

Online Supplementary Information for:

How to Thrive in Agricultural Economics PhD Programs: SAEA Emerging Scholar Award Winners' Experience and Advice

Item A. Survey Questions

Did you ever change your adviser/mentor during your PhD study?

Yes (1)

No (0)

Why did you change?

Page Break

For the remaining questions about your advisor, answer for the person who advised you the most (in duration) for your program.

What was the primary reason you matched with your PhD advisor? [please choose all that apply]

- Assigned (1)
 - Available funding (2)
 - Overlapping research topic (3)
 - Other (please specify): (4)
-

Please state how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I provided input in determining my dissertation research (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that my PhD advisor was crucial to my early career success (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Mentorship and Research

Start of Block: Non-research training and Job search

How important do you think the following non-technical skills are to early career success?

	Not at all important (1)	Slightly important (2)	Moderately important (3)	Very important (4)	Extremely important (5)
Writing (writing)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time Management (timemanage)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking/Socializing (network)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify) (other)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Did you use any of the following resources to improve your writing?

	Yes (1)	No (0)
Formal university resources such as workshops, writing center, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feedback from faculty excluding your advisor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feedback from other students/post-docs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

How useful were these resources towards developing your writing?

	Not at all useful (1)	Slightly useful (2)	Moderately useful (3)	Very useful (4)	Extremely useful (5)
<p><i>Did you use any of the following resources to improve your writing? = 1 [1]</i></p> <p>Formal University resources such as workshops, writing center, etc. (writeuse_univ)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p><i>Did you use any of the following resources to improve your writing? = 2 [1]</i></p> <p>Feedback from faculty excluding your advisor (writeuse_fac)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p><i>Did you use any of the following resources to improve your writing? = 3 [1]</i></p> <p>Feedback from other students/post-docs (writeuse_stud)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please select the highest level of teaching experience you gained as a PhD student:

- None (1)
- Guest Lecture (2)
- Grader (3)
- Lab TA or Instructor of record for 1-credit (4)
- Instructor for a full course (5)
- Other (please specify) (6) _____

Page Break _____

Did you use any of the following resources to prepare and improve your teaching?

	Yes (1)	No (0)
Formal university resources, such as workshops (TAprep_univ)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preparing Future Faculty program (TAprep_PFF)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advice from faculty (TAprep_fac)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advice from other students (TAprep_stud)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

How useful were these resources towards improving your teaching?

	Not at all useful (1)	Slightly useful (2)	Moderately useful (3)	Very useful (4)	Extremely useful (5)
<p><i>Did you use any of the following resources to prepare and improve your teaching? = 1 [1]</i></p> <p>Formal university resources, such as teaching workshops (TAprep_univ)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p><i>Did you use any of the following resources to prepare and improve your teaching? = 2 [1]</i></p> <p>Preparing future faculty (TAprep_PFF)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p><i>Did you use any of the following resources to prepare and improve your teaching? = 3 [1]</i></p> <p>Advice from faculty (TAprep_fac)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p><i>Did you use any of the following resources to prepare and improve your teaching? = 4 [1]</i></p> <p>Advice from other students (TAprep_stud)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

How important do you think the following elements are towards successfully obtaining a permanent position in academia?

	Not at all important (1)	Slightly important (2)	Moderately important (3)	Very important (4)	Extremely important (5)
Advisor's guidance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having co-author publications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Department's rank/reputation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having a near-perfect GPA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending professional meetings/networking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interview preparation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participate/exposure to grant-writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Non-research training and Job search

Start of Block: Work-life balance

How much do you prioritize work-life balance?

- Not at all (1)
 - A little (2)
 - A moderate amount (3)
 - A lot (4)
 - Very much (5)
-

Please select the characteristics that applied to you during the majority of your PhD program:

- Married but no kids (1)
 - Having kids (2)
 - Parents live nearby (close enough to provide child/elder care) (3)
 - Other (please specify): (4)
-

Compared to being a junior faculty, how stressful would you consider the last 2 years of your PhD program?

