

**PROGRAM REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION PLAN  
ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT  
PLANT PATHOLOGY 2023 PROGRESS REPORT**

**Recommendation 1.** The committee has identified several issues of concern related to the treatment of graduate students that must be addressed immediately by college administration through initiating a comprehensive independent investigation. These issues include a history of graduate students being required to work well beyond the amount of time allowed by university policies (including Administrative Regulations) delaying their time to degree completion, and a pattern of showing active favoritism towards certain students. Additionally, a continued pattern of abuse of power between certain faculty (whose names have been shared with college administration) and their graduate students has been allowed to persist in the department, creating an unhealthy and insecure environment for all students, as well as staff and other faculty. In addition to the independent investigation, we recommend a formal process of departmental oversight be developed to prevent these issues from occurring in the future, which could include involvement offices at the college and university levels.

**Assessment method:**

**Results:** Please see Recommendation 10 for actions taken.

**Analysis of results and reflection:**

**Ongoing improvement actions:**

**Recommendation 2.** Develop methods to communicate the resources and support available through the university for health and mental well-being of students, staff, and faculty, as well as how to report issues of grievance and Title IX issues.

**Assessment method:**

**Results:** The Chair has already met with graduate students, staff, and faculty to inform them about available resources and plans to meet with them on a regular basis.

**Analysis of results and reflection:**

**Ongoing improvement actions:**

**Recommendation 3.** Identify and appoint a tenured departmental faculty member to serve on the CAFE Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Department Representatives Committee who will work with the department chair on recommendation 2.

**Assessment method:**

**Results:**

**Analysis of results and reflection:**

**Ongoing improvement actions:**

**Recommendation 4.** Develop a specific plan to add new faculty to the department to address significant gaps in expertise in the context of the college and university faculty hiring process.

**Assessment method:**

**Results:** Discussions on hiring new faculty started at the departmental retreat and will continue at faculty meetings. A proposal was submitted to the college to hire a permanent chair and four faculty members.

**Analysis of results and reflection:**

**Ongoing improvement actions:**

**Recommendation 5.** Add personnel and/or redirect effort in existing Regular Title Series lines to help manage and bolster the undergraduate teaching responsibilities, and to help take advantage of future opportunities. This solution may include a new Lecturer position and/or TA lines.

**Assessment method:**

**Results:** An ad-hoc faculty committee was appointed to develop a plan to improve undergraduate teaching.

**Analysis of results and reflection:**

**Ongoing improvement actions:**

**Recommendation 6.** The current graduate curriculum needs to be reexamined closely and retooled to provide well-rounded training that includes, in addition to mycology, virology, and plant immunology, the other important areas of bacteriology, nematology, and epidemiology that can be taught on a consistent, regularly scheduled basis to ensure comprehensive and timely degree completion for students.

**Assessment method:**

**Results:** PPA faculty voted to merge PPA graduate program with the IPSS graduate program

**Analysis of results and reflection:** Discussions are in progress on the merger with IPSS program and curriculum changes for PPA concentration. Faculty started discussing changes to courses offered by the department.

**Ongoing improvement actions:**

**Recommendation 7.** Develop a department level Awards and Recognition Committee.

**Assessment method:**

**Results:** Discussions on establishing the Awards and Recognition Committee started at the November faculty meeting. A departmental awards committee was formed and the committee is working to nominate members of the department for various awards.

**Analysis of results and reflection:****Ongoing improvement actions:**

**Recommendation 8.** Work with college administration to develop a funding plan that supports necessary infrastructure and allows adequate staffing that will make the two PDDLs financially sustainable and service oriented.

**Assessment method:**

**Results:** Improvements are in progress. A director has been hired and an advisory committee is formed. At a recent meeting, the PDDL advisory committee discussed ways to raise funds to support PDDL. The PDDL advisory committee developed a proposal for a fee structure to charge counties for processing samples submitted.

**Analysis of results and reflection:****Ongoing improvement actions:**

**Recommendation 9.** Work with college administration to immediately develop a succession plan for new leadership in the Chair and Director of Graduate Studies positions. Individuals for these positions should possess strong leadership and communication skills, as well as skills in conflict resolution.

**Assessment method:**

**Results:** An interim chair has been appointed. Discussions with CAFÉ administrators are underway to hire a permanent chair. The PPA graduate program is merging with IPSS; hence, there is no need to hire DGS.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** The interim chair formed ad-hoc faculty committees that developed strategic plans to revitalize the department by improving the research, instruction and extension missions of the department. The interim chair submitted these plans and a strategy to hire a permanent chair and four new faculty members. These proposals are under consideration by M-G CAFÉ administration.

**Ongoing improvement actions:**

**Recommendation 10.** A University-level investigation to cover current practices of graduate student supervision, advising and instruction throughout the Department of Plant Pathology, with the goal of providing actionable feedback to the Department.

**Assessment method:** There is no process at UK for a university-level investigation as recommended by the review committee. The college and department take the committee's intent seriously, however, and the college has requested guidance from all appropriate university-level offices regarding actions we can take to address this concern. Our work on this recommendation will be considered complete when feedback to the department has been provided following guidance from University administration so that the department may move forward with appropriate actions.

**Results:** College leadership met with and received guidance from university administrators in the Provost Office, International Center, Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity, Graduate School, and UK Legal. Departmental changes have been implemented to enhance the student experience and improve management practices related to graduate student supervision, advising, and instruction. College leadership met with the department chair and with each departmental faculty member individually to ensure a full understanding of departmental perspectives. Changes to date include the appointment of an interim department chair, appointment of a new DGS, reconfirmation with DGS and chair regarding maximum workload limits for graduate students, implementation of budget clarification and transparency process, and faculty vote in support of merging both departmental graduate programs into the existing Integrated Plant and Soil Sciences program outside of the department. In addition, the college Center for Student Success has hired a new staff position with a major job responsibility to develop a new college-level Graduate Student Council to provide a formal platform to elevate graduate student perspectives.

**Analysis of results and reflection:** The department's majority of faculty and students support these changes so far, and we anticipate continued enhancements of the student experience through the program merger and implementation of the Graduate Student Council.

**Ongoing improvement actions:** Integration of PPA and IPSS student activities is progressing well.