

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM:
AN APPROACH TO INTERDISCIPLINARY EDUCATION

by

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Agricultural Economics, Global Food Systems Leadership, International Agriculture,
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A FINAL HONORS PROJECT

submitted in accordance with the University Honors Program requirements

Global Food Systems Leadership
Staley School of Leadership

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Abstract

The Global Food Systems Leadership (GFSL) program at Kansas State University is a joint secondary major housed between the Staley School of Leadership and the College of Agriculture. The program helps equip students to address complex issues within the global food system. This honors project explores what would be needed to reform and develop the program to be offered as both an undergraduate major and a certificate. Through multiple methods, I interviewed those who founded the program, drew comparisons from peer and aspirational institutions, aligned the program with three of K-State's strategic plans, and analyzed feedback from student surveys. These methods allowed me to identify potential curriculum plans for both degree offerings, applied learning opportunities, target students for the program, and strategies for recruitment. Key findings from the survey demonstrate students' desire for program expansion through developing a standalone major and modifying the secondary major into a certificate option. This proposal then outlined the pathway for program approval at each step. Lastly, this project argues the importance and value of more interdisciplinary approaches to education and how the Global Food Systems Leadership program better prepares students to understand and lead in addressing the global food systems' most complex challenges, like food security, poverty, and climate change.

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Introduction

The global food system is filled with a broad scope of complex problems that are all interconnected. As Kansas State University continues to evolve and change to meet the needs of the food and agriculture industry, having a strong understanding of these interconnected issues will set students ahead of their peers. The Global Food Systems Leadership program at K-State is an interdisciplinary secondary major housed both under the College of Agriculture and the Staley School of Leadership that challenges students to ask tough questions and develop a systems-thinking mindset that can be used to explore the complex issues of the food system and foster positive change in their communities. As a secondary major, this program is meant to enhance a student's primary study area, whether in food science, political science, or engineering. The current structure of the secondary major is nine credit hours of core courses, six credit hours of basic knowledge courses, and nine credit hours that fall under one of the areas of concentration for a total of 24 credit hours.

Since its founding in 2016, GFSL has continued to grow, and students, faculty, and alumni have all expressed a want for further opportunities to be available in the program, specifically being a standalone major, a more flexible certificate option, and more applied learning opportunities. Three main questions are guiding this honors project:

1. *What needs to be considered, such as curriculum and strategic plans, before developing GFSL into a standalone major and certificate?*
2. *How does the GFSL program compare to similar programs at peer and aspirational institutions, and what ideas can K-State use to improve it?*

3. *How does expanding the GFSL program better address the needs of students, the industry, and the global food system?*

To help answer these three questions, I set up interviews with the faculty that originally founded the program, analyzed programs at similar institutions, considered institutional strategic plans, surveyed students for feedback, identified target students for the GFSL program, and developed new curriculum pathways.

My motivation to pursue this honors project is that if implemented, I would have been a student who would have pursued the Global Food Systems Leadership major. As a current student coordinator for the GFSL program, I have met many other students who feel the same as I do, where they don't feel like they fit exactly into their degree of study and wish they could better understand the entire food system. Ultimately, I think developing this program into a standalone major would draw current students to agriculture and students from other areas of study outside agriculture and across the country because it would be the first program of its kind.

Background & Insights from Interviews

To begin understanding how to change the program for the future, I first wanted to know why the program was developed in the first place. To do this, I spoke to two of the faculty who helped start the program at K-State in 2016 but have now moved on to working at the Ohio State University (OSU): Dr. Kris Boone, assistant dean and director of Ohio State Agricultural Technical Institute, and Dr. Shannon Wasburn, Chair of the Department of Agricultural Communication, Education, and Leadership. Through the interviews, I had two main questions that guided our conversations:

1. *What was the motivation for developing the program? Why did you feel like the population of students in 2016 needed this program?*

As far as the first question went, Dr. Boone and Dr. Washburn said that the Global Food Systems Leadership program was created for two main reasons: to get students to have more engaged conversations about the global food system and connect them to the leadership school. Before the program's creation, the College of Agriculture had the fewest students compared to the other colleges enrolling in the leadership minor. This program was created to attract agriculture students to courses with a leadership lens through conversations filled with diverse perspectives and areas of study. The college had noticed an increasing number of students passionate about public service and issues that affect the global food system, such as hunger, sustainability, policy, and international development, areas that existing majors didn't focus on. So, GFSL was created

as an interdisciplinary major to add to a student's primary area of study and help those students learn about future career pathways that fit their interests. Since it was created as a secondary major, this allowed students across the College of Agriculture and other colleges to have a strong disciplinary base with an interdisciplinary overlay. Historically, this aligned with the then-university President Kirk Schulz's plan to make K-State a leader in global food systems efforts and research.

2. *As we work to gather information to propose a program expansion, why may this program be or not be relevant now? How does this program benefit students and industry needs?*

Both interviews touched on the current program's success, demonstrating its relevance to students. Now, both at OSU, Dr. Boone and Dr. Washburn say they are working to try to bring a program like this to their current university because they are finding students also at K-State who are curious and motivated by solving global issues in the food system. If a student can have that they are a part of the Global Food Systems Leadership program on their resume, it draws potential employers' eyes and leads to questions about what GFSL is and what the students have learned. It shows employers that these students are big-picture thinkers. Employers are looking increasingly for students who can collaborate across disciplines, work in complex systems, and ultimately have a holistic view of food and agriculture.

While both interviewees thought it was a good idea to expand the program, they had a couple of hesitations that will need to be considered in the future. The first thing students majoring in GFSL alone may struggle with is talking to potential employers. For example, each year K-State has a career fair for all colleges. If I am an Agricultural Economics major talking to an employer, they already know what that degree is and what skills I am learning. It is not as likely that they would understand what Global Food Systems Leadership is and what skills I would bring to the table. This means there would need to be intentional efforts as the program expands to help students know how to explain to employers what the program is and how it would be an asset to them.

Lastly, there was some hesitancy about making GFSL a standalone major rather than pairing it with another major because of the potential for students to be a mile wide and an inch deep in their understanding of agriculture, rather than very specialized in one specific area, with some added broader courses through a secondary major. This is something that will continue to be considered as the program changes and proposed curriculum and specialty pathways are developed.

Overall, Dr. Boone and Dr. Washburn believe that programs like GFSL are needed at K-State and other universities across the country because they fill a gap that existing majors don't meet for students passionate about global food systems issues and leadership. The interdisciplinary and systems-thinking approach allows students to better understand all sides of an issue when they are in their careers. A couple of concerns need to be kept in mind, but through intentional

program design, they should be able to be addressed. Both interviewees see the continued value of the Global Food Systems Leadership program for current and future students because it equips students to lead in our complex global food system.

International Leadership Association's External Review

In Fall 2024, the Staley School of Leadership had an external review completed by the International Leadership Association's (ILA) Committee for the Advancement of Leadership Programs on the Global Food Systems Leadership program. The review was conducted by committee members Dr. Kathy L. Guthrie, Florida State University, and Rian Satterwhite, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. I will summarize their findings here since they provide an outsider's perspective of GFSL and will shape the program's continued development.

They both assessed the program using the ILA General Principles for Leadership Programs, which are context, conceptual framework, content, learning, metrics, outcomes, and assessment. They completed this assessment by reviewing program course materials, attending on-site meetings, and interviewing stakeholders. Below are the strengths and opportunities they found for the future of GFSL.

Key Strengths Identified:

1. Leverage Mary Kay's deep knowledge of GFSL and relationships across campus before her retirement.
2. Students can utilize and understand systems thinking.
3. After reviewing the core courses' syllabi for the GFSL program, the course objectives demonstrate a great depth of leadership and interdisciplinary perspectives.

4. The instructors of GFSL courses can go deep into content and make connections in an interdisciplinary way.
5. Applied learning opportunities such as Food Security Scholars (FSS) and the study tour in Kenya are great for students to have access to further enhance their learning.
6. Students who participate in GFSL and FSS have transformative experiences.
7. A topical focus on food systems is a good way for students to engage with other topics, such as DEIB, in a deeper and more meaningful way.

Key Opportunities Identified:

1. There is an ambiguous connection between GFSL and the umbrella research program K-State has called the Global Food Systems.
2. Create multiple entry points to the leadership classes for students, making it more accessible for them to take courses even if they are out of order.
3. LEAD: 212 Introduction to Leadership Concepts is a very well-developed introduction to leadership course. The GFSL students who took it felt like it enhanced their learning, while the students who didn't wish they had.
4. Consider mapping out all of the courses offered at the Staley School to see if any would be beneficial as part of GFSL content.
5. Tell GFSL's story in a way that connects it to the University's vision and values as a next-generation land grant university, using students as the storytellers.
6. Explore opportunities with the University Honors program, Scholar Development and Undergraduate Research, and the Applied Learning Experiences initiative, since they are

all housed under the Staley School, to build more opportunities for students to apply what they learn in GFSL courses.

7. Build an alumni network that can help in recruitment, mentorship, or guest lecturing courses.
8. Implement consistent learning assessments for GFSL.
9. Capitalize on GFSL's track record of developing students for success by sharing stories of what students have accomplished (such as the last four Truman scholars being students in GFSL).

This external review gave us both strengths to rely on and opportunities to hone in on for the future of the Global Food Systems Leadership program. By implementing some of these changes in the curriculum development, GFSL can have a larger impact on its students, the greater K-State community, and the food and agriculture industry.

