

April Newsletter

ACE Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics

NEWSLETTER



It is recruiting season. The recruiting efforts and successes of our beloved Illini sports teams receive significant attention. However, the scholarly reputation and ranking of our university are based on the successful recruiting of world-class faculty and students. The College



of ACES recently completed a two-day student recruiting event, Explore ACES, showcasing the excellence across the college. The Department of ACE hosted a visit day for prospective ACE graduate students last week. The talent, energy and backgrounds of our next generation of ACE students are quite impressive.

We are also in the midst of recruiting new faculty and staff in ACE and ACES. The reputation of our university and department has allowed us to attract outstanding scholars to ACE and ACES. At the end of the interviews, I often hear from the candidates that ACE has a great culture and is a productive place to work. I have often thanked Dean Robert Hauser, my predecessor, for establishing such a successful workplace. Bob's immediate response is this culture was established long before he arrived. Last week I received the following picture from the monthly meeting of ACE retired faculty. These are some of the faculty that built the reputation and foundation of ACE. I am thankful and grateful.

All the best,

Paul Ellinger

(Names in the above photo L-R: Earl Swanson, Bob Spitze, Lyle Fettig, Harold Guither, Tom Frey, Royce Hinton, Jim Roush, John Van Es, Don Uchtmann, Bob Bentz, Del Wilken, Bill Thompson, Dick Kesler)

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Resources

[Department Homepage \(http://ace.illinois.edu/\)](http://ace.illinois.edu/)

[College Homepage \(http://aces.illinois.edu/\)](http://aces.illinois.edu/)

[Extension Homepage \(http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state/\)](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state/)

[ACES Alumni \(http://www.acesalumni.illinois.edu/\)](http://www.acesalumni.illinois.edu/)

[Previous Newsletters \(/about/newsletter\)](#)

[Make a Gift \(/giving\)](#)

[Facebook \(http://www.facebook.com/home.php?sfm=1#!/pages/ACE-University-of-Illinois/406444220861\)](http://www.facebook.com/home.php?sfm=1#!/pages/ACE-University-of-Illinois/406444220861)

Research and Outreach

[Consumer & Family Economics \(http://www.ace.illinois.edu/cfe/\)](http://www.ace.illinois.edu/cfe/)

[Farm Analysis Solution Tools \(http://www.farmdoc.illinois.edu/fasttools/index.asp\)](http://www.farmdoc.illinois.edu/fasttools/index.asp)

[Farmdoc \(http://www.farmdoc.illinois.edu/index.html\)](http://www.farmdoc.illinois.edu/index.html)

[Farmdoc Daily \(http://www.farmdocdaily.illinois.edu\)](http://www.farmdocdaily.illinois.edu)

[FBFM \(http://fbfm.ace.uiuc.edu/\)](http://fbfm.ace.uiuc.edu/)

[Illinois Tax School \(http://www.taxschool.illinois.edu/\)](http://www.taxschool.illinois.edu/)

Policy Matters

(<http://policymatters.illinois.edu>)

The logo for Policy Matters features the word "POLICY" in a large, white, serif font, with a small white silhouette of the Illinois State Capitol building integrated into the letter "Y". To the right of "POLICY" is the word "MATTERS" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. The entire logo is set against a solid orange rectangular background.

The University of Illinois's FarmDoc Daily program is now considered to be one of the most trusted and useful sources of information for agriculturalists across the globe. Building on its popularity, ACE Department Head Paul Ellinger and a team of ACE faculty created Policy Matters. A substantial portion of the ongoing research and outreach of ACE faculty has policy implications.

The goal is to use Policy Matters as a method to communicate and inform society on issues related to environmental, consumer, agricultural and international policy concerns.



Policy Matters was launched in June of 2014. The site's primary goal is to feature the research of ACE faculty and graduate students and to serve as a resource for the greater policy debates of today's society. Policy Matters' creators Kathy Baylis and

Jonathan Coppess founded it with the intentions of building off of Farmdoc Daily and developing a complimentary site to Farmdoc Daily. By covering a diverse set of topics such as nutrition, food labeling, biomass crops, water issues, and butterflies, Policy Matters is establishing a reputation as a useful, less-technical reference for policy issues.

