Distance Education in Natural Resources: A National Study of Inhibitors and Motivators for Participation in Distance Education Programs

Mississippi State University
Jodi B. Roberts, M.S.
Stephen C. Grado, Ph.D.
Andrew J. Londo, Ph.D.
Distance Education

“formal education process in which the student and instructor are not in the same place” (Parasad & Lewis, 2008, p.1)

Early beneficiaries:
- Physical disabilities
- Women
- Working individuals
- Remote regions
History of Distance Education

- Biblical, St. Paul
  - Correspondence
- *Boston Gazette*, 1728
- University of Chicago, 1892
- Chautauqua Correspondence College, 1900
- Distance teaching universities, 1970
  - 26 countries
  - University of Maryland University College
  - Penn State University
Land–Grant Institutions

- Morrill Act of 1862
- First Correspondence Courses, 1892
  - Penn State University
  - University of Wisconsin
Distance education programs/course growth
- 4.6 million – Fall 2008 up from 1.6 million – Fall 2002 (Allen & Seaman, 2009)
- Institutions with over 15,000 students
- Primarily doctoral/research based

Natural resource programs slow to make offerings

He (2004)
- 4.5% of institutions offering programs/courses in natural resources
Purpose: If distance education participation is growing, why is the natural resource discipline less represented

Survey 50+ institutions offering natural resource degree programs
Research

- Participation in distance education
  - Survey of Inhibitors and Motivators
    - Administrators
    - Faculty
    - Students
Contact

Jodi B. Roberts, M.S.
Program Coordinator/Ph.D. Student

jroberts@aoce.msstate.edu
Academic Outreach
Mississippi State University