Institutional Alignment

Since coming to K-State, the university has undergone many changes under President Linton. When considering expanding the GFSL program, I wanted to ensure that it aligned with many newly developed strategic plans, such as the Next-Gen K-State Strategic Plan, the College of Agriculture Strategic Plan, and the Staley School of Leadership Strategic Plan. Below are points of alignment that GFSL should continue to consider moving forward in the expansion process.

Next-Gen K-State Strategic Plan:

GFSL aligns well with three main imperatives and three opportunity agenda focus areas.

- Imperative 1: Grow enrollment to 30,000 total learners by 2030
 - Expanding GFSL to include a major and a certificate will attract new students to the program who are attracted to interdisciplinary offerings from both inside and outside the university. This will also allow non-degree-seeking students an option to pursue.
- Imperative 3: Provide every degree-seeking student with applied learning experiences
 - Current GFSL coursework provides students with opportunities to participate in community-engaged projects. Expanding the curriculum, such as including an internship requirement, continuing to offer international study tour experiences, or building research opportunities, will create more opportunities for applied learning experiences.
- Imperative 5: Nimble and proactively meet the needs of learners, employers, and society.

- GFSL teaches students about the most pressing issues in the global food systems and equips them with an interdisciplinary approach to solving these issues in future employment.
- Community Health and Well-Being Focus Area: establishing community sense of place, improving the health and wellness of communities, building more resilient communities, improving health disparities and outcomes, enhancing education access and outcomes, supporting economic prosperity, and meeting the needs of diverse and disadvantaged communities
 - GFSL teaches students about how the food system impacts culture, health, and community resilience by focusing on hunger, food access, nutrition, poverty, and marginalized communities.
- Sustainability Focus Area: working toward a more sustainable future in water, air, energy, soil, climate change, biodiversity, and community resilience
 - Sustainability themes are present in all aspects of the GFSL courses, including topics such as climate change, climate-smart agricultural technology and practices, and sustainability practices that meet cultural needs.
- Global Food Security and Biosecurity Focus Area: enhancing and expanding food production, developing safe and sustainable agricultural practices, and studying animal and plant infectious diseases to improve global health and security
 - This focus area best aligns with what GFSL is and does. This program helps students understand how food and agriculture policy impacts global food security.

College of Agriculture Strategic Plan:

As a part of the College of Agriculture, expanding GFSL will help to meet the following goals.

- Vision: The College of Agriculture will be a top-five agriculture university known for developing high-quality graduates and research and extension programs that meet the needs of Kansas communities and address global challenges.
 - The GFSL program is unique in that it helps students understand how these global challenges are interconnected and attracts a diverse range of students who are committed to leadership and civic engagement.
- Investing in Research that ensures sustainability and adds value.
 - Expanding to a standalone major allows students to be more connected to research opportunities with the GFSL program or with other departments, bringing the interdisciplinary approach they have gained through the GFSL courses.
- Advancing Learners through applied and alternative programs that serve community and industry needs.
 - Expanding this program will attract students who want to work in industries that address food security, biosecurity, community health, and climate resilience.
- Growing Extension and meeting changing community needs.
 - Future partnerships can be built with extension through programs such as the Kansas Local Food System's Local Food Fellows program, which allows students to gain hands-on and applied learning experiences and allows extension to work with students who understand systems-based approaches. This can also be a great tool for exposing students to potential careers in extension.

Staley School of Leadership Strategic Plan:

This strategic plan focuses on the future of the Staley School from 2024 to 2030, and GFSL aligns with a couple of areas.

- The Staley School reworked its mission and vision statements to reflect better the programs housed under the school and the impact it hopes to have. They are as follows:
 - *Mission: Developing bold, curious, and connected learners to address our world's most complex challenges.*
 - GFSL supports the mission of developing bold and curious learners through the courses and experiences students can have that challenge the assumptions they have not just about the food system but about the world around them. Students are encouraged to learn about many different areas, such as policy, nonprofit leadership, agriculture, economics, conflict, and sociology, to build a better perspective of the issues that persist in the food system.
 - *Vision: Our diverse and changing world thrives because people and communities are prepared to learn, serve, and lead change.*
 - GFSL exposes students to a diverse range of disciplines and perspectives and gives them the opportunity to serve in their communities through programs like Food Security Scholars or community service projects that are part of courses. The students who participate in the GFSL program are servant leaders who care about leading change in their communities.
- Goal 1: Expand and extend learning experiences in ways that reflect our mission and reach diverse learner populations.

- The plan calls for launching a new interdisciplinary major with the College of Agriculture by 2027: Global Food Systems Leadership.
- Goal 2: Advance and catalyze applied learning at K-State to broadly connect students, accelerate engaged research and scholarship, and serve local, state, national, and international communities.
 - As stated before, GFSL already offers some applied learning experiences, but there should be continued consideration of how to expand offerings. Since the Staley School wants to expand undergraduate research, GFSL should capitalize on this.

Overall, the GFSL program already connects to multiple strategic plans at K-State, but there are opportunities for growth. As the first operational land-grant university, K-State has the responsibility not just to educate the next generation of learners and conduct research that benefits others but also to extend this knowledge to communities across Kansas and the globe. Through programs like GFSL, students should be equipped to extend this knowledge into their communities while at school and after graduation.

Comparison of Peer & Aspirational Institutions

After seeing how GFSL aligns internally with many different strategic plans at K-State, I then wanted to examine peer and aspirational institutions and other institutions with similar programs. Completing this comparison was able to inform the curriculum design and program expansion ideas. The key institutions I found to have similar programs, such as the Global Food Systems Leadership program, include Iowa State University, Oregon State University, the University of Missouri, Purdue University, and the University of Georgia.

Iowa State University:

- **Global Resource Systems:** “Global Resource Systems studies the way the world uses its limited resources to create sustainable systems. By integrating social, natural, and economic sciences, GRS majors learn how to efficiently impact public health, food and agriculture, and environmental systems on an international level.”
 - The major has 5 areas that students make a choice in:
 - Choose A Region Of The World
 - Choose A Language to Learn
 - Choose Your Area of Expertise
 - Choose Your Internship
 - Choose Your Senior Research Topic

Oregon State University:

- **Food in Culture and Social Justice Certificate:** “...Cultural analyses of food and food production lead us to question the level of social justice within the local and global food systems...Students who complete this certificate will not only have a clear idea of the cultural bases of food and food production but will obtain some experience working towards community food security.”

University of Missouri:

- **Deaton Scholars Program:** “...engages undergraduate, graduate, and professional students from every college and discipline in the fight against global poverty and hunger.”
 - 3 Core Learning Outcomes for Students:
 - Explore the value of interdisciplinary teamwork
 - Understand their individual role in collaborative problem solving
 - Empower local action to address global poverty.

Purdue University:

- **International Studies in Agriculture Minor:** Student learning outcomes are as below.
 - Demonstrate critical thinking and analytical skills through successful completion of a project with an international dimension in agriculture.
 - Demonstrate effective cross-cultural international communication, both orally and in written form, about an international topic.
 - Demonstrate the ability to be a global citizen in international and multicultural, locations and groups.

- Understand the global importance and impact of agriculture.
- Communicate an appreciation of and respect for cultural diversity, and being able to think critically about the impact that their own cultural identities have on their worldview.

University of Georgia:

- **Sustainable Food Systems Certificate:** “This certificate is for graduate students interested in taking an interdisciplinary approach to understanding, communicating and participating in finding solutions to the grand challenges we face for sustainable food production, access and utilization.”
 - Core Courses:
 - Foundational/Systems Learning Courses
 - Food Systems Service-Learning Courses
 - Professional Development Course

There were several takeaways that the Global Food Systems Leadership program at K-State could use for inspiration in its program expansion from other institutions. These programs have an interdisciplinary approach with many applied learning experiences available to students, such as research opportunities, internships, service-learning, or study abroad. Many of these programs require language courses for their students, which I think would also be important for this program. Each program is flexible to each student’s needs and interests, and is designed not just to attract agriculture students. Overall, GFSL has many examples to model after.

Results from Student Surveys

To better inform curriculum and program development, I surveyed current students of the GFSL program and received 47 responses. The survey asks questions related to student interests, current curriculum format, and potential future changes, and the survey results are below.

