



Bio

Dr. Lisa House is Professor and Department Chair in the Food and Resource Economics Department at the University of Florida, where she has served on the faculty since 2001. Dr. House earned her B.S. in FRE from UF, followed by M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Kansas State University. Her first position was as an assistant professor at Mississippi State University. She has earned teaching awards from the AAEA, SAEA, and UF. Lisa is an applied researcher, with over 100 refereed publications and \$21 million in grant funding. She has served as AAEA Director and President of the SAEA, and was awarded the 2021 SAEA Lifetime Achievement Award. Dr. House was co-developer of AAEA's Graduate Student Case Study Competition, a founding member and president of the AEM section, and has served on numerous AAEA committees. She has

officially advised 124 graduate students and earned the 2021 AAEA Mentoring Award.

What is the biggest concern/problem facing AAEA?

The AAEA faces the continual challenge to stay relevant to its members and prospective future members as the needs change over time. We need to make sure that we are listening to our membership and speaking with potential members to understand what they find valuable from engaging with a professional society. We need to communicate what we offer, within and throughout the larger world. The value proposition of our professional society of applied economists is of growing relevance in today's world – there are more and more critical questions for agricultural and natural resource economists to answer. The AAEA is positioned to serve in key roles to ensure that professionals have the ability to answer these questions, and to connect those with the questions to professionals who offer answers and guidance.

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

I think improvements could be initiated through the identification of smaller initiatives that have the potential to help across groups. As our discipline has evolved over time, applied economics training has become largely quantitative in nature, yet there is an inequality in the ability of programs at different universities to be recognized for this development. Teaching programs are assigned to a classification (CIP) code that designates if the program is STEM. This impacts international students (eligibility for longer OPT visas), which in turn, impacts department's abilities to recruit, hire, and place graduate students. I believe AAEA could serve a large portion of the profession by investigating at the federal level the ability to create new CIP codes that more accurately describe our profession. At the same time, we need to find innovative ways to recruit domestic students, especially minorities, into the profession. With increased demand from industry and government for our PhD graduates, the AAEA can investigate the need to better prepare graduates for non-academic jobs – and offer continuing education and professional value-added to industry members. Another way that AAEA may improve service to membership is to expand opportunities for recognition for our current faculty. Compared to other disciplines,

we do not recognize the broad range of accomplishments and outstanding achievements of our members. This places our faculty at a disadvantage when College-level tenure and promotion committees see agricultural economists side by side with other disciplines who employ different approaches to awarding excellence. I believe we can investigate ways to recognize the hard work of our faculty without devaluing the awards AAEEA already sponsors. A final actionable improvement is related to Extension. Finding ways to help develop the next generation of extension economists by immersing students in fieldwork and multidisciplinary opportunities, or providing professional development, would be successful ways to serve the broader industry and attract new members to the Association.

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

I would want to have identified items such as those suggested above (or others identified as important by the membership) that add value to an individual's decision to join and become involved in Association. I would like to see AAEEA reinvigorate its mentoring initiatives and be rated as a welcoming association that makes a difference/improvement in the professional lives of all students, faculty, professionals, and stakeholders in the agricultural and natural resource economics profession. Most of all, I would like to make sure that AAEEA provides the opportunities to network with the intention to grow – so that others can look back on their career as I do, knowing that my investment of time and energy as an AAEEA member played a key role in my success and ability to motivate others as a professional agricultural economist.