URI natural resource economics department ranked fourth in nation for scholarly productivity

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KINGSTON, R.I. – January 11, 2007 -- The University of Rhode Island Department of Environmental and Natural Resource Economics has been ranked the fourth most productive research department in the country in the field of agricultural economics by the 2005 Faculty Scholarly Productivity Index.

Produced by Academic Analytics, the index rates faculty members’ scholarly output at nearly 7,300 doctoral programs around the country. It examines the number of book and journal articles published by each program’s faculty, as well as journal citations, awards, honors and grants received.

Only Colorado State University, Iowa State University and the University of California at Berkeley ranked ahead of URI. Of the top 10 universities in the field, URI’s program has the fewest faculty members with 10.

“I could not be prouder of this accomplishment,” said Jeff Seemann, dean of the URI College of the Environment and Life Sciences. “It reflects the commitment of a cadre of outstanding faculty to leading-edge, socially important research in resource economics that produces heavily cited publications and attracts large amounts of competitive funding.”

The URI program was the first in the nation to offer a graduate degree in natural resource economics (in 1969), and the department publishes an internationally recognized research journal, Marine Resource Economics. In addition, three faculty in the department have served as president of national professional organizations in the last five years, and a third of them have been invited to participate on committees of the National Academy of Sciences and National Research Council to address critical science and policy questions. The program has recruited three faculty members who won national awards for their dissertations, and three recent graduate students also won similar awards.
James Anderson, professor and chair of the department, said “It is fantastic news to be ranked number 4, just behind UC Berkeley, in the Scholarly Productivity Index. I'm proud to work with a dedicated faculty who are doing exciting and relevant research on the environment and natural resource economics. This recognition is well deserved.

“I hope our students and citizens of Rhode Island recognize the importance of this achievement in building URI's reputation as a leading research university,” Anderson added.

Agricultural and natural resource economists study the interactions between economic and natural systems, with the goal of developing a sustainable and efficient economy. Faculty in the URI department focus on issues related to the spectrum of natural resource and environmental management, with particular strengths in fisheries and aquaculture, the marine environment, coastal watersheds and terrestrial systems, ecosystem valuation and international trade.