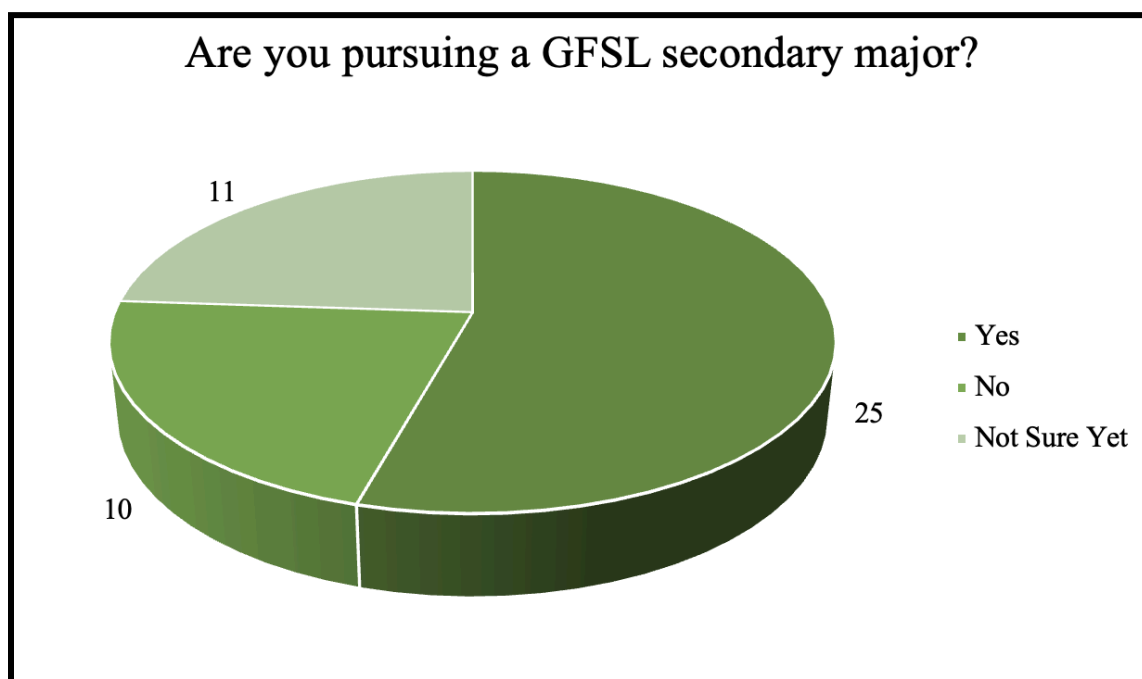
Q1: What is your primary major(s)?

Primary Majors	
Animal Science	12
Agricultural Communications	7
Agricultural Education	7
Agricultural Economics	5
Food Science	4
Entomology	3
Bakery Science	2
Political Science	2
Agronomy	1
Human Development and Family Science	1
Milling Science	1
Nutrition & Health	1
Psychology & Integrated Health Studies	1
Social Sciences	1
Social Transformation Studies	1
Spanish	1

As we can see the top 5 majors of GFSL students are Animal Science, Agricultural Communications, Agricultural Education, Agricultural Economics, and Food Science which are

all housed under the College of Agriculture. However there is also presence from the Arts & Sciences and Health & Human Sciences colleges in this survey. Not reflected in this current survey is the College of Engineering which has been regularly represented in the classroom.

Q2: Are you pursuing a secondary major in Global Food Systems Leadership?



Of the students that filled out the survey, 54% report that they are currently pursuing or planning to pursue the secondary major, 22% report that they do not plan to continue in GFSL courses, and 24% report that they are not sure yet.

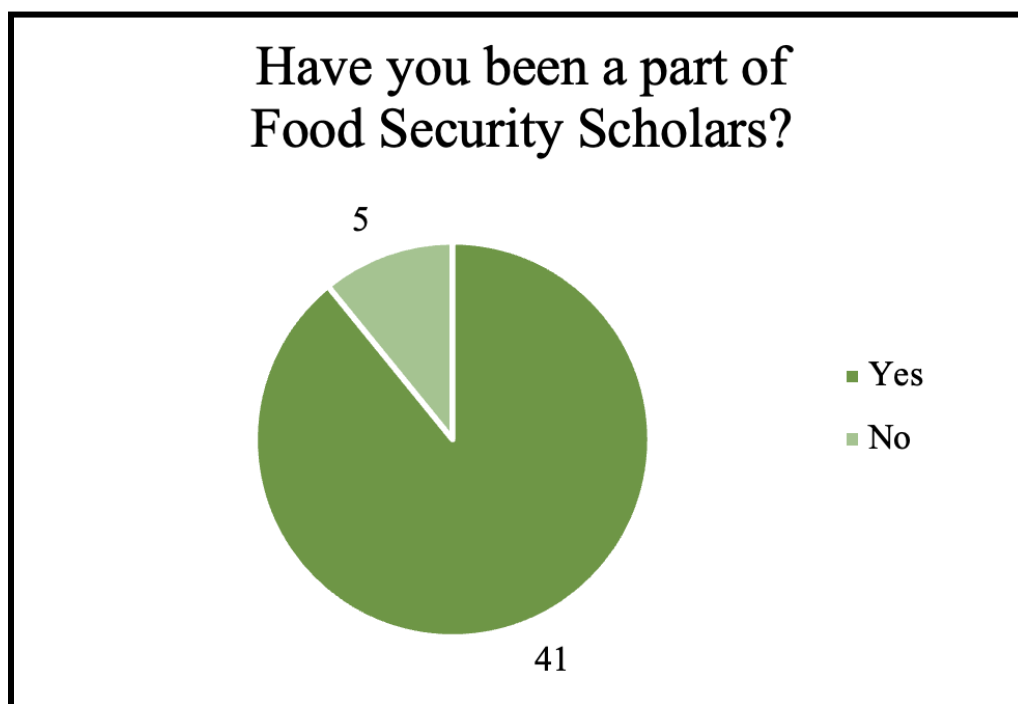
Q3: What other areas of study are you pursuing (minors, certificates)?

There were a total of 35 minors or certificates reported being pursued by the survey takers with the top ones being Animal Science (4), Leadership Studies (3), Plant Pathology (2), Agricultural

Economics (2), Nonprofit Leadership (2), International Agriculture (2), and Business (2). Other areas ranged from global health to spanish to anthropology.

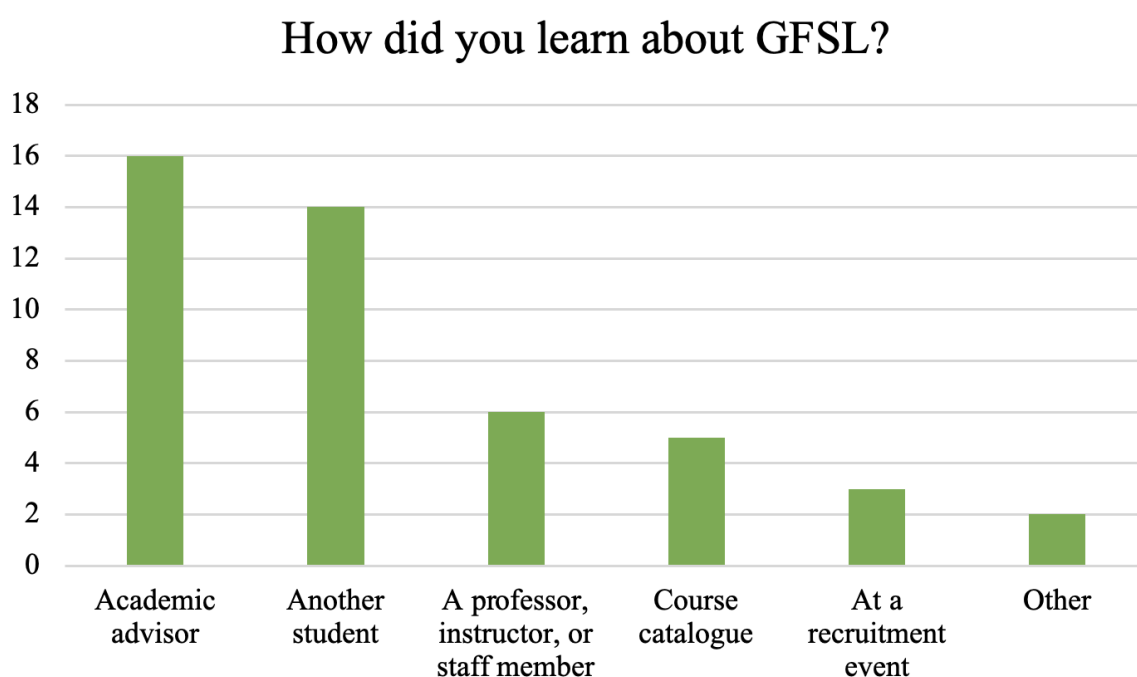
Q4: Are you, or have you been, a part of Food Security Scholars?

Below we can see that 89% of respondents in a GFSL course have not been a part of Food Security Scholars. On one hand this is good for Food Security Scholars because it means the program is attracting a wide range of students who would not otherwise have learned or talked about issues in the global food system. However, on the other hand, it shows that there is not a lot of connection between the two programs. This could be something to work towards strengthening in the future.



Q5: How did you first learn about the Global Food Systems Leadership program?

From the survey we were able to find that students primarily learn about the secondary major through either their academic advisor or through another student. Interestingly enough, no responses said social media and only three said they learned about GFSL at a recruitment event. For future expansion, these two areas will be something to try to focus on.



Q6: Why did you want to participate in GFSL while at K-State?

There were six main themes that students discussed as to why they pursued these courses.

1. Desire to have a better and wider understanding of the Global Food System
 - a. *"I wanted a broader perspective on agriculture and its impacts on those from different backgrounds than me."*

2. Interdisciplinary Approach that allows students to explore multiple areas of interest

- a. *"I wanted to find something that merged my passions of education, leadership, policy, and food security and GFSL was the perfect answer!"*

3. Personal Lived Experiences with Food Insecurity

- a. *"...When I saw that this program was aimed to provide the next generation of leaders in multiple fields to combat the flaws in a system that I personally suffered through, I knew I had to join... This major has allowed me to travel to low resourced, high risk communities and give back/educate on the importance of our food system, inspiring others to work for this same common goal."*

4. Initial Exposure led to a Sparked Interest

- a. *"At first, I didn't know what GFSL was... after I took the first class, I wanted to keep practicing systems thinking and understanding other perspectives."*

5. Desire for Continued Leadership Development

- a. *"...I was especially hooked by the leadership component—learning how to build the right mindset, foster cross-cultural understanding, and become someone who can advocate for positive change in agriculture on a global scale."*

6. Meets Future Career Interests

- a. *"I felt like my career goals aligned with what I would learn in GFSL."*

Q7: What do you rate GENAG/LEAD 225: Fundamentals of Global Food Systems Leadership on a scale of 1-5?

