

MEMORANDUM

July 10, 2002

To: College of Agriculture Personnel

From: M. Scott Smith

Subject: "Ag Futures" volume 2

In April, I sent to College of Agriculture administrators and chairs a review of numerous developing initiatives and issues. Several, but not all, of these issues were related to recommendations by President Todd's "Futures Task Force"; therefore I adapted the title to "Ag Futures". Recognizing the need for greater efforts to keep everyone in our large and diverse college better informed, I believe that this "Ag Futures" banner can offer a useful format to communicate about the full scope of planning activities and initiatives under way in our College. Under this title, I expect to provide you with continuing updates, stimulate constructive discussion on future directions, and solicit input on important decisions we will be facing. I encourage debate on these initiatives within your department or program area, and welcome individual or collective feedback directly to me on any of these issues.

You may wish to review my April correspondence, and other "Ag Futures" related documents and links at <http://dobson.ca.uky.edu/admin/>.

College Planning and "Ag Futures"

As a College, we made a commitment to develop a new Strategic Plan during and subsequent to the College Review of 2000. In my experience, comprehensive planning exercises are of great value in expressing broad vision and direction, but are often so general that they fail to provide a useful guide for future decisions. "Ag Futures" communications will help us to interconnect a very diverse array of active and specifically targeted initiatives, providing a coherent view of the many changes already underway, many of them requiring urgent and timely response. I expect this connection of targeted "Ag Futures" activities to comprehensive Strategic Planning will produce not just a new vision statement but also specific action plans. I intend that "Ag Futures" will lead into the development of a new Strategic Plan for the College some time late in 2003.

UPDATES

A New Department of Community and Leadership Development The establishment of this new academic department has been formally approved. Faculty from Rural Sociology, Ag Education, as well as D. Witham and R. Weckman from Ag Communications; and P. Warner, R. Rennekamp, and M. Nall from Extension Program and Staff Development have been appointed to the department's Faculty and now hold their tenure and academic appointment there. Following a strong endorsement by the search committee, I will recommend to the Provost that Gary Hansen be appointed Chair. Although this will now drop from the roster of "Ag Futures" initiatives, the exciting work of this new department is only beginning.

The College of Human Environmental Sciences The university continues to pursue plans which would discontinue the operation of HES as a College. The Provost's advisory group on implementation of the UK Futures Task Force report recommended that HES, less Interior Design, be reorganized as the Center for Family and Consumer Sciences. This Center would be administratively directed by the College of Agriculture. The Provost has tentatively indicated his intention to accept this recommendation and plans are already underway for an expected implementation date this summer or early fall.

During deliberations about implementation of the Futures Task Force recommendation, I was asked to draft a proposal for merger of HES, less Interior Design, with our College. With input from many individuals, I submitted this proposal. (You can find it at the previously referenced web site <http://dobson.ca.uky.edu/admin/>). According to the proposed transition plan, the Center for Family and Consumer Sciences would include remaining HES faculty and tenure-track FCS Extension faculty. The Center would be administered by a Director reporting to the Dean of the College of Agriculture. The Center would be constituted to provide the same academic functions as an academic department, for example, grant tenure and offer degree programs. The transition plan allows for a period, approximately 2 years, of planning and analysis during which some former HES units or faculty clusters will have the opportunity to propose re-affiliation with units outside of Agriculture. For example, it remains possible that the Department of Family Studies faculty may realign with the College of Education during this transition period.

The final outcome of this reorganization will remain unclear for some time. In my judgment the advantages of a Center for Family and Consumer Sciences within our College include:

- Opportunities for greater integration of Extension and research/teaching programs in family and consumer sciences,
- Potential synergy between HES and our own staff in food science, nutrition, applied economics, family/youth issues, and other high priority subject matter areas,
- Maintaining a responsive, high-impact university identity in family and consumer sciences, with statewide ties to agents, professionals and local extension constituencies.
- A significant expansion of undergraduate and graduate student enrollment, and strong connections to a broader alumni base.

The Department of Landscape Architecture The Department of Interior Design will be merged with a new College of Design. The Department of Landscape Architecture will not at this time, according to the Provost's Futures implementation advisory group recommendation. Establishing closer ties between LA and the College of Design will continue to be mandated. Further consideration of organizational change for LA remains a possibility at some future date.

Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences Within the Department of Forestry discussions are well under way about a broader vision addressing new needs and opportunities in environmental sciences and renewable natural resources. These plans are focused on the filling of multiple current faculty vacancies and the direction of a national search for a new Chair. (Don Graves has indicated his intention to step down at the end of this year.) A proposal for a new departmental name reflecting this vision is anticipated. Nancy Cox is providing administrative leadership for this initiative.

