

**PROGRAM REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION PLAN  
PROGRESS REPORT  
Department of Forestry and Natural Resources  
2018 - 2019**

**1. With input from College, develop a plan to replace facilities to provide faculty, staff, and students with suitable office, laboratory, and classroom space.**

**Assessment Method:** We will continue to engage college and university administration to advance planning for a new Natural Resources and Forestry Learning Center. We view significant progress to be when the University capital planning and budgeting includes funding for the facility.

**Results:** The CAFE recently engaged Sasaki Associates, Inc. to develop a facility plan for the south side of campus. This plan was completed and presented to CAFE Department Chairs on October 12, 2016. Construction of a new Natural Resources and Forestry Learning Center is included in Phase II of that plan.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** We have begun conversations with the Director of Philanthropy and with our alumni about initiating fundraising for a new facility. A new natural resources building has been added to UK's master plan. Interim space plans include the incorporation of office and lab space provided to the Department in the Dimock Building.

**Improvement actions:** We will develop a philanthropic fundraising plan and continue to work with industry leaders and university officials to gain support for constructing a new facility. Interim plans involving occupancy of Dimock have been underway with faculty and graduate students currently housed there.

**2. Simplify the administrative structure for Robinson Forest and Robinson Center for Appalachian Resource Sustainability (RCARS) with an eye towards sustaining the forest and Wood Utilization Center.**

**Assessment Method:** The department chair and RCARS director will collaborate and evaluate with appropriate staff the functioning of the facilities to provide an efficient and effective process for activities and programs conducted at the facilities.

**Results:** Three initiatives were completed, or are in-progress, to improve the administration and provide for fiscally sustaining Robinson Forest and the Wood Utilization Center. The FNR chair and RCARS director have developed a budgetary assessment to address immediate and on-going infra-structure needs at Robinson Forest. To improve the administrative structure and work efficiency at Robinson Forest, the chair and director have re-aligned the forest manager position to a shared administrative position between the department and RCARS. The chair has initiated planning to enroll Robinson Forest in a voluntary carbon program to provide continued funding for Robinson Forest and RCARS.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** The strategic budget and improvement plan was submitted to CAFE administration for support. CAFE administration has supported the recommendation of a shared Robinson Forest Management position and the process is underway to fill the position. UK has signed initial paperwork to facilitate the scoping process to enroll Robinson Forest in a voluntary carbon program.

**Improvement actions:** FNR will finalize enrollment in a carbon program. FNR and RCARS will hire a new shared management position and continue to consult with CAFE on implementation of the budget plan and RCARS administrative structure.

**3. Develop a succession plan to effectively deal with a significant number of faculty openings that will be the result of faculty members retiring in the next 5-10 years. This plan should include additional staffing at both the faculty and staff level to meet current and future needs in research, teaching, and extension.**

**Assessment Method:** Annually, we will revisit our staffing situation and evaluate progress toward filling anticipated vacancies and responsibilities.

**Results:** The Undergraduate Program Committee chair has developed and implemented a new undergraduate advising plan that incorporates all FNR faculty replacing advising that had been largely done by the DUS, currently held by late career faculty. Instructional DOE has been added to two Extension faculty lines, recently hired, to help build instructional capacity needed to address required courses needs for our accredited forestry undergraduate program. Career advancement opportunities have been planned for early career faculty. Succession planning is a key focus area of the department's two day faculty/staff retreat scheduled for the fall of 2019.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** Summer undergraduate advising has been distributed to a larger number of faculty including early career. New Extension hires will be instructors of record for FOR courses, helping to distribute the teaching load and assisting in succession planning.

**Improvement actions:** The department chair will annually assess succession planning and convene faculty representatives from all department mission areas to strategically discuss succession planning efforts as needed.

**4. Develop a Ph.D. program for the department. Careful consideration will need to be given to what additional graduate level Forestry courses will need to be added and who will teach these courses.**

**Assessment Method:** Completed.

**Results:** In the summer of 2018 the Ph.D. (Forest and Natural Resources Sciences) program was approved by UK BOT and by Kentucky Council on Post-secondary Education (CPE). .

**Analysis of results and reflection:** The department is currently accepting applications for a Ph.D. in Forest and Natural Resource Sciences and has made decisions regarding department stipend allocations among MS and PhD candidates.

