

April 4, 2016

Dean's Column by Ron Rosati, PhD

### **Every person counts at NCTA**

The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture recently experienced a complete “checkup” – or a review from top to bottom to verify that the institution is offering quality programs.

This process originates with U. S. Department of Education and is implemented by a regional accrediting agency called the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The HLC sends a team of trained experts to NCTA once every seven years to evaluate procedures and academic programs. We've been preparing for this visit for approximately two years.

The goal of an accreditation visit is to document and improve institutional quality, efficiency, competence, and responsiveness to Nebraska residents. The visiting team works hard to help the college accomplish its mission. We will learn valuable suggestions for improvement from this review, and we look forward to implementing those suggestions in the next few months.

Initial feedback from the reviewers was that they were quite impressed with the work done by faculty and staff in our unique college. Assessment results show a high degree of student competence upon graduation, which is verification of the instructional quality delivered by our faculty.

The evaluators witnessed here, in our small community, that every faculty member and many of our staff wear multiple hats. NCTA employees are responsible for students and the college 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Someone is always overseeing this campus, and making it the best, safest, quality environment for students.

Student satisfaction with their college became evident as students pitched in to help during the accreditation review. Not only did students provide candid input to the four individuals evaluating NCTA's re-accreditation, but the pride and sense of ownership possessed by the students came shining through while guiding tours, keeping the team interview schedules on time, and sharing enthusiastic commentary about courses and their personal educational experiences here.

I appreciated the dedication of the students, and the extra attention contributed by all of our faculty and campus staff who shared in small group, confidential discussions. In particular, my thanks to Dottie Evans who has guided the accreditation review and the accompanying, extensive documentation that goes with it these past two years.

Dottie came to campus as a part-time instructor in human resources, specifically psychology. Soon, she was tapped to oversee the extensive reaffirmation of NCTA's national accreditation.

She stepped up to that challenge with remarkable competence and effectiveness. Our accreditation evaluation was a great success because of the work of Dottie, her committee, and the faculty staff and students who assisted with the effort. We expect formal results from the accreditation review in the next few months.

I value the dedication from many, many of our staff members who work behind the scenes, day in and day out. I am fortunate to work at a college like NCTA, here in Curtis. Thank you to everyone in the community for making this YOUR college campus, as well.

Upcoming Events:

- April 6-8 – State FFA Convention, Lincoln
- April 9-10 – Aggie Rodeo to SDSU, Brookings
- April 9 – Pet Spa Day, Vet Tech, 9 am - 3 pm
- April 9 – NCTA Stock Dog Trials, LTC Arena, 9 am – 5 pm
- April 15 – NU Investiture of President Hank Bounds, Lincoln
- April 15-16 – NACTA Contests, Crookston, Minn
- April 15-16 – Aggie Rodeo to UNL, Lincoln
- April 16 – Personal Finance Challenge, NCTA Ed Center 8 am
- April 16-17 – Jeanna Mueller Barrel Racing Clinic, LTC Arena

**NCTA Mission:**

*The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture is devoted to a statewide mission of preparing students for successful careers in agriculture, veterinary technology, food and related industries. The college provides open access to innovative technical education resulting in associate degrees, certificates, diplomas and other credentials.*

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NCTA students Kayla Reynolds, left, and Aaron Jensen, right, lead HLC team reviewers at NCTA's Nebraska Agriculture Industry Education Center. (Crawford/NCTA photo)