellent introduction to college courses in the Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry and Consumer Science. Each course is required for the Agribusiness Management major at WVU. However, students do not have to major in Agribusiness Management to benefit from these courses. ARE 110 is part of the requirements for minors in Agribusiness Management and Entrepreneurship. ARE 150

satisfies WVU's General Education Curriculum Objectives 4 or 6.

The course objectives for Agribusiness Accounting include: assisting students in understanding the purpose of accounting; understanding accounting concepts and interpretations of accounting statements; becoming proficient in the preparation of financial statements; using financial statements for decision making and problem solving; and designing an accounting system for use by an owner operator business. The instructor for ARE 110 is Dr. Doolarie Singh-Knights, a faculty member of the ARE program.

Introductory Agricultural and Agribusiness Economics will introduce the basic tools of economics and provide an

understanding of how they apply in "real world" situations of natural resource and environmental management. By the end of this class, students will be able to define and explain the basic microeconomic concepts by using verbal arguments and graphic tools. The instructor for ARE 150 is Serkan Catma, a PhD graduate student in the ARE program

As with AGEE 101, all course material, quizzes and exams are administered through WVU's Web CT-VISTA. Thus, reliable Internet access and email capabilities are essential to successful completion of ARE 110 or ARE 150. For more information about either course, please contact Alan Collins at (304) 293-4832 ext. 4473 or by email at [alan.collins@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:alan.collins@mail.wvu.edu).

## ***High School ACCESS Program (Continued)***

vanced high school students the opportunity to enroll in WVU courses and earn college credit. Many program participants get a substantial head start on their college career. The success of the student is the overriding concern of the University, the Board of Education, the high school administrators and the guidance counse-

lors who have coordinated their efforts to enable this success.

**Who can participate?** This program is for diligent, ambitious students. This opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school is appropriate for those who have excelled in high school. Since grades

earned in these courses taken at WVU become a part of the student's permanent WVU transcript, an ACCESS participant should demonstrate a serious commitment to learning. Visit Admission Requirements to view the WVU requirements. Boards of Education may impose additional selection criteria.

*(Continued on page 7)*

# 2006 West Virginia Career



Sweepstakes Winner -- Tyler Consolidated HS



Dairy Cattle -- Jefferson County HS



Agribusiness Management -- Wirt County HS



Dairy Products -- Taylor Tech Ctr.



Agricultural Mechanics -- Mineral Tech Ctr.



Entomology -- Roane County HS



Agronomy -- Tyler Consolidated HS



Equine -- Marion Tech Ctr.

# Career Development Events



Floriculture -- Clay County HS



Nursery Landscape-- Hampshire HS



Forestry-- Tyler Consolidated HS



Plant Pathology -- Musselman HS



Livestock -- Hampshire HS



Poultry -- Pendleton County HS



Meats -- Clay County HS



7 & 8 Agriscience -- Ravenswood HS

# *Research in Action: Attitudes of County Commissioners Toward Farmland Preservation*

by Wickline, T. M., & Boone, D. A.

Nationwide, America is losing substantial amounts of farmland to urban sprawl. According to the American Farmland Trust (as cited in State Farmland Protection, 2003), the United States is losing 2.2 million acres of rural lands to urban sprawl every year. "This means that across the United States over 4 acres of rural lands are consumed every second" (State Farmland Protection, 2003, background section, ¶ 1).

Due to the loss of green space, scenic beauty, historical resources, low taxes, local sources of agricultural products and tourism opportunities there has been incentives for local counties to consider the adoption of a farmland protection program. Sixteen counties in West Virginia have implemented a program or are in the process of developing a farmland preservation program. According to McQueen and McMahan (2005), nationwide 42 states have adopted a farmland protection program. In 1996, USDA provided funds for farmland protection efforts and had a goal of protecting between 170,000 and 340,000 acres of farmland.

On March 10, 2000, the West Virginia State Legislature unanimously passed into law State Code § 8-24-72 through § 8-24-84 (2000) and later revised to State Code §8A-12-1 through §8A-12-20, known as the Voluntary Farmland Protection Act. The Act went into effect on June 8, 2000 and amended a 1982 statute of similar code location (sic) that once allowed the creation of Farmland Preservation Committees. (State Farmland Protection, 2003, acts section, ¶ 1).

The purpose of the study was to determine West Virginia county commissioner's knowledge and attitudes toward the Farmland Preservation Program. Information obtained from the study was used to establish or document commissioners' perceptions and knowledge toward the implementation of the program.