New Faculty Profiles

[Dr. Teresa Serra \(/directory/tserra\)](/directory/tserra)

Dr. Teresa Serra joined the ACE Department as an associate professor in 2014. Dr. Serra was raised in Vic, Spain, where she was an assistant professor. After receiving her B.A. in both business administration (1994) and business studies (1992) at the University of Barcelona, Serra furthered her education with Barcelona and was awarded a Ph.D. in economics in 1988. Dr. Serra's research centers on market



price analysis, as well as production economics. She has devoted substantial effort to the analysis of the impact of biofuels on food commodity prices, as well as on the development of firm-level indicators of economic and environmental sustainability. Before coming to Illinois, Dr. Serra

[International Business Immersion Program](http://ibip.illinois.edu)
(<http://ibip.illinois.edu>)

[International Policy and Development](http://ipad.ace.illinois.edu)
(<http://ipad.ace.illinois.edu>)

[Market Maker](http://www.marketmaker.uiuc.edu) (<http://www.marketmaker.uiuc.edu>)

[Office for Futures & Options Research](http://ofor.ace.illinois.edu)
(<http://ofor.ace.illinois.edu>)

[Plan Well Retire Well](http://www.retirewell.uiuc.edu)
(<http://www.retirewell.uiuc.edu>)

[Program for Environmental & Resource Economics](http://pere.ace.illinois.edu)
(<http://pere.ace.illinois.edu>)

[Rural Health](http://www.ace.illinois.edu/ruralhealth/)
(<http://www.ace.illinois.edu/ruralhealth/>)

Programs

[Graduate Program \(/graduate\)](/graduate)

[Undergraduate Program \(/undergraduate\)](/undergraduate)

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spent time at major universities in the United States such as The Ohio State University and the University of California, Berkeley, where she served as a visiting scholar for four years.

Serra says she envied the resources available to researchers in the United States and hopes to use those resources to make as much of an impact in the United States as she did with her work in Europe. She plans to begin teaching a statistics course and a time-series econometrics course in the spring semester, 2016.

Dr. Erica Myers (/directory/ecmyers)

Dr. Erica Myers joined the ACE faculty in fall 2014 as an assistant professor. Dr. Myers earned her B.S. in natural resources and the environment at the University of Michigan in 2004. She received her M.S. in environmental and natural resource economics at the University of Rhode Island. From 2007 to 2009, Myers served as a research assistant at Resources for the Future in Washington D.C. She had the



opportunity to work on projects that informed the auction design for the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). She views that as an exciting time in her career because she was “part of a project that was working to make impacts on real world issues.” In 2010, she moved across the country to the University of California, Berkeley. While working on her Ph.D. in agricultural and resource economics, she served as a Research Assistant at the Energy Institute at the University of California, Berkeley. In 2014, after Myers received her degree from Berkeley, she returned to her home state of Illinois with her husband Benjamin Crost to join the Department of ACE.

Her research interests are energy economics and environmental economics. Her recent work has focused on the energy-efficiency gap. She has published her research in several journals, including the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, *Agricultural and Resource Economics Review*, *Environmental and Resource Economics*, and the *International Review of Economics and Education*. Dr. Myers plans to continue to do research that impacts energy policy and through her teaching, she also hopes to train undergraduate and graduate students in the use of economic tools to make a difference on environmental and energy efficiency issues.

Dr. Benjamin Crost (/directory/bencrost)

Dr. Benjamin Crost joined the ACE faculty as an assistant professor. Dr. Crost's research interests are in the fields of development economics and health economics. He is most interested in the causes of civil conflict and considers his co-authored paper, "Aid Under Fire: Development Projects and Civil Conflict", one of his greatest accomplishments in his professional career. Dr. Crost's most recent research interests lie in the study of societies' resistance to climate change. Not only has he been working to provide evidence for demonstrating the threat that climate change poses to global security but he also has been investigating how to avoid the consequences of climate change.



Dr. Crost was raised in Frankfurt, Germany and began his secondary education as a biochemistry and molecular biology major at the University of Hamburg, Germany. He then spent a year in the United Kingdom where he received his M.Sc. in agricultural development economics at the University of Reading. Subsequently, Crost traveled to the University of California, Berkeley, where he received his Ph.D. in agricultural and resource economics. He then taught as an assistant professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Colorado at Denver for three years. Crost joined the ACE faculty in 2014. So far, Crost loves the university for its exceptional academics and is most excited about the diversity of concentrations and studies ACE has to offer. He says that since becoming a part of the department, he feels that he is doing research that matters. His current teaching assignment includes a course in econometrics and an "Introduction to Environmental Economics".

Scholarships in ACE and ACES

With college costs rising around the country, the College of ACES is constantly working to help students reduce the cost. Through the financial support from generous alumni, corporate sponsors, and others, the college is offering more than \$2.5 million of annually awarded scholarship support to students pursuing majors in ACES related disciplines.

ACE students are eligible for some of these College of ACES scholarships, and there are several opportunities to apply for scholarships within the ACE major. "I think that is what sets us apart from a lot of the other colleges on campus," ACES Assistant Dean Jason Emmert says. "Our scholarship program enables us to support the particular needs and interests of the students." For many students on campus, savings, earnings, and financial aid still do not cover the expense of a

college semester; this is where the variety of scholarships the department offers is most benefit to students. ACE extends assistance to students in the forms of renewable scholarships and awards based on an annual College of ACES' scholarship application. ACE provides a more comprehensive scholarship program that is not just merit-based; many awards focus on the extracurricular activities and leadership involvement of students.

