

**PROGRAM REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION PLAN  
PROGRESS REPORT  
Department of Forestry and Natural Resources  
(formerly Department of Forestry)  
2016 - 2017**

**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 new Director of Philanthropy about initiating fundraising for a new facility.

**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.

**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:** We will periodically visit with Forestry and RCARS staff about how well the revised approaches being taken at RCARS and Robinson Forest are functioning.

**Results:** In furthering progress from a strategic planning meeting in 2016 the Robinson Forest manager, FNR Interim Chair, and RCARS Director agreed to develop a long-term strategic budget and capital improvements plan for Robinson Forest.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** The strategic budget and improvement plan is being developed with the goal of presenting it to CAFE administration for support. This plan will include the recommendation to develop a Robinson Forest Endowment to generate adequate operating and maintenance funding for the facility.

**Improvement actions:** FNR and RCARS personnel will continue to develop the strategic plan and budget to present to CAFE administration and the CAFE development office.

**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:** We have recently appointed a new Associate Professor to the DGS position upon the retirement of faculty that has held that position for the last 10 years. We have also appointed a new Associate Professor to chair the Undergraduate Program Committee to work in collaboration with the senior DUS on undergraduate curriculum and issues, with plans for the Associate Professor ultimately taking over the DUS position.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** Discussions are on-going with regards to instructional planning over the next 3-5 years that includes retirement of several faculty during that time frame.

**Improvement actions:** The department chair will annually convene faculty representatives from all department mission areas to strategically discuss succession planning efforts and success in that pursuit.

**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:** We will have succeeded when we get approval for the new Ph.D. program.

**Results:** CAFE Graduate Curriculum Committee has approved the program. We are drafting further documentation needed for university approval, followed by the Kentucky Council on Post-secondary Education (CPE).

**Analysis of results and reflection:** Documentation will be submitted for university approval by March 2018 while information is concurrently moving through CPE.

**Improvement actions:** the DGS that is currently spearheading the effort is consulting with appropriate personnel to assist in developing documentation needed for university consideration.

**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:** Our current student population is 18 female, 27% out-of-state, (both female gender and non-residency increased slightly), 10% non-white, and 20% first-generation college students (the latter two decreased slightly compared to 2016).

**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. Our most recent searches have done a good job of identifying diverse pools of candidates and three of our last six faculty hires have been international (Chile, China, Kenya) faculty and we recently hired a female to replace a male Forestry Extension Associate. However, faculty gender diversity is currently less than in previous years.

**Improvement actions:** We will continue to seek diversity in our student body. While faculty gender diversity is currently low, our overall gender diversity has improved with the addition of the Forest Health Research and Education Center, which has enabled us to hire several female post-doctoral scholars. 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 will begin meetings to discuss specific actions and assessment methods for improving the partnership between Forestry and NRES.

**Results:** In the summer of 2017, a MOU between FNR and NRES was approved by the FNR faculty and NRES Steering Committee. This MOU outlined the working relationship between the programs and included a provision to meet annually to discuss application of the provisions in the MOU and its effectiveness.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** Results of the MOU analysis will be monitored and shared with faculty and staff and improvements incorporated into Departmental decision making as appropriate.

**Improvement actions:** We look forward to using the provisions in the MOU to improve synergy between NRES and the Department, and assist NRES in developing similar agreements with all departments involved in the NRES program.

**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 DOF 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 \$2.2 million (competitive grants and gifts) to date and has hired 5 post-doctoral scholars to assist with research and programming. A tree improvement forester position is currently posted and we should hire by November 2017.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** We continue to seek permanent, recurring funding for the

FHC. Our partnership with the USFS has yielded two permanently stationed USFS scientists on UK's campus for the first time.

**Improvement actions:** We have recently collaborated with 4 other departments (Plant Pathology, Entomology, Plant and Soil Sciences, and Horticulture) to develop a cluster hire proposal to add one faculty member in each department that will advance UK's capacity for conducting tree and forestry research.

**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 zenith.

**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, 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.