

**College of Agriculture
Annual Report
June 2008**

SIGNIFICANT HIGHLIGHTS

Strategic Activities and Planning

1. Leadership role in development of Kentucky Strategic Plan for Agriculture
2. Continuing College-level direction of planning activity for natural resources and environmental sciences
3. Support for and early role in University-level Environmental Science initiative through recruitment of P. Bertsch
4. Final phases of College Review and Dean's Periodic Review were positively concluded
5. Major planning effort for School of Human Environmental Science completed: "Charting the Course".

Developing Research Distinction

1. Academic Analytics national rankings placed UK 10th overall in Agricultural Research, with three programs in the top ten.
2. College extramural funding held stable in face of general downturn and increasing competition
 - i. 2006 \$31.5M
 - ii. 2007 \$31.5M
 - iii. 2008 \$30-33M (projected)
3. Several major grants from new funding sources led by College of Ag faculty, including:
 - i. \$5.3M Gates Foundation by Dobson
 - ii. \$10M NIEHS Superfund by Hennig
 - iii. \$1.2M in well-publicized youth environmental education grants (C. Hanley- TFCE)
4. Major international recruitment effort for Director of Gluck Center (and VSC Chair) successfully concluded (Troedsson)
5. High profile recruitment of Gluck Foundation Executive Director (Squires)
6. Nationally distinguished senior scientist (Bertsch) hired for Environmental Science effort
7. National search for Chair of Family Studies (Werner-Wilson)
8. On Experiment Station Farms- new Director of Environmental Compliance position, ~\$2M for Cane Run watershed projects, other water quality initiatives
9. Expanding grants and project management capacity, including search for a new Assistant Dean for Research
10. Appointment of N. Cox to USDA Secretary advisory board, NAREEE

Advancing Extension and Outreach

1. Completed implementation and budgeting of County Enhancement Initiative funded by Legislature in previous budget sessions

2. National and State awards for two Extension programs: Fine Arts and Entrepreneurial Coaches
3. STEM pipeline effort through 4H Science/Engineering/Technology program, collaborative with Engineering
4. College maintains national leadership role in very large web-based delivery system development, eXtension
5. College is among several land-grant colleges of agriculture developing a national distance education consortium, AG*IDEA (Agricultural Interactive Distance Education Association) for the development and distribution of courses and degrees.
6. Continuing a 30 year partnership, the Kentucky Extension Homemakers cumulative fund raising for UK Ovarian Cancer Research topped \$970,000 as of May 2008.
7. MarketMaker (a web-based food and ag marketing tool) selected as a Commonwealth Collaborative.
8. Featured Program impact reporting
9. Total contact count for Cooperative Extension at 7.2 million, up from mid-6 in previous year.

Promoting Student Success

1. Undergraduate and graduate enrollment were stable (2006 vs. 2007: UG – 2107, 2096; MS – 219, 219; PhD – 161, 175)
2. Advising Resource Center model initiated in Office for Academic Programs and new staff member (J. Dunn) hired
3. Equine Science and Management major: initial freshman class 65% non-resident, 45 students enrolled
4. Trial run of new Sustainable Ag major initiated through independent study route. Twelve students, CSA Farm with several student interns.
5. College is now requiring GEN 100 – Issues in Agriculture – of all first semester freshmen. This will provide at least one small class environment (25 or fewer students) with a professor in the College. Each section will also have an upper division “Peer Mentor” who will assist students with transition to college life and academics issues.
6. International education activities have been on the rise. Faculty-led study tour opportunities this year include France, Ecuador, Ghana, the Caribbean and Thailand. Students are participating in internships in the Republic of Georgia and Thailand.
7. Administered advising surveys to all students in the College this spring. Data analysis in progress. This survey will help us identify areas of excellence and need in our faculty-driven advising programs.
8. Creation of the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence in the College (<http://www.uky.edu/Ag/CLD/CETL/>).

Resource Development

1. We conducted a successful education and advocacy effort for state funding of Livestock Disease Diagnostic Center renovation and expansion (\$20M appropriated in 2008)
2. Sustained operational funding for USDA-ARS Federal Lab and incremental funding increase for proposed facility

3. As national Chair of NASULGC Board on Agriculture Assembly Budget and Advocacy Committee, had a leadership role in successful effort to increase USDA research extension appropriations over President's budget proposal for FY 2008. Also involved in national effort on Farm Bill Research and Education Title.
4. By the beginning of FY 2008, the College endowment had almost doubled in a 5-year period, reaching about \$93M.
5. Continued progress on development of Maine Chance Equine Campus facilities, largely gift or self-funded

Management

1. Major steps completed in long-term reorganization and re-staffing of College Business Office, a key objective has been to enhance support for departments and budget units struggling with new administrative systems (notably SAP/IRIS)
2. Special efforts in marketing and communications included:
 - i. Development of new "umbrella" brand and logos encompassing extension, experiment station and academic mission (UKAg)
 - ii. Renovation of College web site
 - iii. Staff changes and targeted reductions in Ag Communications
3. Overhaul of College-level administrative structure is in process, will eliminate an Associate Dean and an Assistant Dean position
4. 4% budget cut met largely through elimination of existing vacancies, but some strategic targeting and reallocation has begun.

