



Carola Grebitus is Associate Professor at Arizona State University. She has been a faculty member at Bonn University, Germany, and Post-doc at Iowa State University and University of Alberta, Canada. Carola holds a Ph.D. from Kiel University, Germany. Her research has been funded with over \$5 million, e.g., by USDA and NSF. She has published 80 articles, among others, in the *AJAE*, *AEPP*, *Food Policy*, *ERAE*, and marketing and economics journals. She is area editor of *Q Open* and served as guest editor for *AEPP* and *ERAE*. Carola served as Director on the Board of the AAEA, as well as chair of AAEA's membership committee, EXECON, IBES, and FSN. She has organized several AAEA pre- and post-conference workshops, as well as track sessions, and was involved in AAEA mentoring workshops. She served on the AAEA DEI Task Force and is currently Co-Chair of the AAEA Health and Wellbeing Task Force.

1. What is the biggest concern/problem facing AAEA?

One of the biggest concerns facing AAEA is the need to support members in relevant areas. There are two areas that I believe are vital to the profession and AAEA. First, the transparency of science has been questioned, and we are faced with what Ferraro and Shukla (2023) dubbed a “credibility crisis in agricultural economics.” Only a small percentage of research tries to replicate studies, and of those replicated, an even lower share can be reproduced. AAEA can play a key role in designing and adopting best practices for replications in applied and agricultural economics. Given our diverse membership and use of data (e.g., primary data, secondary data), we need guidelines that address the variety of research conducted by members. My goal would be to provide necessary aid to members in acquiring skills and resources to produce transparent and replicable research. For instance, we can offer workshops (in-person and virtual) to keep members abreast of new developments, such as pre-registration of studies, pre-analysis plans, data storage, data confidentiality, and data availability. We can also ensure that new developments align with members’ best interests.

Second, a high fraction of AAEA members have health and wellbeing concerns – students and faculty both state that they are facing mental health issues. A recent study by Zhang, Fang and Nayga (2024) found that 76% of graduate students are worried about their work when they are off work, and 39% of graduate students report signs of anxiety, depression, and even suicidal ideation. In addition, data collected for AAEA highlights that minorities experience situations during education and in the workplace that are exacerbating feelings of being unwelcome. I believe it is essential for the AAEA to take a strong supportive role. We have to provide information and resources to help alleviate the potential impacts of our jobs and life experiences on members’ health. Graduate students and junior professionals are experiencing the stresses of dissertation work and being on tenure track, while mid- and senior-career members have been dealing with pressure for a prolonged time. It would be my priority to provide resources and make funds available to offer potential health-related solutions, as well as to create an inclusive and welcoming culture.

2. What actions would you initiate to improve the situation described in your response to the previous question?

Regarding transparency in science more generally, and replications in particular, we need to develop strategies to support members in their endeavors. For instance, when requiring authors to make data available at the publication stage, we must ensure that those who collect their own data are not at risk of losing potential research outputs in the future. Furthermore, requirements need to be met for those working with proprietary and confidential data sets. To support efforts, I would propose a task force to investigate potential collaborations with sections, such as the Experimental Economics Section or the Econometrics Section, to develop best practices for AAEA. The task force could also investigate whether other associations would be interested in collaborating with AAEA to set standards for the field.

During my tenure as director of the AAEA, I led data collection related to diversity and inclusion. The findings revealed that minority members were especially at risk to feeling unwelcome. In addition, as Co-Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Task Force, I have become aware of the challenges regarding members' health. The Health and Wellbeing Task Force is currently working on potential resources, and we will continue discussing with members how the association can serve them best; one specific opportunity will be through an organized session at the annual meetings in New Orleans, LA. Resources could be provided through different formats, ranging from an AAEA website offering relevant content to virtual and on-site workshops to meet different needs. For example, at Arizona State University, I hosted a series of workshops informing on topics, such as, "Tools to Calm and Center the Mind, Relax Anxiety and Nervousness" and "Teaching with Purpose". And at the 2023 AAEA Annual Meeting, I was involved in a pre-conference workshop for first-time AAEA attendees that had the goal to make them feel more welcome by providing information, as well as networking opportunities. It would be my goal to foster measures that are tailored to and inclusive of the diverse membership of the AAEA. I believe if we are successful in supporting members in their wellbeing, it will greatly benefit AAEA as an association and also allow us to increase member numbers and engagement in the long-run.

For both areas, I would seek input from AAEA members for more targeted actions through townhall conversations with the AAEA leadership, as well as through feedback portals.

3. At the end of your three-year term, what changes/new initiatives would you have helped create?

I would like to see permanent resources available to all members to manage and navigate sound research processes that foster transparency and replicability, with a mechanism in place to keep resources up-to-date with recent developments. I would also hope that by the end of my term, long-lasting structures will be established that are easily accessible to foster wellbeing of all members of the AAEA. I am convinced that it is especially important to reach out in challenging times and offer resources to all members. While not all members may need the support, it demonstrates the association's involvement and meaning to the profession. Above all, it is necessary to communicate efficiently and effectively to all members about existing opportunities and resources AAEA has to offer.

Ferraro, P.J., and Shukla, P. (2023). Credibility Crisis in Agricultural Economics. *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy* 45(3): 1275–1291.

Zhang, X., Fang, D., and Nayga, R.M. (2024). Mental Health of PhD Students in US Agricultural Economics Departments. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Xh2qQ6NGGgmf0Np64OD7Er_ZINkfYdHC/view