Average Score: **4.79** out of 5

Score Distribution:

- **5:** 40 students
- **4:** 6 students
- **3:** 1 student

The main comments on LEAD 225 were as follows:

- Changed their worldview and understanding of the global food system
- The instructors created a space that was safe and intellectually challenging
- Enjoyed the interactive, discussion-based format of class
- Loved the diversity of perspectives in the room
- Great introduction to understanding systems thinking
- Very impactful and many students stated it was their favorite class they've taken at K-State
- Some students felt that topics were at some point repetitive or not about core course content
- Some topics were presented with some bias
- Lecture-heavy classes were hard to follow

Q8: What do you rate GENAG/LEAD 325: Uncertainty in Global Food Systems Leadership on a scale of 1-5?

Of those that responded to the survey, 30 students have taken this course and gave the following ratings.

Average Score: **4.53** out of 5

Score Distribution:

- **5:** 23 students
- **4:** 5 students
- **3:** 2 student

The main comments on LEAD 325 were as follows:

- There was a continued progression of learning from LEAD 225
- Enjoyed the reflection on self-contributions to the issues in the global food system
- Enjoyed diversity of perspectives but also the fact that the class is a safe space to share your perspective without being “wrong”
- Gained more leadership skills and began to identify biases they have in their personal life
- The sheer number of speakers had giving lectures made it difficult for more hands-on learning
- There was some students who felt like the content became repetitive from LEAD 225
- Wasn’t challenged as much as in LEAD 225

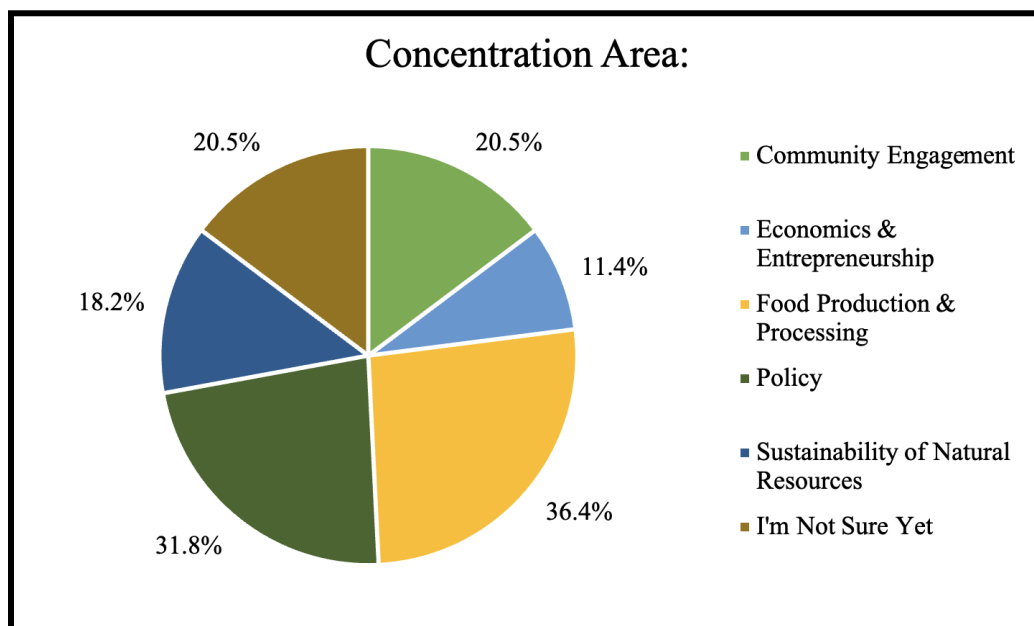
Q9: What do you rate GENAG/LEAD 425: Global Food Systems Leadership in Action on a scale of 1-5?

Of those who filled out the survey, only 5 had completed LEAD 425, but they all rated this course as a 5. Feedback shows that this course allowed students to talk a lot more about current global issues that the other courses weren't as flexible to be able to do. There was a diverse set of speakers that allowed for students to have a meaningful capstone course experience. While all of the students who responded were very positive about their experience, it would be beneficial to survey the next set of students in the course to get their perspective.

Q10: Did the courses that you have participated in meet your expectations or what you thought the course would be about? If not, please list which course and why.

None of the respondents stated that any of the courses did not meet their expectations. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive with students sharing that this program has had a huge impact on the way they view the world and been transformative in their learning. This helps affirm that expanding the curriculum to a major would allow more students to be impacted.

Q11: Which of the Areas of Concentration are you a part of?



The most popular concentrations by far are Food Production & Processing and Policy. These areas of concentration are important to see for further development of curriculum and future pathways.

Q12: What have you learned or experienced through GFSL that has made an impact on you (personally, academically, professionally)?

Below are samples of quotes from students on the main things that they have taken away from the GFSL courses:

- *“GFSL encourages you to look at the variety of factors that contribute to a problem and also encourages you to try and solve the root of the problem rather than the low hanging fruit.”*

- *“One thing that has really stuck with me is that food insecurity isn't just a poverty issue. It's a system issue that will take more than money to fix. Whole systems will have to be overhauled or worked on in order to feed the world.”*
- *“The danger of a single story. GFSL has shown me that when we have empathy for others, societies' simple answers to put over problems as band-aids simply will not work for every situation.”*

Q13: List 1-4 experiences you had during GFSL that has stuck with you. Why did they leave such an impact? Ex. speakers, projects, field trips, etc.

Here is a list of the top GFSL experiences that have stuck with students:

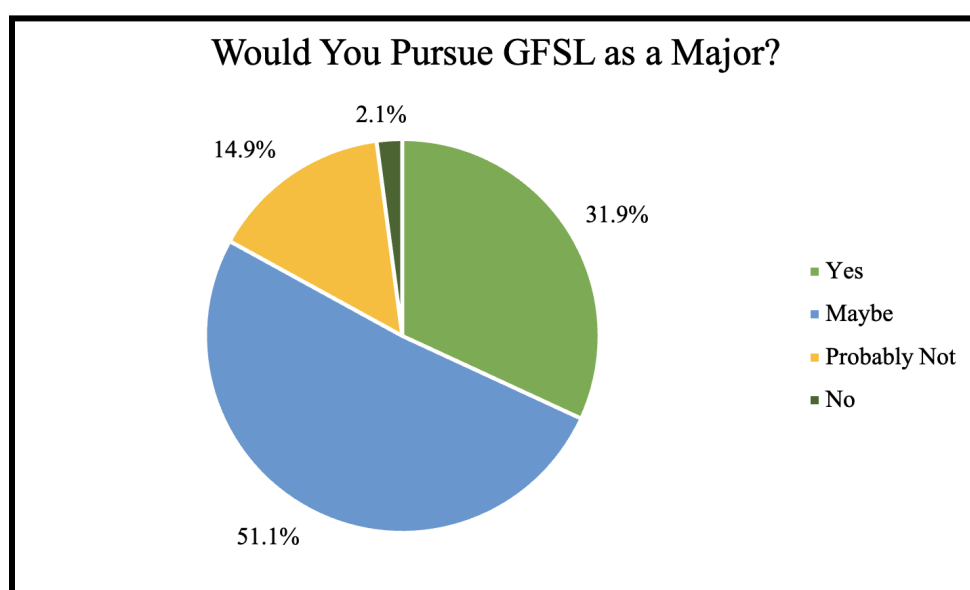
1. Guest Speakers
 - a. Chuck Warta, Kat Gregorson, Muthoni, Carl & Mary Ice, etc.
2. Systems Thinking Activities
 - a. The “Danger of a Single Story” video and homeostasis game
3. Food for Thought Presentations
4. Lessons on Global Perspectives
 - a. Guest lectures on study abroad experiences and lessons on areas such as global conflict and decolonization
5. Volunteering
6. Family Interviews
7. Fast 5 Presentations

8. Capstone Projects

Q14: How does GFSL complement or add to your primary area of study?