It is noteworthy that environmental sciences has been added to the list of Futures priorities by the university administration. Our role in environmental sciences and natural resources continues to grow and broaden within several academic units and across Extension

program areas. Several of our faculty and staff are providing leadership and programming for the Tracy Farmer Center for the Environment, a partnership which I will continue to encourage. The innovative planning underway in Forestry will be a strong step towards College prominence in this area but eventually broader discussions, to include multiple units in Ag and some outside the College, will be necessary.

The Super-College of Social Sciences Implementation appears unlikely, at least for the foreseeable future, of the Futures Task Force recommendation to combine some units in Ag and B&E with social science departments in Arts and Sciences, forming a new College of Social Sciences. Reaction from our social science faculty has been strongly and almost unanimously negative. We can probably close the book on this issue.

The Department of Animal and Food Sciences I have recently indicated my support for the proposal from the Animal Science faculty to change the department name to Animal and Food Sciences. This will require College, Senate and administrative review/approval before it becomes official.

This new title for Animal Sciences should in no way be perceived to conflict with our realization of the multidisciplinary, interdepartmental opportunities in food science and technology. Faculty in BAE, HES, HOR, and other departments must be full participants if we are to make substantial progress in this area. In the near future, I will appoint an interdepartmental committee to develop an aggressive plan for advancement in food science/technology research, instruction and extension. Your reactions to my comments in the first "Ag Futures" memo reinforce my conviction that this is a key opportunity for the College.

Restructuring Plant and Soil Sciences Your feedback on this issue has convinced me that it need not be addressed in association with the relocation of portions of Agronomy, Plant Pathology and Horticulture to the new Plant Sciences building later this fall. While this discussion can be considered off the table at this time, I continue to believe that there would be potential advantages to further integration of these units, particularly in graduate education and research.

Re-envisioning Extension *(update by Larry Turner)* The process of re-envisioning Extension is nearing completion of this current planning phase. A report will be provided by the end of July to the administration from the Re-envisioning transition team. As you know, the goal of the Re-envisioning process is to improve an already strong Extension system and to make our system even more responsive to our clientele and even more supportive of programming to meet local needs. An important aspect of the re-envisioning Cooperative Extension process has been the inclusion of input and guidance from all stakeholders (internal and external) in the process. As of this week, the steps of assessing the changing environment and meeting with selected clientele groups, as well as with Extension personnel, have been completed.

We anticipate that the results of the Re-envisioning CES process will be a strengthened Cooperative Extension System which will be more flexible and adaptable to changing needs, with improved programming and connection between campus specialists and faculty and agents in the field. To support enhanced programming, our Extension administrative structure will most likely change as well. Possible scenarios for the structure include regional approaches or a reduced/combined number of areas from the current 14-area system. Preliminary concepts for consideration, including possible organizational structures, a list of team members and other

supporting documents, and opportunity for further input, are available on the web (on the College internal site at <http://www.ca.uky.edu/internal/> under “Re-envisioning CES”).

Changing the College’s Name It is interesting that virtually all of the responses I received on this question, raised in “Ag Futures 1”, were favorable and enthusiastic. This is in contrast to the majority negative reaction in the survey conducted in the 2000 College Review. Clearly, this is a complicated issue that should be carefully considered in the context of both our traditional strengths and our future plans. I will continue to welcome commentary on this question but will not expect that it be explicitly addressed until we enter the Strategic Planning process next year.

NEW ISSUES AND INITIATIVES

College of Agriculture Diversity Task Force I have charged the Diversity Task Force with both evaluation of current efforts to increase diversity and with developing specific recommendations for new measures needed. Mary Marchant chairs this task force which is actively working on the evaluation and review phase of this initiative. Your comments and suggestions either to me or to the Task Force, through Mary, are encouraged at any time.

Computing and Information Technology Review Dwayne Edwards in Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering chairs this recently appointed committee. Their project is beginning with definition of the scope of work and with collection of information. You should expect an opportunity to provide input on this important, and very resource-intensive, issue of information technology as the review progresses.

Developing Flexible Incentive and Appointment Policies Many of our benchmark colleges are adopting various policies designed to:

- provide incentives for extramural funding,
- reallocate salary resources, or
- offer faculty and professional staff greater flexibility to pursue entrepreneurial activities consistent with their college responsibilities.

Such policies include optional or temporary 9 or 10 month appointments, or changes in overload/consulting policies. Some colleges have established fellowship awards or salary supplement programs linked to extramural generation of salary savings. All of these represent very significant changes for Land Grant colleges of agriculture, but they are becoming increasingly common for several reasons. Our department chairs’ working group has been evaluating the feasibility of such options for some time now. I have asked Nancy Cox to work with the chairs to draft some preliminary concepts for open consideration in our college. These will be available in the near future.