

**Minnesota Agricultural Education  
Leadership Council (MAELC)  
Farm Business Management Grant  
Evaluation Project Briefing**



Doris Mold, Outside Evaluator

September 12, 2017

**CHALLENGE GRANT PARAMETERS**

Maintain current number of credentialed FBM instructors under a MSCF contract

**Grow current FBM student credit numbers by 2% (college-wide, not per instructor)**

80% of eligible students are enrolled as full time FBM students (10 credits per year)

**CHALLENGE GRANT PARAMETERS**

80% of full-time students in the FBM program complete a FINAN analysis

Local college encourages professional development for new FBM instructors (less than 4 years of FBM experience) by supporting them in the PEP program

**QUALITY PROGRAM INDICATORS**

95% of students have completed an assessment within their respective business model. FINAN and enterprise submissions follow state parameters for submission (pricing, methodology, etc.)

Instructor possesses and follows a professional development plan supported by the college

Local college offers public meeting setting to present data related to FBM

Local college is aware of statewide initiatives within FBM and supports instructor involvement

### REPORTS

- ✘ All colleges submitted a Farm Business Challenge Grant progress report by July 2016 and then a final report by July, 2017.
- ✘ Programs generally did well on meeting each Challenge Grant parameter; however in their final report, 4 of the 8 had difficulty with the "Grow current FBM student credit numbers by 2%"
- ✘ Programs challenged by this were offered the opportunity to amend credit numbers which brought them in line with expected growth.
- ✘ Programs are doing well in terms of quality program parameters.

### COLLEGES REPORTED

- ✘ 2015 - 55 total instructors, 48 full-time, 7 part-time;
  - ✘ 2016 - 57 total instructors, 52 full-time and 5 part-time;
  - ✘ 2017 - 64 total instructors, 56 full-time and 8 part-time.
- 
- ✘ 2017 - 2,602 students (1,833 full-time, 769 part-time) - 70% of all students were full-time;
  - ✘ 2015 - 3,047 total students (1,778 full-time, 1,269 part-time) - 58.35% of all students were full-time.

### COLLEGES REPORTED

- ✘ In FY17, a total of non-amended 23,498.7 credits sold (22,626.2 amended) at an average cost of \$178.01 per credit.
- ✘ In FY15 non-amended credits sold 23,880.9 (21,205.9 amended) at an average cost of \$182.54.

### COLLEGES REPORTED

- ✘ 1,967 Full time students completed a FINAN in FY17, 2,071 in FY15
- ✘ Four colleges have instructors under four years of experience. Across these four colleges there were 17 instructors that had under four years of experience.

## COLLEGES REPORTED

All colleges held public meetings in both 2017 and 2016.

- + In 2017, colleges held 114 meetings that reached over 6,521 people.
- + In 2016 the colleges held 82+ public meetings that they hosted with an attendance of 4,131 people.

Colleges reported the following attendees at their public meetings:

Administrators  
 Ag finance/lenders  
 Agri-business professionals,  
 Community members  
 Farmers (non FBM students)  
 FBM instructors  
 FBM students

Colleges also reported that others participated including legislators; Minnesota Department of Agriculture and college faculty and students.

## COLLEGES REPORTED

- ✘ All colleges reported that receiving the FBM Challenge Grant had impacted their local college "A lot" the highest level option available.
- ✘ In the final report, seven colleges reported that as a staff they were involved in statewide Farm Business Management initiatives "A lot" the highest level of activity offered.
- ✘ This is an increase from four colleges from the interim report; one college reported at the next highest level "some", while it was four colleges in the interim report.

## GRANT CREATED A POSITIVE FEELING

- ✘ In Colleges and FBM programs
- ✘ Among FBM instructors
- ✘ While it has been seen as a generally positive experience there is some concern over parameters on credit growth and moving students from part-time to full-time

## OPPORTUNITIES

- ✘ Downturn in Ag Economy presents new opportunities
- ✘ Supplemental grant (Additional Instructor) offered opportunity to grow staff and credit potential
- ✘ New instructors to replace retirees
- ✘ Now a Team
  - + One that is focused on growth rather than survival

**MAINTAIN CURRENT NUMBER OF CREDENTIALLED FBM INSTRUCTORS UNDER A MSCF CONTRACT**

College	# FBM Instructors under MSCF Contract - Full-Time		# FBM Instructors under MSCF Contract - Part-Time		TOTAL	
	FY15	FY17	FY15	FY17	FY15	FY17
Alexandria	1	1	0	0	1	1
Central Lakes	4	7	1	0	5	7
MN West	7	9	4	6	11	15
Northland	6	7	1	2	7	9
Ridgewater	8	8	0	0	8	8
Riverland	8	9	1	0	9	9
South Central	12	13	0	0	12	13
St. Cloud	2	2	0	0	2	2
Totals					55	64