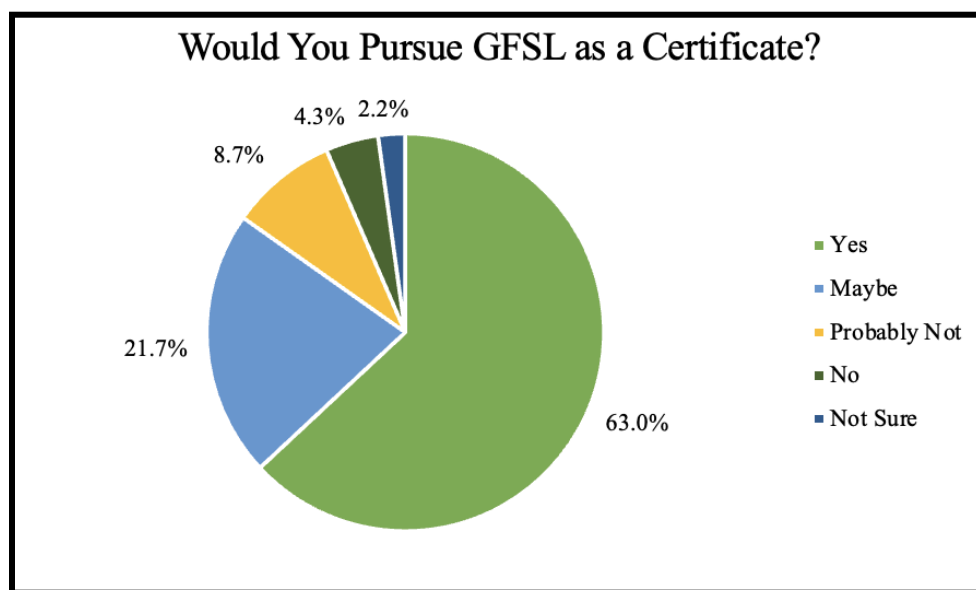
Many of the responses touch on the fact that GFSL allowed them to take their more technical primary major such as agronomy and connect it to ethical, global, and social considerations. Being in these courses improves students' empathy, leadership, and understanding of how to connect to different perspectives. Students in areas such as policy and economics were able to better understand concepts such as trade and government programs through these courses. GFSL has allowed students to better understand not just the issues that face their primary area of study but also the greater global food system and how to begin having conversations on how to solve these challenges.

Q15: If Global Food Systems Leadership had been available as a full major during your time at K-State, would you have pursued it?



Of the respondents, 83% state that they would or maybe would pursue GFSL as a major if it was available. This is huge in showing that students are interested in further learning in this program. It would be interesting to see if this percentage would increase if we were able to survey students after they had completed all three current core courses.

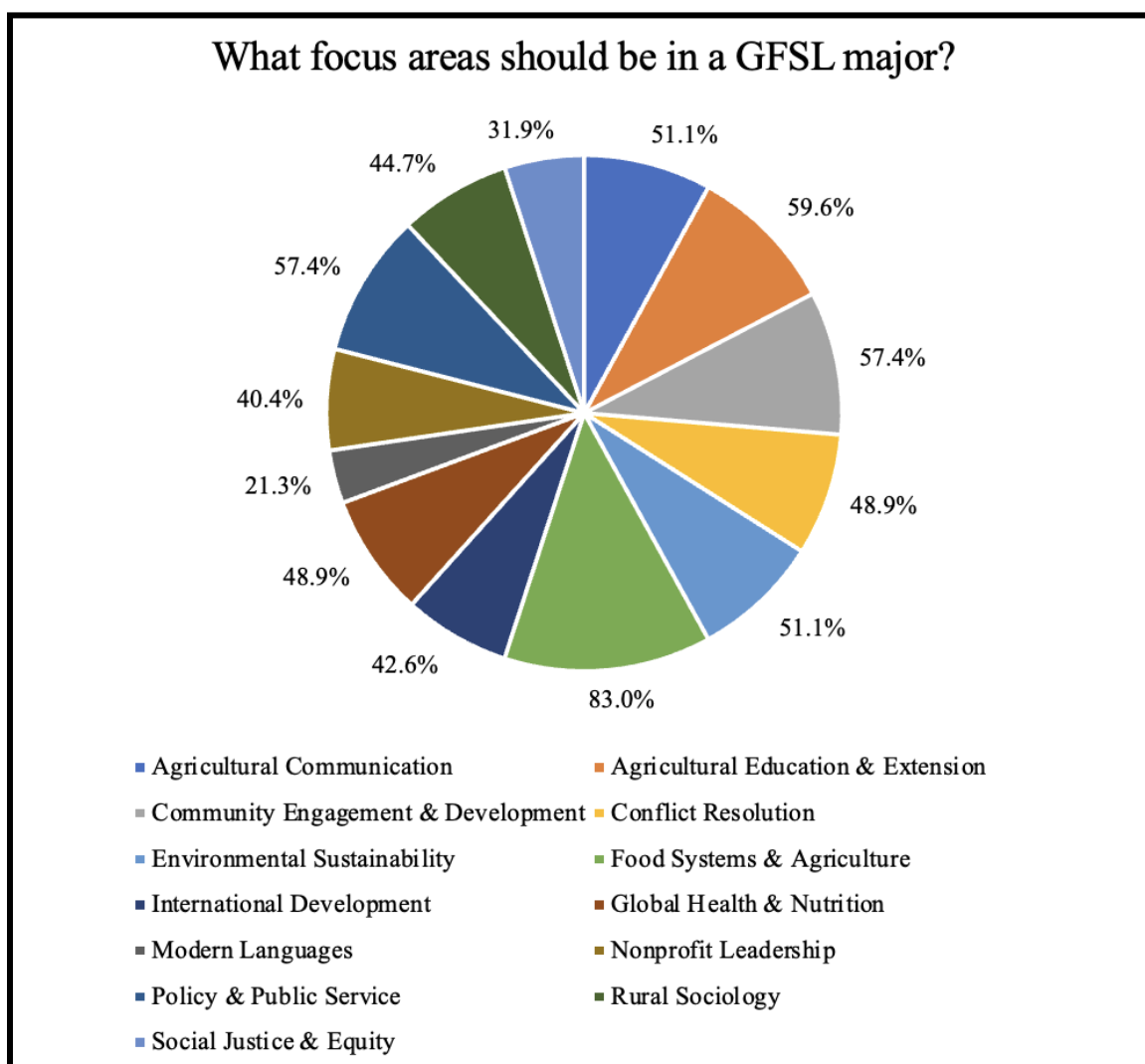
Q16: If Global Food Systems Leadership had been available as a certificate rather than a secondary major during your time at K-State, would you have pursued it?



Of the respondents, 84.7% state that they would or maybe would pursue GFSL as a certificate if it was available. This statistic also shows the need for GFSL to still be offered as a certificate for students still interested in this interdisciplinary approach.

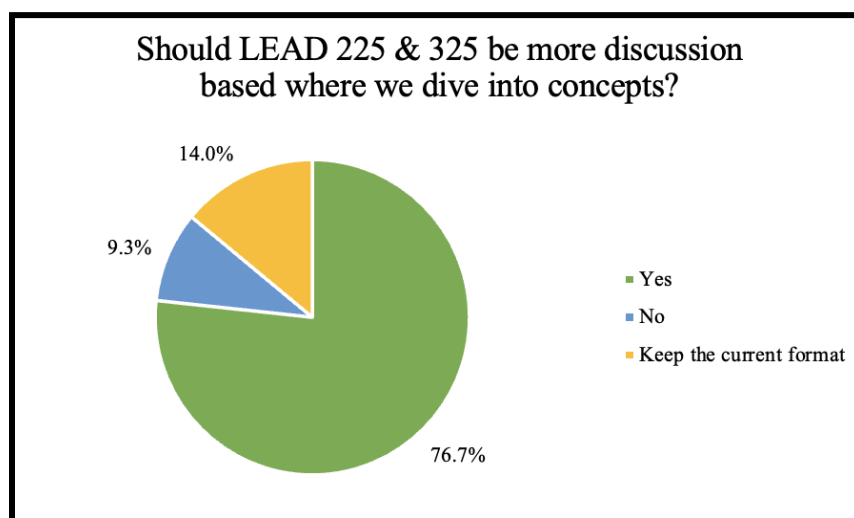
Q17: What types of courses or focus areas would you like to see in a Global Food Systems Leadership major?

The leading course subjects students would like to see offered in a major include Food Systems & Agriculture, Agricultural Education & Extension, Community Engagement & Development, Policy & Public Service, Agricultural Communication, and Environmental Sustainability.

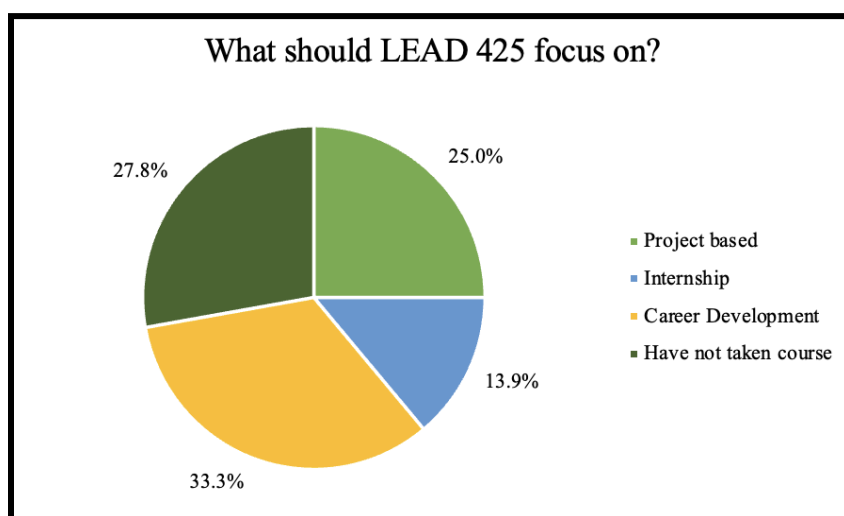


Q18: Should the GENAG/LEAD 225 & 325 classes be more discussion and guest-speaker based where we mainly spend time diving into concepts and theories?