NOTABLE CHALLENGES
June 2008 Update of 2007 Self-Study

Goal I: Reach for National Prominence

- 1. For the next few years, the College is very likely to be setting programmatic priorities in a non-growth environment.**
- 2. Infrastructure and capacity appears likely to constrain further growth and advancement in all mission areas, and across most units in the College. Limits have been reached in:**
 - i. quantity and quality of lab space**
 - ii. ability to sustain Top 20 caliber farm and forest research capacity**
 - iii. office, meeting and teaching space**
 - iv. IT and communications support and hardware**
 - v. Grants, accounts, business management for rapidly growing operations.**
3. Many national metrics are size-dependent (for example, the pending NRC evaluations of doctoral programs). The UK College of Agriculture is a mid-size institution.
4. We must prepare for significant increases in assessment expectations.
5. We have made limited progress on strategic indicators calling for development of metrics relevant to the national standing of Extension and other land grant programs.
6. The perception and potential reality of incompatibility of the land grant mission and Top 20 goals demands continuing communication and analysis.

Goal II: Attract and Graduate Outstanding Students

- 1. University-wide freshman retention and six-year graduation rates are not up to the standards of Top 20 benchmarks. Advising and teaching quality is inconsistent in some programs.**
- 2. In several growing areas, additional undergraduate enrollment will not be possible without additional faculty instructional DOE.**
3. Quality and quantity of classroom space on south campus has become limiting.
4. Some classrooms and teaching labs are inadequately equipped.
5. Graduate enrollment could be increased in most College programs. However, assistantship support is increasingly expensive and may become an unattractive option for many faculty research programs.
6. Continuing tuition inflation substantially increases the cost of funding Research Assistants.
7. High enrollment and low faculty numbers in HES continues to limit progress in undergraduate metrics. Further growth cannot be supported in these majors without significant investment.
8. The potential for enrollment growth is probably linked to interdisciplinary areas (e.g., Equine Science, Ag Biotech, Natural Resources) creating challenges not common in department or disciplinary programs
9. As our faculty and student population changes we are challenged to sustain our tradition of a supportive, student-centered teaching culture.

10. Need for quality graduate teaching assistants and support is rising in several programs with high enrollment and laboratory classes.

Goal III: Attract, Develop and Retain a Distinguished Faculty and Staff

1. **Multiple faculty and key staff positions were eliminated in the freeze, replacing some will be required to sustain program level.**
2. **Retention and compensation remains a challenge for high skill staff, particularly county agents and skilled professional levels.**
3. **National competition for outstanding mid-career faculty remains intense.**
4. Many departments report that further growth in either enrollment or grant funding is unlikely without addition of faculty.
5. Many departments report limited office space for faculty and staff.
6. At all levels staff morale is suffering from recent cuts and increasing work demands.
7. New business systems, reporting, and accountability issues have tremendously increased demands on staff and department chairs and unit directors. Particularly at the department level higher level of skills and training will be essential.

Goal IV: Discover, Share and Apply New Knowledge

1. **There is wide disparity among College departments in research and grad education standing and expectations.**
2. Infrastructure and facilities limit the potential for continued growth of research. Including:
 - i. Grants management, accounting and reporting capacity is stretched to the limit of current staff.
 - ii. Our most distinguished and successful research programs have insufficient laboratory space for further expansion.
 - iii. Plans must be made to deal with increasing operating budget deficits and substantial deferred maintenance needs at off-campus research facilities.
 - iv. On-campus facilities for the environmental sciences and for HES are inadequate and will not support Top 20 caliber programs.
3. Funding of doctoral Graduate Research Assistants on extramural funds should increase.

Goal V: Nurture Diversity of Thought, Culture, Gender and Ethnicity

1. **At least for the next few years, we are likely to be striving to address diversity goals in a non-growth environment.**
2. The College has yet to achieve targets in most areas. Diversity remains unacceptably low in many departments and program areas.
3. At the faculty level, both gender and racial diversity are inadequate.
4. While substantial efforts are being made to hire and retain minority county agents, progress remains slow.

Goal VI: Elevate the Quality of Life for Kentuckians

1. **The 2009 budget cut for Field Programs (county extension) has not been made truly recurring; further expenditure adjustments or redistribution of cost to counties may be required.**
2. Long-term budget models have provided for salary increases but not operating expense inflation. Operating support for extension, teaching and some applied research areas becomes increasingly short. As reliance on extramural sources and county funds increases, stresses will arise.
3. Several, but not all, Extension partnership initiatives have been successful and sustainable.
4. Extension's role in health programs should be carefully reviewed and planned.
5. Statewide and national information/communications systems are evolving rapidly, requiring investment and innovation in delivery.
6. The expectation for graduate education for county agents has been established. Now more accessible and appropriate graduate degree options must be developed.

HIGH PRIORITY PROJECTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS FOR 08-09

1. Complete initial phases of Equine Initiative
 - a. Facilities at Maine Chance
 - b. Building of ESM undergrad major
 - c. Veterinary extension positions
 - d. Accelerate fund raising
2. Formalize and activate a Natural Resource and Environmental Science Initiative at the College level
 - a. Response to the NRES Planning Task Force
 - b. Coordination with Bertsch and university initiative
 - c. Enhancement plans for NRCM undergrad major
 - d. Develop an umbrella, coordinating structure in the College
3. Analyze and begin to implement cost reduction and cost recovery measures to restore budgetary stability to research farms and other off-campus facilities
4. Complete transition/reorganization of College administrative team and Business Office
5. Address department chair issues
 - a. Chairs' terms and reappointments
 - b. 2 or 3 key replacements
 - c. Enhance support for chairs administratively