- Much less stressful (1)
 - Less stressful (2)
 - Equally stressful (3)
 - More stressful (4)
 - Much more stressful (5)
-

Page Break

Thank you for taking the survey portion of understanding SAEA emerging scholars' perspective for early career success. Click the arrow below to submit the survey, then return to the Zoom meeting to move to the personal interview portion. Please feel free to add additional comments below.

End of Block: Work-life balance

Item B. Semi-structured Interview Questions

Interview script

Good Morning/Afternoon, Dr. xxxx, thank you for taking time for the interview. As we described in the invitation letter, the interview is mainly about your PhD study experience and your insights and tips you would like to share with our current PhD students. The interview will be recorded for the research purpose. First, we have some very brief questions about your current position.

Brief Questions:

What is your current assigned appointment (percentage of time devoted to research, teaching, and extension)?

How many graduate students you are advising? Among whom how many are PhD students?

How many classes you are teaching per year?

Now we have some questions more pertaining to your PhD study experience.

Part A. Mentorship

Could you describe the role that mentorship played in your PhD study period?

Could you reflect on what you did well when working with your PhD advisor when you were a PhD student? What would you do differently to better work with your PhD advisor? Could you provide some tips on how to efficiently work with the advisor?

How did you match up with your PhD major professor? Did you ever change your adviser/mentor during your PhD study? If you did, when and why did you change?

Could you describe an ideal advisor? For instance, what are the top three characteristics of an ideal advisor?

Part B. Course work and TA/RA-ship

When you were a PhD student, how did you decide whether to take an additional course work that were not mandatory? (i.e., the benefit and cost of taking upon an additional course work)

What courses now you wish you could have taken when you were a PhD student?

How did you decide to do TA work vs RA work each semester? What were the benefits you saw in each?

Part C. Research and Publication

What do you think about the importance of publishing before graduation (e.g. MS thesis or the 2nd year or 3rd year paper)?

Could you describe how you explore a research idea and how it develops into a project and a published paper, perhaps using your JMP paper as an example? (possibly frame it as a then and now question)

How did topics and methods that received most public and academic attention during your PhD study shape your research interest?

What do you think is the most difficult part of research? Why? (possibly frame it as a then and now question)

We find that many PhD students struggle in writing during at least the first couple of years of study. For native English speaker, what are their problems and how did they overcome them? For non-native English speaker, what are their problems and how did they overcome them? Was writing a problem to you when you were a PhD student? If yes, how did you overcome the problem? Any suggestions to our current PhD students in writing? What is the role of the advisors in helping students in writing? How do you structure writing?

Did you find any useful resources to improve your writing/teaching skills in your university? If so, could you list them/provide a brief description of them? To what extent do you think these resources help you writing/teaching?

What would you do differently in research and publications if you were to re-do your PhD?

Part D. Teaching, networking, and job search

How did you work on your teaching skills during your PhD study? Did you have stand-alone teaching experience during your PhD study? How did that help your teaching skills and job search?

Did you participate in the Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) program when you were a PhD student? If yes, then how did PFF help?

What do you think about attending AAEA, ASSA, or other meetings? What is the best way to spend time at conferences?

What helped the most in your job search when you were on the job market? Any suggestions to our current PhD students, particularly those who are on or soon to be on the job market?

Could you describe any experiences you have had facing unfairness or being discriminated against? (If necessary, an additional prompt: by that we mean has a disability, your nationality, race, gender, or sexual orientation shaped the way you were treated)?

Part E. Time management and work-life balance

We know that PhD study is quite demanding and students are under huge pressure. How did you handle all the (physical, emotional, or financial) pressures you had in your PhD study that arose from dissertation, job search, and perhaps relationship as well as family?

Could you talk about how you managed your time as a student and later as a professor/researcher? (Prompt as necessary: What about procrastination?)

What role has family life played in your PhD work? How did you balance your PhD work and family life?

What would you do differently if you were to re-do your PhD? What do you wish you've learned (or trained) in your PhD program?

Part F. Any final comments and suggestions to our current and future PhD students?