Students overwhelmingly respond that class structure for LEAD 225 & 325 should stay similar to how it is currently with a discussion format and diving into concepts.



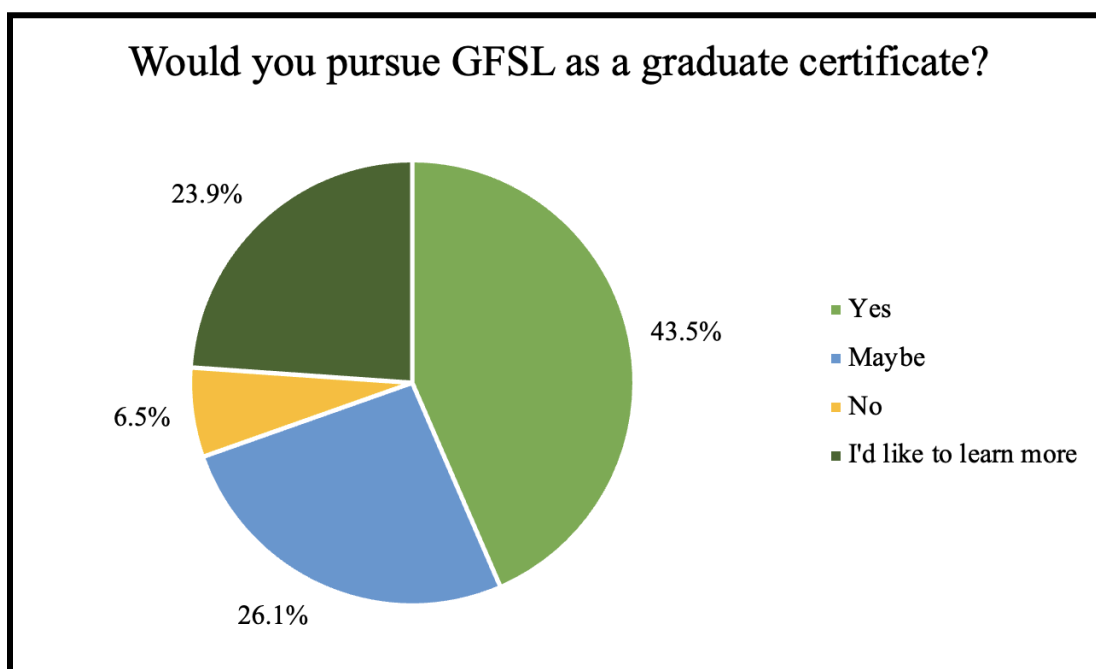
Q19: Should the GENAG/LEAD 425 class change to be more project based, an internship, or a career development course?



Students are mostly interested in having LEAD 425 focus on career development and projects to teach curriculum.

Q20: Would you be interested in pursuing a graduate certificate in Global Food Systems Leadership if it became available?

A majority of students report that they would be interested in pursuing or learning more about a graduate certificate in GFSL if it was offered. This demonstrates the interest in not just GFSL students pursuing graduate degrees but that they would want to study this type of interdisciplinary content.



Conclusion of Survey Results:

Of the 47 students surveyed, there is strong interest and support for expanding the Global Food Systems Leadership program. While most current students' primary majors are found in the College of Agriculture, there is a growing interest from other colleges such as Health & Human Sciences, Arts & Sciences, and Business Administration. Students report being drawn to GFSL for the diverse perspectives, global focus, systems-thinking approach, and effort to talk about the current and ethical issues affecting food and agriculture. All three core courses are highly rated, demonstrating the transformative impact of GFSL on a student's learning. 83% of students said they would pursue or want to learn more about GFSL being offered as a standalone major, and 85% say they would either pursue or want to learn more about a certificate option. This demonstrates that students in the courses feel that GFSL fills a gap in their current education and wish to continue learning through this interdisciplinary lens.

Proposed Curriculum Development

Based on the feedback from the student survey, comparison of similar programs at other institutions, and conversations with K-State faculty, below is the proposed list for a potential curriculum for the Global Food Systems Leadership major and certificate option.

Global Food Systems Leadership Curriculum Certificate List:

GENAG/LEAD 225: Fundamentals of Global Food Systems Leadership, 3 credit hours

GENAG/LEAD 325: Uncertainty in Global Food Systems Leadership, 3 credit hours

GENAG/LEAD 425: Global Food Systems Leadership in Action, 3 credit hours

LEAD 350: Culture and Context in Leadership, 3 credit hours

Choose 2 Food & Agricultural Electives, 6 hours

Total Hours Required for Certificate Completion: 18 hours

Global Food Systems Leadership Curriculum List:

Kansas State University Core: 34-36 Credit Hours:

English (Written Communication Outcomes): 6 Credit Hours

ENGL 100 - Expository Writing I Credits: 3

ENGL 200 - Expository Writing II Credits: 3

Communication (Oral Communication Outcomes): 3 Credit Hours

COMM 106 - Public Speaking I Credits: 3

Math & Statistics (Quantitative Literacy Outcomes): 6 Credit Hours

MATH 205 - General Calculus and Linear Algebra Credits:

STAT 225 - Introduction to Statistics Credits: 3

Natural & Physical Sciences (Sciences Outcomes): 4-5 Credit Hours

Choose 1 subject area which must include a lab.

Examples:

BIOL 198 - Principles of Biology Credits: 4

CHM 210 - Chemistry I Credits: 4

GEOL 103 - Geology Laboratory Credits: 1

GEOL 115 - Environmental Geology Credits: 3

GEOL 125 - Natural Disasters Credits: 3

PHYS 113 - General Physics I Credits:

Social & Behavioral Sciences (Social Sciences Outcomes): 6 Credit Hours

At least 2 courses from 2 subjects under this area.

Required:

AGEC 120 - Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness Credits: 3

POLSC 135 - Introduction to Comparative Politics Credits: 3

POLSC 250 - Environmental Political Thought: The Future of Food, Air, Water, and Soil Credits: 3

SOCIO 211 - Introduction to Sociology Credits: 3

Arts & Humanities (Arts & Humanities Outcomes): 6 Credit Hours

At least 2 courses from 2 subjects under this area.

Examples:

2 Language courses

Free Electives (Institutionally Designated Area): 6 Credit Hours

Includes ALL 100 and 200 level courses at K-State or in Transfer.

Note: One course may be used to satisfy more than one requirement. However, students must complete a total of 34-36 credit hours of general education courses.

For a Full Listing of K-State 100/200 level courses you may search those courses individually via the University Course Catalog.

TOTAL CREDITS: 34-36 hours

Global Food Systems Leadership Core: 29 credit hours

GENAG/LEAD ??? : Orientation, 1 credit hour

GENAG/LEAD 225: Fundamentals of Global Food Systems Leadership, 3 credit hours

GENAG/LEAD 325: Uncertainty in Global Food Systems Leadership, 3 credit hours

GENAG/LEAD 425: Global Food Systems Leadership in Action, 3 credit hours

GENAG/LEAD ??? : Topics Courses, 1 credit hour each, 3 are required

GENAG/LEAD ??? : Senior Capstone Project, 3 credit hours

Internship: 4 credit hours

GENAG/LEAD ??? : Internship Preparation, 1 credit hour

Choose 1 of the following:

GENAG/LEAD ??? : Global Internship, 3 credit hours

GENAG/LEAD ??? : United States Internship, 3 credit hours

Leadership: 6 credit hours

LEAD 350: Culture and Context in Leadership, 3 credit hours

LEAD 420: Theories of Nonprofit Leadership, 3 credit hours

Nutrition: 3 credit hours

FNDH 132: Basic Nutrition, 3 credit hours

Society & Development: Choose one of the following, 3 credit hours

SOCIO 532 - Our Communities, Our Futures Credits: 3 (prereq is SOCIO 211)

SOCIO 533 - Society, Food, and Agriculture Credits: 3 (prereq is SOCIO 211)

SOCIO 507 - International Development and Social Change Credits: 3

Ag Systems & Policy: Choose one of the following, 3 credit hours

AGEC 315 - Contemporary Issues in Global Food and Agricultural Systems Credits: 3 (prereq is AGECE 120)

AGEC 411 - Agricultural Policy Credits: 3 (prereq is AGECE 120)

Agricultural Economics: 6 credit hours

AGEC 615 - Global Agricultural and Economic Development Credits: 3

AGEC 710 - Comparative Food and Agriculture Systems Credits: 3

Other Required Courses: 9 credit hours

CNRES 532 - Conflict Resolution across Cultures & Contexts Credits: 3

SOCIO 541 - Wealth, Power, and Privilege Credits: 3

POLSC ??? - Course of your choosing

Language: 8 credit hours

Choose one of the following languages (I-IV courses) and take two courses:

Arabic

Chinese

French

German

Japanese

Spanish

Agricultural and Food Science Technology Electives: (6-8 credit hours)

Examples:

Crop Science I and Lab, Intro to Milling Science and Lab, Principles of Animal Science,

Principles of Horticultural Science

Specialty Track Electives: (21 credit hours)

Options can include: Any major or minor in the College of Ag (Economics & Business, Food Production & Processing), Community Engagement, Public Health, Policy, Sustainability of

Natural Resources, Leadership, Nonprofit Leadership, Nutrition, Language, Conflict Resolution, Social Justice