**Improvement actions:** The department and DGS will monitor the implementation of the Ph.D. program and will develop guidelines and procedures to ensure effective implementation of the program including monitoring stipend development.

**5. Aggressively work towards improving the diversity of the department's faculty and undergraduate student population.**

**Assessment Method:** The department chair and academic coordinator will annually evaluate student demographic metrics and the chair will ensure all faculty and staff searches adequately access individuals from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

**Results:** Enrollment has increased to 60 students, 30% female and increase from 18% last year. Other metrics including non-resident, underrepresented minorities, and first-generation college student percentages have remained stable. Recent faculty hires include one female minority.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** We continue to seek diversity in our student population as well as our faculty and staff. Many of our peer institutions also report challenges in diversifying their undergraduate student body and we are challenged in this regard as well. We currently have one open faculty line.

**Improvement actions:** We will continue to seek diversity in our student body as well as our faculty and staff. The open position provides diversity opportunities for the latter. Regardless, we will continue to reach out to diverse pools of applicants when hiring faculty and staff and recognize the importance of overall diversity and gender diversity, specifically in our decision making processes.

**6. With the involvement of all departments and students that comprise the multidisciplinary Natural Resources and Environmental Science (NRES) program, explore and address both the perceived and real underlying tensions between the Forestry and NRES programs.**

**Assessment Method:** We continue to monitor relations following provisions in the MOU between FNR and NRES.

**Results:** In the summer of 2017, a MOU between FNR and NRES was approved by the FNR faculty and NRES Steering Committee. Provisions within the MOU were acted upon and the MOU was shared with other CAFE departments, upon request.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** The development and implementation of the MOU have been helpful in dealing with issues. Communications between FNR and NRES leadership have been regular and effective. Continued monitoring of the situation is appropriate.

**Improvement actions:** The Chair will schedule a meeting with the new incoming NRES Steering Committee chair upon their initiating the position January of 2020.

**7. Continue development of the Forest Health Center (FHC) to meet the needs of the department, college, and forestry industry. Consideration should be given to providing the needed staffing, facilities, and equipment, including the possibility of co-locating the FHC and FNR in any new facility that is built.**

**Assessment Method:** We are currently evaluating our success by tracking extramural funding, staffing, and program participation.

**Results:**

The FHC has acquired well over \$2.5 million (competitive grants and gifts) to date and has hired 5 post-doctoral scholars to assist with research and programming. A forest genetics position has been added as a Research Specialist in the Department working collaboratively with FHC.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** We continue to seek permanent, recurring funding for the FHC. Our partnership with the USFS has yielded three permanently stationed USFS scientists on UK's campus for the first time.

**Improvement actions:** We will continue to look for opportunities to include the FHC in initiatives like the emerging Beam Spirits Institute and the White Oak Initiative to help build the presence of the FHC in Kentucky and a UK.

**8. Continue developing relationships with stakeholders and support industries. In addition to departmental interaction with these groups, it is important for college administration (particularly the Dean) to have periodic, direct contact with these groups as well.**

**Assessment Method:** We will use the department advisory board to evaluate our success in establishing relationships and partnerships with various forestry groups and industries.

**Results:** Our relationship with other forestry organizations and agencies in Kentucky and throughout the region is at a high level and continues to expand. FNR is exploring ways to leverage interaction with the emerging Beam Spirits Institute that will provide direct assistance to the distilling industry and forest industries that supply barrels critical to the survival and competitiveness of the whisky in industry in the U.S. The Department has worked with the American Forest Foundation and the Dendrifund to establish the White Oak Initiative, a region wide effort to assist white oak dependent industries and sustain white oak resources. The department provided the proposal that was used to establish \$2.3 million in USDA funding for white oak sustainability efforts in 17 states where white oak is a critical ecosystem component and economic driver.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** We will continue to broaden these relationships with other groups and focus on communicating with these partners. We have made particular strides in

recent months to engage non-traditional forestry clientele, such as the distilling industry, which depends on white oak for making bourbon.

**Improvement actions:** We will continue reaching out to clientele using our multiple Constant Contact (Center for Forest and Wood Certification, Youth, Wood Products, Landowner, Forest Health Research and Education Center) newsletters. We have recently completed an overhaul of our department website, which has greatly improved our clientele's access to information produced and compiled by the department. We will help establish an alumni group to facilitate improved fund raising and Department awareness, and re-initiate and improve the department's hardcopy newsletter for alumni and friends of the department.