Current students have the opportunity to apply for college-wide scholarships, with over 90 percent of applicants receiving some level of funding in recent years. In addition, there are more than 15 ACE-only scholarships, awarded to students pursuing ACE degrees.

In addition to these opportunities, ACE advisors and faculty often email students with information about various outside scholarships for which they may be eligible.

For more information on scholarship opportunities within the college and ACE department

visit: academics.aces.illinois.edu/scholarships

(<http://academics.aces.illinois.edu/scholarships>).

Explore ACES 2015



Students interested in exploring a career in applied business, economics, policy or international development witnessed first-hand what college is like at Explore ACES March 13 and 14.

ACE students took over the first floor of Mumford Hall with games to role play different careers and opportunities in ACE.

- A jeopardy challenge game that touched on facts about agribusiness.
- Putting their face on the cover of a Fortune 500 magazine.
- Talking to students about internships they have had through ACE.
- Taking a quiz to see how financially savvy they are at saving, spending and budgeting.

ACE also provided two mini-classes to prospective students.

- Learning how the market works with mock simulations by ACE Clinical Professor Paul Peterson.
- Finding 51 Things You Should Know about a Career in Agribusiness.

Students admitted to the University of Illinois for fall 2015 attended special activities just for them Saturday, March 14 beginning with a breakfast led by current students in the college. A lunch for admitted students in ACE allowed them to ask

questions and learn more about courses, careers and the opportunities available on a Big 10 campus.

For more information visit exploraces.org (<http://exploraces.org>)

Where Are They Now: Professor Donald Uchtmann

Professor Emeritus of Agricultural Law, Don Uchtmann, has led an esteemed career both professionally and academically. Uchtmann grew up in

Sparta, Illinois, and attended the University of Illinois where he received his B.S in agricultural science. After graduating from the U of I, Uchtmann served



for three years in the United States Coast Guard and then attended the University of Leeds in England as a Rotary Fellow for International Understanding. He received his M.A. in economic development from Leeds and then, returned to the United States to study law, receiving his Juris Doctorate, cum laude, from Cleveland State University in 1974.

Uchtmann returned to the Midwest when he accepted a faculty position in teaching, extension, and research at the University of Illinois. He published 35 refereed articles, co-authored two textbooks and taught numerous classes in the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics. His research examined issues at the intersection of law and agriculture, including his more recent focus on legal matters in agricultural biotechnology. Over a span of more than 30 years, Uchtmann taught courses in veterinary jurisprudence, agricultural law, rural taxation, and a freshman discovery course. He was awarded the Young Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching.

His textbook, *Agricultural Law, Principles and Case*, published by McGraw-Hill, was widely used across the United States in the 1980s and 90s. Professor Uchtmann also held numerous academic leadership positions within the University, including Interim Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics (1987-1988), Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture and Director of the Cooperative Extension Service (1988-1996), and Director of Federal Extension Relations (1996). As Director of Extension, he led Illinois Extension through a period of significant change. He also served as Chair of the Extension Directors from the

North Central States and was elected to the National Extension Committee on Organization and Policy.

Beyond his academic leadership roles, Professor Uchtmann also served as President of the American Agricultural Law Association from 2005-2006 and served as Chair of the Agricultural Law Section Council of the Illinois State Bar Association in 2006-2007. Throughout his professional career, Uchtmann has explored the international dimensions of agricultural law through his trips to countries across the world. Not only has he written papers concerning a broad scope of ideas within ag law, but he also has conducted research or served as a consultant in numerous countries including Brazil, France, China, Japan, and Germany.

In August 2007, after 33 years of dedication to the University, Uchtmann became Professor Emeritus. Although he remains extremely active in the ACE department and the campus community as a whole, Professor Uchtmann now has more time for travel including recent trips to the Western Caribbean, Mexico, Belize, Honduras, French Polynesia, New Zealand, and Australia. Uchtmann and his wife also frequently travel to Colorado, Indiana, and Wisconsin to visit their children and grandchildren.

Uchtmann continues to be a leader outside of the university. He serves on the Agricultural Law Committee of the Illinois State Bar Association and serves locally on the Mass Transit District Board of Trustees. Given that he is still actively collaborating with faculty colleagues, it seems that orange and blue will eternally be instilled into Uchtmann's life. Uchtmann loves the campus for its wonderful College of Agricultural Consumer and Environmental Sciences and its global reputation for being an excellent comprehensive university. He says, "not only does the University of Illinois pursue scholarship in all the fields that a great university should, but it has wonderful students, an excellent faculty and staff, and a fine work environment that continues to allow me to stay connected with agriculture and law."

[ACE Newsletter \(/newsletter/ace-newsletter\)](#)