



THE LAND-GRANT VISION:
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
STRATEGIC PLAN
2009-2014



WHO WE ARE

The College of Agriculture was founded as, and remains, a land-grant institution, offering access to knowledge and learning to enhance the lives of Kentuckians. The College is fundamentally interdisciplinary; we apply the biological, physical, and social sciences to challenges in agricultural, food, and environmental systems. Our work encompasses farms and forests, food and fiber, families and communities.

The College holds a unique position as the home of the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station and the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service. Our teaching, research, and extension programs are part of a national system that maintains a statewide presence and links local, state, and global issues.

OUR VISION

The College will be recognized for excellence in fostering:

- learning that changes lives,
- discoveries that change the world, and
- opportunities that shape the future.

LAND-GRANT VALUES

As a College, we are guided by the values underlying the land-grant philosophy:

- learning – enhancing access to educational opportunities for all;
- discovery – expanding knowledge through research; and
- engagement – collaborating with diverse institutions, communities, and people to improve lives.

A hallmark of our work is the integration of these three values – learning, discovery, and engagement – into programs that make a difference.

OUR MISSION

The mission of our College is:

- to promote sustainable farming and food systems, from production through consumption;
- to enhance health and well-being of people and the environment in which they live; and
- to expand economic opportunity by sharing the knowledge and tools for wise, innovative uses of natural resources and development of human potential.

As full partners in the University of Kentucky and in every Kentucky county we:

- facilitate lifelong learning, informed by scholarship and research;
- expand knowledge through creative research and discovery; and
- serve Kentuckians by sharing and applying knowledge.

The College shall honor, sustain and advance the land-grant heritage and mission.

GOAL 1

Prepare Students for Leadership in an Innovation-Driven Economy and Global Society

Educating students was the earliest mission of the College and remains the most important way that we enhance the future of the Commonwealth. Instruction is fully integrated with our other missions – research and extension. The College expects its graduates to become leaders in their professions and their communities. To this end, the College must attract and graduate outstanding students with diverse backgrounds and the skills to meet the challenges of the future.

Most Significant Challenges

- ❖ In several programs that have experienced significant enrollment growth during the last several years, additional undergraduate enrollment will not be possible without additional faculty instructional DOE.
- ❖ Quality and quantity of classroom space on south campus has become limiting.
- ❖ Some classrooms and teaching labs are inadequately equipped.
- ❖ University-wide, and in the College of Agriculture, 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.
- ❖ Graduate enrollment could be increased in most College programs.

Strategies

- Use the opportunities provided by the university changes in general education requirements to develop more efficient and effective curriculum and instruction delivery at the program level.
- Develop plans and actions that will make the College a leader in integrating experiential education into the curriculum.
- Aggressively promote student participation in personal and professional development opportunities beyond the classroom, including student research, student and professional organization membership, international travel experience, and internships.
- Sustain an active, effective college-level recruitment program, but plan to more selectively target defined student populations and relatively under-enrolled majors.
- Continue to develop, refine and assess the Student Advising Center and related strategies to enhance retention and graduation.
- Increase opportunities for distance learning and continuing education.
- While sustaining and fostering the identity of the School of Human Environmental Sciences, continue to integrate students and faculty into the College.
- Secure additional support for college-based scholarship and recruiting programs.
- Increase faculty recognition and reward for excellence in academic and extracurricular advising.
- Implement incentives for leveraging graduate student financial support with grant funds.

Key Indicators, by 2014 the College will have:

1. Increased the first-to-second year in-college retention rate to 80 percent.
2. Reduced the ratio of majors to teaching/advising faculty to less than 20/1 in each undergraduate program.
3. Shifted enrollment growth to targeted, higher capacity majors in biological and environmental sciences: Five initial targets are Biosystems & Agricultural Engineering, Food Science, Forestry, Natural Resources & Conservation, and Plant & Soil Sciences.
4. Increased the number of graduate degrees awarded by an average of 5% per year.

