MEMORANDUM

April 10, 2008

To:       Dr. Fred Hartmeister, Dean
          Dr. Clifford Fedler, Associate Dean
          Graduate School

From:    Eduardo Segarra, Chairman
          Agricultural and Applied Economics

Reference: Graduate Program Review

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Graduate School for facilitating the recent comprehensive review of our Graduate Program. We in Agricultural and Applied Economics routinely engage in this kind of efforts at a somewhat “smaller” scale and many times with a somewhat “smaller” scope. However, we have found out that these kinds of efforts always present an excellent opportunity to pause, figure out where we are, and decide not only where we want, but where realistically we CAN, go. The bottom line is that these kinds of efforts have truly helped us through the years to enhance the overall effectiveness and relevancy of our programs. So, once again THANKS!

Please find attached to this memorandum a “bullet-form” summary of findings and issues needing attention, along with the requested, short-run and long-run plans of action which we intend to follow in the next few years. If you would like us to elaborate on any of our intended items included in our plans of action, please let me know. Again, thanks for facilitating the Graduate Program review and all you do to system-wide for graduate education at Texas Tech University.

Cc:       Dr. John Burns, Interim Dean -CASNR
Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics
Texas Tech University

Graduate Program Review, 2008 – Findings &
Short-Run and Long-Run Plan of Action

Summary of findings
- Outstanding students, staff and faculty
- Excellent coordination between departmental missions and faculty/staff duties
- High level of productivity of staff and faculty
- Increasing trend in student (undergraduate and graduate) enrollment
- Increasing trend in total SCH generation (undergraduate and graduate)
- Increasing trend in retention and graduation rates (undergraduate and graduate)
- Strong internship program at the undergraduate and graduate levels
- Superb placement of students (undergraduate and graduate) in workforce
- Embracement of the relevancy of learning outcomes in all academic programs
- Enhanced course and academic program offerings as programs have evolved
- Strong student (undergraduate and graduate) participation and performance in academic and professional activities
- Effective use of research advisory committee
- Widespread recognition of the high degree of relevancy of research programs’ efforts and contributions in academic and professional circles
- Strong research funding performance (total level and in a per faculty basis)
- Strong leveraging of state provided research funds
- Strong research and engagement partnerships with other institutions
- Widespread recognition of the relevancy of academic, professional and community engagement activities/contributions by students (undergraduate and graduate), faculty and staff
- Proven to be a good investment for Texas Tech University and the state

Issues Needing Attention
- Total number of graduate students
- Generation of SCH
- Salaries of staff and faculty
- Gender equity issues in faculty ranks
- Professional development opportunities for staff and faculty
- Student fellowships and scholarships stipends
- Partnerships with community colleges and post-secondary institutions
- Increase the quality and availability of physical/space facilities
Short - Run Plan of Action – one year to two years

- Continue recruiting efforts to increase the total number of graduate students – especially Ph.D. level students
- Generation of SCH in all programs and make sure all of our Ph.D. level courses make in a regular basis
- Revitalize the activities of the AAEC - Graduate Student Association
- Seek to enhance salaries of staff and faculty through equity increases in salary for their contributions to all of our teaching, research and service programs/activities
- Address gender equity issues in faculty ranks – number of female faculty members
- Wrap up development efforts to establish the Agricultural Competitiveness Endowment (first $1 million)
- Seek to improve classroom facilities in the Agricultural Sciences Building

Long - Run Plan of Action – two years to six years

- Make sure the relevancy of all of our programs/activities (teaching, research and service programs/activities) continue to be significant and of the highest quality
- Routinely engage in discussions regarding the continuation, preservation and enhancement of all our current teaching, research and service programs/activities
- Routinely engage in discussions regarding the identification of “new” endeavors regarding teaching, research and service programs/activities
- Identify potential diversification strategies for our teaching programs such as distance-education opportunities or cooperative academic activities with other institutions of higher education
- Continue to balance resource availability with programs/activities needs
- Seek and fully justify the need for new resources when warranted
- Seek to reward appropriately staff and faculty for their contributions to all of our teaching, research and service programs/activities
- Address gender equity issues in faculty ranks – number of female faculty members
- Identify approaches/ways which would enhance retention of outstanding faculty and staff members
- Establish an Agricultural Business Center
- Wrap up development efforts regarding the Agricultural Competitiveness Endowment (long-term goal of $3 million)
- Improve classroom, office and public space areas/facilities in support of our departmental programs regarding teaching, research and service/activities
- Continue to attain a high degree of efficiency of all resources invested by Texas Tech University and the state in our unit