Unrestricted electives as needed to meet 120 credit hours

Total Hours Required for Graduation: 120

I have also created a mock up of what a four-year plan for the major could look like which is below:

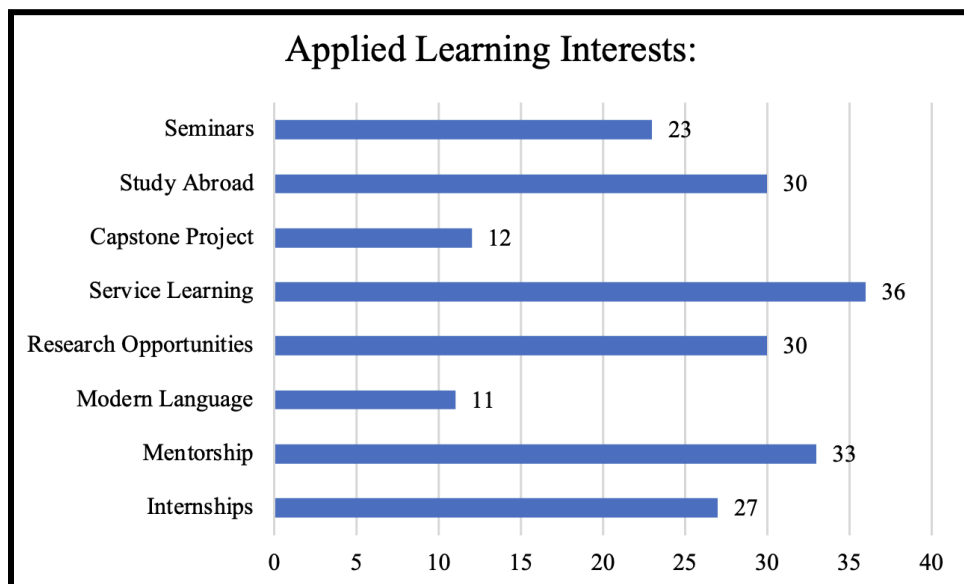
Global Food Systems Leadership Major, Four Year Plan					
Freshman					
Fall:			Spring:		
GFSL 100	Global Food Systems Leadership Orientation	1	GFSL 325	Uncertainty in Global Food Systems Leadership	3
GFSL 225	Fundamentals of Global Food Systems Leadership	3	POLSC 135	Introduction to Comparative Politics	3
AGEC 120	Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness	3	SOCIO 211	Intro to Sociology	3
MATH 205	General Calculus & Linear Algebra	3	Natural Sci	CHM 110 & 111, BIOL 198, PHYS 113 Recommended	4
ENGL 100	Expository Writing I	3	ENGL 200	Expository Writing II	3
Total		13	Total		16
Sophomore					
Fall:			Spring:		
LEAD 350	Culture & Context in Leadership	3	GFSL 425	Global Food Systems Leadership in Action	3
Language I	Aarabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, or Spanish	4	Language II	Aarabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, or Spanish	4
Ag Science I	Crop Science, Hort, Milling, Animal Science	3	Ag Science II	Crop Science, Hort, Milling, Animal Science	3
COMM 106	Public Speaking I	3	POLSC 250	Environmental Political Thought: The Future of Food, Air, Water, and Soil	3
ECON 110	Intro to Macroeconomics	3	STAT 225	Introduction to Statistics	3
Total		16	Total		16
Junior					
Fall:			Spring:		
GFSL ???	Topics in the Global Food System	1	GFSL ???	Topics in the Global Food System	1
FNDH 132	Basic Nutrition	3	CNRES 532	Conflict Resolution across Cultures & Contexts	3
Ag Systems & Policy	AGEC 411 or AGECE 315	3	Sociology	SOCIO 532 or 533	3
Specialty Elective		3	Specialty Elective		3
Specialty Elective		3	Specialty Elective		3
Total		13	Total		13
Senior					
Fall:			Spring:		
GFSL ???	Topics in the Global Food System	1	GFSL 475	GFSL Internship, Global or U.S.	3
GFSL ???	Internship Preparation	1	AGEC 710	Comparative Food and Agriculture Systems	3
GFSL 500	GFSL Senior Capstone	3	Political Science	Political Science course of your choosing	3
AGEC 615	Global Ag Development	3	Specialty Elective		3
LEAD 420	Theories of Nonprofit Leadership	3	Specialty Elective		3
SOCIO 541	Wealth, Power, and Privilege	3	Total		15
Specialty Elective		3			
Total		17			
				Total	119

Applied Learning Opportunities

In conjunction with the new Applied Learning imperative, GFSL should develop many applied learning opportunities for its students. To ensure this success, part of the curriculum will be four credit hours related to applied learning through an internship. These four credit hours include one preparation course and either a U.S. or a Global internship experience:

1. **GENAG/LEAD Internship Preparation (1 credit hour):** This class is for students to build their resumes, meet with potential employers, and explore internship options.
2. **GENAG/LEAD Global Internship (3 credit hours):** This internship/learning experience will be for students interested in pursuing an internship or learning experience with a food and agriculture focus abroad.
3. **GENAG/LEAD U.S. Internship (3 credit hours):** This domestic internship/learning experience will be any opportunity with a food and agriculture focus.

When surveying students about what other applied learning experiences they think would be important for a Global Food Systems Leadership major to include, these were the results.



These experiences can be addressed through proposed curriculum, further program expansion, and a better advertisement of opportunities through other departments at K-State. Below are other experiences that are already developed that students could pursue:

- **Food Security Scholars:** a program for students who are interested in understanding food security systems and challenging the way we think about food insecurity, community needs and how we provide food.
- **Food & Agriculture Study Tour to Kenya:** this GFSL study tour officially launched this January allowing students to travel the country to better understand another country's food system from both a rural and urban lens.
- **International Service Teams:** this program has varied opportunities for students to serve abroad during the summer with some of the programs having a focus on food and

agriculture. In the future, GFSL could work with IST to have a regular team focused on food systems work.

- **Undergraduate Research Amplification Project:** launching in the fall this Scholar Development and Undergraduate Research program offers 10 undergraduates \$2,000.00 to support their unfunded, student-directed research project for one academic year.
- Potential Internship Opportunities:
 - With Departments across the College of Agriculture that is under a student's specialty track
 - Cats' Cupboard staff positions or serving on the Advisory Board
 - K-State Research & Extension: Local Food Fellows program, Rural Grocery Initiative, etc.
 - Nonprofits in Manhattan such as Flint Hills Breadbasket or Common Table
 - Food and Farm Council of Riley County and City of Manhattan
 - Flinchbaugh Food & Agriculture Policy Fellowship: this program connects students to an internship with a Kansas Commodity group or state government agency during the spring semester and then a summer internship in Washington D.C. with a food and agriculture policy focus.

These are a few current opportunities that GFSL students could begin to get involved in to apply what they have been learning in the classroom. Due to the multitude of partnerships the program has created, many other opportunities could be developed.

Program Proposal Process

If the Global Food Systems Leadership Program chooses to pursue changes to the program after submitting this project, they will have to go through a process. I have outlined the following steps to implement a Global Food Systems Leadership major and certificate.

1. Continue to gather feedback from students, alumni, and industry partners and make revisions to proposals.
2. Share the proposal with the faculty who will teach the program courses. Get their feedback and support for the program.
3. Get the proposal reviewed by Dr. Dan Moser and Dr. Trish Gott, associate deans of the College of Agriculture and Staley School of Leadership.
4. Get Dean Mary Tolar of the Staley School and the new Dean of the College of Agriculture to approve the proposal and get letters of support.
5. Use the K-State Curriculog platform to complete the Major New Program and New Certificate Form. These forms include:
 - a. A detailed program description and rationale
 - b. Learning outcomes
 - c. Curriculum outlines for required and elective courses
 - d. Assessment plan
 - e. Resource needs
 - f. Letters of support from academic units
6. Gain approval from the College of Agriculture and the Staley School of Leadership curriculum committees based on the Curriculum proposal.

7. Gain approval from the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee.
8. Gain approval from the Faculty Senate.
9. Submit the KBOR New Degree Program form to the Kansas Board of Regents. This form includes:
 - a. Industry demand
 - b. Enrollment projections
 - c. Cost and funding plan
 - d. Institutional capacity
10. Go through a 10-day open comment period with KBOR, make any requested revisions until approval.
11. Market and recruit target students for the new programs!