GOAL 2

Promote Research and Creative Work to Increase the Intellectual, Social and Economic Capital of Kentucky and the World Beyond its Borders

The College's land-grant mission encourages truly creative research endeavors that result in the discovery of new knowledge. Further, we aspire to capitalize on the individual and collective achievement of our faculty by applying discoveries to the improvement of agriculture, industry, families, communities, and the natural environment. The College integrates discovery science and applied research and technology in teaching, technology transfer, and outreach activities to solve problems and generate economic, societal, and environmental benefits at the state and national levels.

Most Significant Challenges

- ❖ Infrastructure and facilities limit the potential for continued growth of research:
 - Increasing operating costs and accumulating deferred maintenance threatens off-campus research facilities. Our most distinguished and successful research programs have insufficient laboratory space for further expansion.
 - On-campus facilities for the environmental sciences and for Human Environmental Sciences are inadequate and will not support Top 20-caliber programs.
- ❖ The research attainment of some units in the College remains below expectations.
- ❖ Repeated budget cuts have capped faculty expansion and created key vacancies.

Strategies

- Aggressively pursue targeted initiatives to increase extramural research funding from all sources, with particular emphasis on federal competitive funding.
- Review and update the College's "Targets of Opportunity" to identify research opportunities areas where cutting-edge science and critical mass exist to achieve national and international prominence.
- Develop inter- and multi-disciplinary research teams, facilities, and resources within the College, across the University and with other universities (including Kentucky State and other state universities).
- Continue to actively compile, document and communicate impacts of our research.
- Advance planning for and articulation of resource and facility priorities and aggressively advocate for these priorities.

Key Indicators, by 2014 the College will have:

1. Increased the annual total of external awards to \$35M or above.
2. Increased federal competitive grant awards from 33 to 40 percent of the College's extramural funding portfolio.
3. Increased at the college level the number of refereed journal publications by 3% per year.
4. Sustained the number of patents awarded on a four-year rolling average of five per year.

GOAL 3

Develop the Human and Physical Resources of the College to Achieve Top 20 Stature

As a land-grant institution, the College of Agriculture offers access to knowledge and learning for citizens and students throughout the Commonwealth. Agriculture, food, and environmental systems are key components of Kentucky's economic future, and the UK College of Agriculture is playing a prominent role in those areas with its research, teaching, and outreach programs. The UK College of Agriculture seeks to be recognized as one of the top colleges of its kind in the nation.

Most Significant Challenges

- ❖ 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:
 - quantity and quality of lab space
 - ability to sustain Top 20 caliber farm and forest research capacity
 - office, meeting, and teaching space
 - IT and communications support and hardware
 - business management for rapidly growing operations.
- ❖ Many national metrics are size-dependent. We are a mid-size institution.
- ❖ National rankings in most agricultural disciplines are of limited validity.
- ❖ Budget circumstances portend limited growth in faculty numbers. Further expansion of enrollment or grant funding is difficult without addition of faculty.
- ❖ Retention and compensation of highly skilled staff remains a challenge.
- ❖ Recruitment or development of faculty at the most distinguished level (e.g., academy-level) remains severely limited by budget cuts.

Strategies

- The College will strive to recruit, develop and retain nationally distinguished faculty.
 - We will opportunistically reallocate resources to recruit exceptional mid-career faculty who bring elevated recognition and leadership to targeted programs.
 - We will improve strategies for enhanced development of new faculty.
- The College will further develop plans for expanding and enhancing the physical infrastructure needed to sustain the growth and advancement of the last decade.
- We must seek increased funding for high-quality lab, teaching, and field facilities.
- We will seek to improve recruitment, retention, and remuneration of staff.
- The College will continue to improve access to resources and infrastructure through enhanced business management, information technology, and support systems.

Key Indicators, by 2014 the College will have:

1. Sustained at least two listings in the top 10 or top quartile according to Academic Analytic's Faculty Productivity Index.
2. Increased the contributed value of the college endowment by \$500,000 per year.
3. Sustained a Top 20 national ranking as indicated by NSF-reported research funding from USDA.
4. Renovated, modernized, or added 50,000 gross sq. ft. of educational, general, research, and student support space available for use by College of Agriculture faculty, staff, and students.

