Evaluation of Undergraduate Students Involvement in the Club Activities of
the Department of Agricultural Economics at Texas A&M University

A goal of the undergraduate program in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Texas A&M University is to develop the whole student. The Department operates under the assumption that it can positively affect the growth and development of students through student involvement in the activities of department sponsored clubs. The department employs a dynamic, multifaceted approach to encourage student participation in club activities, yet a trend of declining student involvement in these activities has been observed.

Research suggests that student involvement in club activities contributes to the student’s cognitive development (Terenzini, Pascarella, & Blimling, 1996), in addition to developing competence, learning to manage emotions, developing mature relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

Others (Cooper, Healy, & Simpson, 1994) have found that students involved in clubs or organizations score higher than nonmembers on factors such as educational involvement, career planning, lifestyle planning, cultural participation, and academic autonomy.

This study attempts to identify the profile of the mainstream student in the Texas A&M University Department of Agricultural Economics and to identify factors that limit students’ involvement in departmental club activities.