A descriptive research design was chosen for this study. A questionnaire was developed specifically for this study to collect information on county commissioner's knowledge and attitudes toward the Farm-

land Preservation Program in the State. The population consisted of 165 West Virginia county commissioners. The instrument was presented to a panel of experts at the state land grant institution to establish its content and face validity. The panel of experts concluded that the instrument had content and face validity. The instrument was determined to have extensive reliability with a Pearson's *r* of .8954 (Robinson, Shaver, Wrightsman, 1991).

## **Findings**

Thirty-six county commissioners (54.5%) indicated a farmland preservation program had been proposed for their county, while 30 respondents (45.5%) indicated that a program had not been proposed for their county. Twenty-seven respondents (42.9%) indicated that a program had been implemented in their county, while thirty-six respondents (57.1%) indicated a farmland preservation program had not been implemented in their county.

One section of the questionnaire consisted of twelve Likert scaled attitudinal items relating to the farmland preservation program in the counties. The items were grouped into categories based on their means using the following scale: 5.51-6.00 "Strongly Agree", 4.51-5.50 "Moderately Agree" 3.51 – 4.50 "Slightly Agree", 2.51 – 3.50 "Slightly Disagree", 1.51 – 2.50 "Moderately Disagree", and 0.00-1.50 "Strongly Disagree."

Moderate agreement was expressed by respondents on seven items. Participants moderately agreed that "all citizens of my county should be educated on the benefits of the farmland preservation program" (M= 5.07), "the real estate transfer tax is beneficial to my county" (M= 4.95), "preservation of farmland is important in my county" (M= 4.87), "I support the concept of a farmland preservation program in my county" (M= 4.72), "the loss of farmland in my county is a concern" (M= 4.53), "a farmland preservation program will decrease the loss of farmland in my county" (M= 4.52), and "a farmland preservation program will provide a good opportunity for landowners in my county" (M= 4.51).

Respondents expressed "slight agreement" on three items. Respondents slightly agreed that "farmland preservation should be perpetual (forever)" (M= 4.00), "real estate transfer tax should be used to fund the farmland preservation program" (M= 4.00), and "if a farmland preservation program is implemented in my county, the overall tax base will not be affected" (M= 3.56).

On two of the items, the respondents expressed "slight disagreement." Respondents slightly disagreed with the statements "I would consider including my personal land in a farmland preservation program" (M= 2.65) and "farmland preservation will have a negative impact on my county" (M= 2.65).

Another section of the questionnaire consisted of ten questions relating to the implementation of the farmland preservation program. County commissioners were asked to identify perceived barriers to the farmland preservation program. Of the respondents, 40 county commissioners (56.3%) indicated that limited funding for the program was a barrier, while 30 respondents (42.3%) indicated the fact that the program is perpetual (forever) was a barrier. Increased real estate transfer taxes were indicated by 27 respondents (38.0%) as a barrier to the farmland preservation program. Limited participation for the program was indicated by 15 respondents (21.1%) as a barrier to the program. An increase in property taxes was indicated by 11 county commissioners (15.5%) as a barrier to the farmland preservation program. The application process is time consuming was listed by ten respondents (14.1%) as a barrier, while seven respondents (9.9%) indicated there were other barriers to the program (see Table 3).

County commissioners were asked to identify perceived impacts of the farmland preservation program. An increase in property taxes was indicated by 11 respondents (15.5%) as a perceived impact to the farmland preservation program, while 19 respondents (26.8%) indicated an increase in real estate transfer taxes as an impact. A decrease in farmland loss was reported as an impact to the farmland preservation pro-

## *Research in Action: Attitudes of County Commissioners (Continued)*

gram by 38 respondents (53.5%), while 23 respondents (32.4%) indicated that the agricultural industry will be stronger as an impact of the farmland preservation program. Small family farms will be maintained as perceived by 41 respondents (57.7%) as an impact of the farmland preservation program. Thirteen respondents (18.3%) indicated an increase in tourism as an impact of the farmland preservation program, while 71 county commissioners (100.0%) indicated a decrease in tourism was not a perceived impact of the farmland preservation program. Control of urban sprawl was

perceived by 26 respondents (36.6%) as an impact of farmland preservation, while four respondents (5.6%) indicated other impacts of the farmland preservation program.