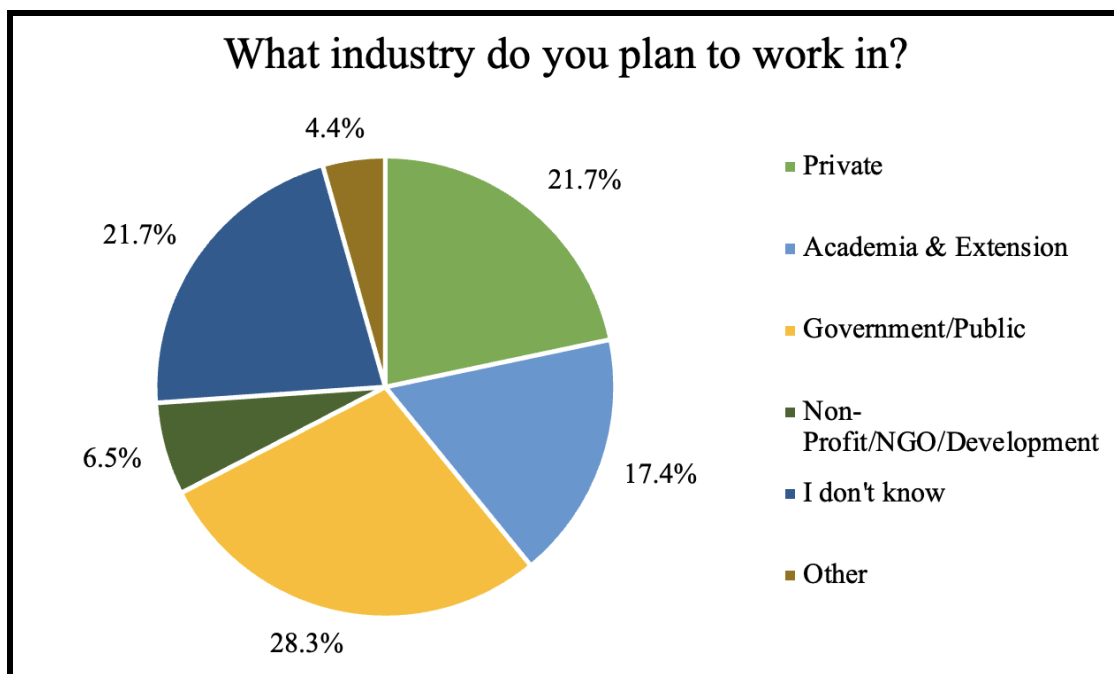
Recruitment Strategy & Target Student Audience

Upon gaining approval for the new major and certificate, GFSL can begin to recruit! Due to its interdisciplinary nature, the Global Food Systems Leadership program attracts a diverse pool of students. Still, some key features target students who would pursue the major. The target GFSL student is curious about the world, interested and motivated in learning about and addressing global issues, and wants to make an impact on their community. These students care about sustainability, equality, food security, leadership, and public service. They don't just want to take classes that only lecture to their students, but that allow them to go out into their communities and apply their learning through projects and service. They don't necessarily want to become an expert in just one area, but have a good understanding of the entire food and agriculture system. While students with an agriculture background and passion are most likely to be drawn to a program like this, GFSL also draws in students interested in global health, nutrition, policy, international development, sustainability, engineering, and nonprofit work. Students involved in programs like 4-H and FFA would be a focus for recruitment.

Shared in the survey, students don't think GFSL should only be marketed as an agriculture program. This can turn away people who don't already have a connection to farming and agriculture. GFSL should focus on advertising its interdisciplinary approach, unique class structures, systems-thinking perspective, and the applied learning opportunities it offers. Some suggestions to improve recruitment include:

- Attending student orientations and the College of Agriculture open house
- Increasing social media engagement and student testimonies
- Being more present with the Staley School of Leadership Ambassadors in discussing GFSL with prospective students
- Update the website and course descriptions
- Creating a Global Food Systems Leadership program student organization, separate from Food Security Scholars
- Leverage alumni to share the impact GFSL has had on their careers
- Get representation on the College of Agriculture Council

Students also shared that while offering the major is important, it is equally important to still offer a certificate for those who want the core content but can't do a full major. Creating a GFSL student organization would allow students to interact more with each other outside of class and allow for further learning.

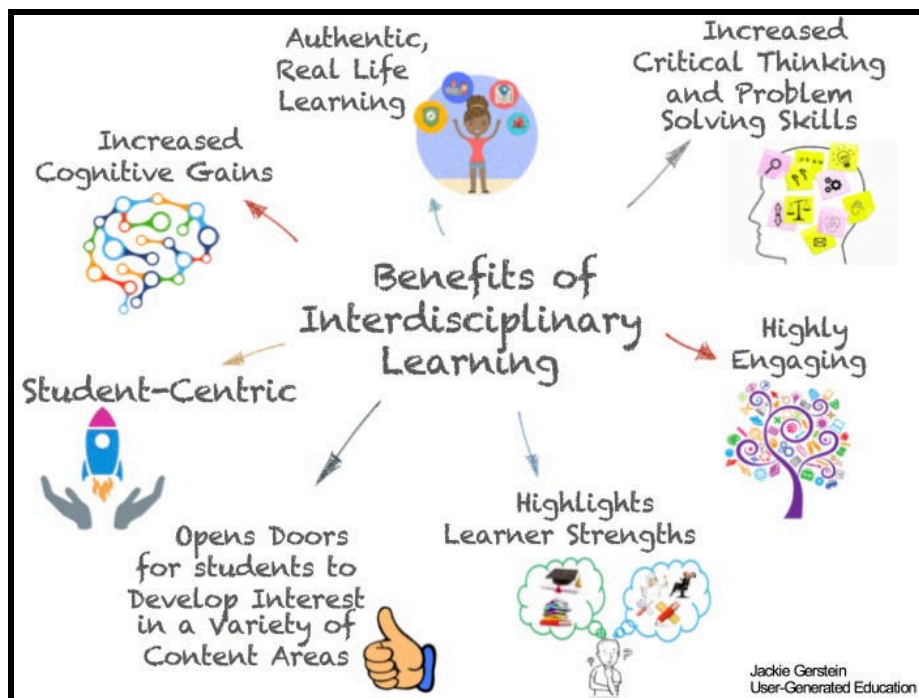


Lastly, I asked students where they see themselves working in the future. The respondents showed a significant interest in working in public service, the private sector, academia, or extension. Target GFSL students are motivated by three main things: serving others, a systems-thinking mindset, and wanting to lead change across multiple areas of study.

Value of Interdisciplinary Education

The Global Food Systems Leadership program was created through an interdisciplinary approach because the founders believed that the only way we can solve the most significant global food systems challenges, like hunger, poverty, and climate change, is only through a systems approach where students learn more about and understand more than just one academic area. Through teaching its students not just about agriculture but also about nutrition, economics, political science, sociology, and more, GFSL teaches students how to collaborate across disciplines.

One concern with an interdisciplinary program like GFSL is that it is “a mile wide and an inch deep,” leading to students not being able to master any field. To address this concern, the specialty ensures that students take 21 credit hours in one field, allowing them to “master” the subject. By having this specialty track, students can still have one field area they are an expert in while gaining a good understanding of many other fields that affect the food system, leading to a broader learning experience. By understanding how a system functions, students can understand, for example, how something like agricultural trade policies impacts humanitarian aid efforts, which impacts nutritional outcomes.



Gerstein, Jackie. "All Lessons Should Be Interdisciplinary." Medium, 27 Jan. 2019, <https://medium.com/@jackiegerstein/all-lessons-should-be-interdisciplinary-ef619be0a747>.

According to Dr. Jackie Gerstein, interdisciplinary education has many benefits, which can be seen through the Global Food Systems Leadership program. Interdisciplinary education:

- Increases cognitive gains
- Is student-centric
- Provides authentic, real-life learning
- Highlights learner strengths
- It is highly engaging for learners
- Leads to increased critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- Opens doors for students to develop a variety of interests across areas of content

The curriculum for GFSL reflects many of these benefits through the diversity of perspectives, applied learning opportunities, and open discussions. One student survey response demonstrates

the benefit of interdisciplinary education on their perspective: "It ties a lot of my studies in a way that I didn't think was possible. It has created a big picture of what my career may look like in agricultural development, specifically in research and innovations." So, interdisciplinary education doesn't limit students ' ability to hone in on one specific field but allows them the flexibility to understand and draw connections between the bigger system.

Conclusion

The Global Food Systems Leadership program represents a unique approach needed in education to equip students to go out into the world and work on complex challenges in the food system, like hunger and climate change. It develops students into leaders who can think across disciplines and divides. This honors project was created to explore what would be needed to adapt the current secondary major into a full undergraduate major and certificate in a more impactful way that reaches more students.

When I first started this project, I interviewed founding faculty Dr. Kris Boone and Dr. Shannon Washburn to better understand the needs of students and the industry when this program was created. From these interviews, it was clear that GFSL was created to fill a gap that K-State had for students who were passionate about agriculture, policy, and public service.

Through the International Leadership Association's external review, analysis of strategic plans, and comparison of peer and aspirational institutions, I could better understand the GFSL program's current strengths and future opportunities for growth. My research found that the Global Food Systems Leadership program aligns perfectly with K-State's land-grant mission by equipping students to solve challenges and serve others.

After surveying 47 students about the current state of the program as well as potential changes for the future, I gained significant findings that shaped the rest of my project. Students in GFSL courses reported how this program has changed the way they view their primary major, exposed them to new career pathways, and made them more confident to go out into their communities

and apply what they have learned to make a change. Students overwhelmingly supported the creation of a standalone major and the adaptation of the secondary major to a certificate option, and they were interested in pursuing one of those options, demonstrating students' desire to expand the program.

This project then outlined a proposed curriculum plan for the major and certificate and identified current applied learning opportunities that the program should connect students to and future ones to develop. I then outlined the following steps that need to be completed to implement these programs internally through university processes and externally through the Kansas Board of Regents. Upon program approval, I listed qualities that target students have as well as some ideas for recruitment and marketing in the future.

Lastly, I argued the importance of a program like the Global Food Systems Leadership program because of its interdisciplinary approach. Expanding GFSL into a major and a certificate will reach more students and make K-State a leader in food and agriculture interdisciplinary education.

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