**GROW CURRENT FBM STUDENT CREDIT NUMBERS BY 2% (COLLEGEWIDE)**

College	# of Credits Sold		% Growth (looking for 2%)	AMENDED # of Credits Sold		% Growth (looking for 2%)
	FY15	FY17		FY15	FY17	
Alexandria	457.0	525.0	14.88%			
Central Lakes	1,959.0	2,205.0	12.56%			
MN West	3,839.4	4,064.2	5.86%			
Northland	3,394.0	3,067.0	-9.63%	2,593.00	3,067.00	18%
Ridgewater	3,590.5	3,052.5	-14.98%	2,806.50	2,900.00	3%
Riverland	4,375.0	4,205.0	-3.89%	3,842.00	3,927.00	2%
South Central	5,338.0	5,433.0	1.78%	4,781.00	4,991.00	4%
St. Cloud	928.0	947.0	2.05%			

**2% GROWTH IN CREDITS CHALLENGES**

“New instructors face the biggest challenge in growing their student credit numbers. The first twelve months of an instructor’s time is generally spent building networks, marketing, and building their client roster.”

**2% GROWTH IN CREDITS CHALLENGES**

“Another challenge to growing student credits is the impact of retirees on Farm Business Management programs; that is, the situation in which a retiring FBM instructor takes some or all of his or her clients at retirement.”

Sometimes farms “retire” out of the system when their instructor retires

**80% OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS ARE ENROLLED AS FULL TIME FBM STUDENTS (10 CREDITS PER YEAR) OR MAKING PROGRESS TOWARDS 80%**

College	# Students Enrolled - Full-Time (10 credits or more/yr)		# Students Enrolled - Part-Time (less than 10 credits/year)		# Students Enrolled Total		% Full-Time	
	FY15	FY17	FY15	FY17	FY15	FY17	FY15	FY17
	Alexandria	32	45	23	11	55	56	58%
Central Lakes	90	172	215	127	309	299	29%	58%
MN West	231	249	330	138	561	387	41%	64%
Northland	234	213	184	146	418	359	56%	52%
Ridgewater	277	224	229	117	506	341	55%	66%
Riverland	357	354	135	117	492	471	73%	75%
South Central	462	489	120	96	582	585	79%	84%
St. Cloud	95	87	29	17	124	104	77%	84%

**80% OF FULL-TIME STUDENTS IN THE FBM PROGRAM COMPLETE A FINAN ANALYSIS**

College	Whole Farm Enterprise Analysis		% of FT Students Completing Analysis
	FY15	FY17	FY17
	Alexandria	49	51
Central Lakes	204	191	111.05%
MN West	315	338	135.74%
Northland	316	240	112.68%
Ridgewater	258	246	109.82%
Riverland	321	338	95.48%
South Central	525	481	98.36%
St. Cloud	83	82	94.25%

**LOCAL COLLEGE PROMOTES DEVELOPMENT OF NEW INSTRUCTORS**

College	# FBM Instructors w/less than 4 yrs. Experience	
	FY15	FY17
	Alexandria	0
Central Lakes	2	4
MN West	2	4
Northland	2	3
Ridgewater	0	2
Riverland	0	1
South Central	2	3
St. Cloud	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>

**OTHER POSITIVE OUTCOMES**

- ✘ New and Innovative Programs offered by programs throughout the state
- ✘ New audiences reached

### FBM INSTRUCTORS REPORT

- ✘ 46 of 51 invited instructors completed a questionnaire - Fall 2016, 90% response rate
- ✘ Average completed years = 14.8 years,  
Median = 12.5 years, Range 1-37 years
- ✘ Average 6 meetings per year per student
- ✘ 44 of 46 instructors offer additional classes/activities beyond individual meetings.

### ANNUAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS

	Full time	Part time
Total	1,763	624
Average	38.33	13.57
Median	41.5	9.5
Minimum	0	0
Maximum	65	47

n=46

### INSTRUCTOR EXPECTATIONS

With the grant do you expect the	Increase	Decrease	Stay the Same	Total
...number of students that you work with annually to	54.35% 25	6.52% 3	39.13% 18	46
...amount of time you spend with each student annually to	17.39% 8	6.52% 3	76.09% 35	46

### INSTRUCTORS VIEW OF THEIR FARMERS

To what level do your farmers	Not at all	Some	Quite a bit	A lot	Don't know	Total
...feel financially stressed?	0.00% 0	17.78% 8	37.78% 17	44.44% 20	0.00% 0	45
...use information gained from participating in the farm business analysis program?	0.00% 0	6.67% 3	37.78% 17	55.56% 25	0.00% 0	45
...make more informed management decisions after participating in the farm business analysis program?	0.00% 0	4.44% 2	22.22% 10	73.33% 33	0.00% 0	45

n=45

## LOOKING FORWARD

---

- × Additional analysis, compilation, interpretation and dissemination of
  - + College Progress Reports
  - + Instructor Questionnaires
  - + College Final Reports
  - + Other data collected

To evaluate if the grant program is effective at maintaining and increasing instructors and students and to evaluate the most meaningful outcomes and impacts.