### **Conclusions**

The following conclusions are based on the interpretations of the data collected in this study. More than one-half (54.5%) of the respondents have had the farmland preservation program proposed for their county, while only slightly less than half

(40.7%) of respondents have had a farmland preservation program implemented in their county for less than one year. More than half (56.3%) of the respondents indicated funding for the program as a major barrier to implementing the program, while more than half (57.7%) of the respondents selected maintaining small family farms as a major impact after the program has been implemented for ten years.

*Tina Wickline earned a Master of Science (2006) degree in agricultural education from West Virginia University. Dr. Deborah Boone was Tina's graduate advisor.*

## *High School ACCESS Program (Continued)*

**What are the costs?** Unlike public education, tuition and fees are charged for enrollment in WVU courses. Tuition is assessed by the number of credit hours for which the student has registered. You will receive an invoice from the WVU Office of Student Accounts.

**What courses should my child take?** A list of recommended courses has been compiled ([http://www.elearn.wvu.edu/HighSchoolACCESS/recommended\\_courses.htm](http://www.elearn.wvu.edu/HighSchoolACCESS/recommended_courses.htm)). This list is not all inclusive but is composed of courses suggested by WVU faculty as appropriate level possibilities for this population. Note that high school and college prerequisites are included.

**What about attendance?** Students must attend the WVU courses for which they receive "college release" from the high school. It is the students responsibility to obtain the signature of the WVU faculty member weekly to document attendance (<http://www.elearn.wvu.edu/HighSchoolACCESS/attendanceform.pdf>). This measure also helps to assure academic success.

**How can my child become an ACCESS student?** Visit the links to Admission Requirements ([http://www.elearn.wvu.edu/HighSchoolACCESS/Admission\\_Requirements.htm](http://www.elearn.wvu.edu/HighSchoolACCESS/Admission_Requirements.htm)) and How to Apply (<http://www.elearn.wvu.edu/HighSchoolACCESS/HowToApply.htm>) for details. Your high school guidance counselor is the best source of this information, but the WVU Contacts are an additional resource.

**Can my child participate without my consent?** The consent of the parents and of an official of the high school are necessary for initial admission to the WVU ACCESS program and for subsequent semester course registration. Note the signature lines on the ACCESS application.

### **Other Frequently Asked Questions**

**Where are these classes taught?** Most classes are taught on the WVU campus. Web courses are taught on-line and so can be taken anywhere. A very small number of courses are taught in the high school setting.

**Will these credits count toward HS graduation?** Courses taken at WVU are for college credit. Please check with your high school guidance counselor to learn if the Board of Education counts them for high school credit.

**Do I have to pay the application fee again if I wish to attend WVU as a freshman?** If you have taken WVU courses as a high school and plan to stay at WVU once you have graduated high school, you must fill out another WVU admission application, and mark freshman for as your status. The admission fee is waived by indicating that you were a WVU ACCESS student on the top of the application.

**Will I still be recruited as a freshman?** Yes, because you are just now graduating from high school.

**Will my grade earned be reflected in my HS GPA?** Courses taken at WVU count for college credit. Check with your

high school guidance counselor to determine what effect dual credit courses may have on your high school GPA.

If you have a question that was not answered here, please direct it to Cheryl Crowley for courses online or in the high school or Gregory Farris for courses on the WVU campus.

### **ACCESS Program Contacts**

**Application Questions**  
Adele Siba  
Assistant Director of Admissions & Records,  
304-293-2124 ext 1517

**Admissions**  
Kim Gynn  
Admissions Supervisor  
Phone 304-293-2121  
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### Important Dates

Oct 26-29	National FFA Convention	Indianapolis, IN
Nov 6	Program Policy Committee Meeting	Morgantown
Nov 11	WVU Football - Cincinnati	Morgantown
Nov 25	WVU Football - USF	Morgantown
Jan 26-28	WV FFA State Winter Leadership Conference	Cedar Lakes
Feb 17-24	National FFA Week	
Mar 11-12	State Ham, Bacon, & Egg Show and Sale	Charleston
Mar 30	State FFA Governing Body	Cedar Lakes

### Email Addresses and Phone Numbers

<b>WVU-AGEE</b>	Office Fax	(304) 293-3752
Dr. Stacy A. Gartin	sgartin@wvu.edu	(304) 293-4832 ext. 4480
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Website	<a href="http://www.caf.wvu.edu/resm/aee">http://www.caf.wvu.edu/resm/aee</a>	
<b>WVDE</b>	Office Fax	(304) 558-1055
Donald L. Michael	dmichael@access.k12.wv.us	(304) 558-2347
Keith Burdette	kburdett@access.k12.wv.us	(304) 558-2347
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