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Teaching plant pathology: experiences from first semester at K-State and ideas for the next year

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you my teaching and outreach activities at K-State during 2018. My first year in the department has been a very productive and positive experience. I could not have asked for a better first year. I enjoyed teaching PLPTH 500 (Principles of Plant Pathology) in the spring and TAing PLPTH 585 (Crop Diseases) in the fall. I can't wait to begin my second iteration. While TEVALs and student comments have been very positive and encouraging, my goal is to further improve my teaching by taking the advantage of resources available at K-State. At the start of this semester, I got an opportunity to enroll in 'Effective Teaching Practices' course offered by Association of College and University Educators (ACUE). This is a one-year course that covers topics such as designing an effective course and class, establishing a productive classroom environment, using active learning techniques, promoting higher order thinking, and assessing to inform instruction and promote learning. This course has provided me some great resources that will help me to improve my instruction. To make the lecture format in a large classroom more interactive, I am planning to try Top Hat (a student engagement platform) next semester. One of the key feature is that students can ask question anonymously during the lecture, which I think will promote more student involvement. In addition to my plans for the next semester, I will provide updates on 1) an intro to R workshop, 2) epidemiology exercises tutorials in R, 3) plant pathology outreach, and 4) Plant Pathology Minor. I will also share with you some of the background work going on our research and extension experience for undergraduates (REEU) program.