GOAL 4

Promote Diversity and Inclusion

The College is committed to creating an environment where diversity is valued and all individuals can fulfill their highest potential. Respect for diversity of thought, culture, and all human differences is a cornerstone of the land-grant philosophy. To fulfill its mission, the College must model the ways in which diversity, fairness, and equity in policies and practices facilitate learning, discovery and engagement. We seek to sustain an institutional climate wherein differences are valued, we create work and learning environments wherein every person has opportunities to achieve their highest potential, and we support an inclusive institution responsive to the needs of all students, staff, faculty and citizens.

Most Significant Challenges

- ❖ The College has yet to achieve targets in most areas. Diversity remains unacceptably limited in many departments and program areas.
- ❖ At the faculty level, both gender and racial diversity are inadequate. Only four African-American faculty members have been hired in five years.
- ❖ While substantial efforts are being made to hire and retain county agents from under-represented groups, progress remains slow.

Strategies

- Continue to strive for full implementation of the College of Agriculture Diversity Review and Planning Task Force Report.
- Review and report annually on the progress towards addressing recommendations of the College of Agriculture Diversity Review and Planning Task Force.
- Review, evaluate, and optimize resources and operations of the Office of Diversity in support of recruitment and retention.
- Establish a network of partners with 1890 land-grant universities for recruitment of students, faculty, and staff.
- Sustain and expand the extension internship program and add support for other summer programs targeted for potential undergraduate students from under-represented groups.
- Maintain the number of doctoral students receiving College matching funds for Lyman T. Johnson Graduate Fellowship support.

Key Indicators, by 2014 the College will have:

1. Increased the percentage of enrolled undergraduate students from underrepresented groups from 9% in 2007 to 14% in 2014.
2. Increased the percentage of enrolled graduate students from underrepresented groups from 7% in 2007 to 9% in 2014.
3. Completed County Program/Civil Rights Reviews for each of 120 counties including development of Affirmative Action Plans.
4. Increased the percentage of female faculty to 30%.

GOAL 5

Improve the Quality of Life for Kentuckians through Extension, Outreach and Service

Agricultural, environmental, economic, and societal issues create an unprecedented demand for knowledge- and research-based educational programs applicable to the needs of all Kentuckians. Economic development, leadership development, family, nutrition and health issues, opportunities for youth, and a rapidly changing agricultural landscape in Kentucky require a vital, progressive and responsive College of Agriculture and Cooperative Extension Service system.

Most Significant Challenges

- ❖ Budget cuts combined with turnover have created critical capacity shortages in key areas, including family and consumer science, health/wellness, community and economic development, and program and staff development.
- ❖ Extension's role in health programs such as the National Extension Primary Health Care initiative should be carefully reviewed.
- ❖ Cuts in state funding of mandated programs and increasing burdens on alternative funds sources, including county extension funds.
- ❖ New communication/information tools are available, but have not been adapted and incorporated fully into Extension programming.
- ❖ The expectation for graduate education for agents has been established. Now more accessible and appropriate graduate degree options must be developed.
- ❖ Operating funds for extension, teaching and some applied research becomes increasingly limited. Reliance on extramural sources necessarily increases. Not all faculty and staff have successfully adjusted to this shift.

Strategies

- Sustain traditional Extension strengths while offering innovative new programs in health and wellness, business, engineering, and humanities to serve increasingly diverse stakeholders.
- Promote new Extension and outreach partnerships within and outside UK.
- Increase the deployment of new information technologies such as eXtension, YouTube, and enhanced web effectiveness.
- Enhance recruiting, retention, training, and support for outreach personnel statewide.
- Establish clearly understood measures to assess and communicate the impact of Extension programs.
- Engage key constituencies – including alumni – to help the College achieve its objectives.
- Enhance the service capacity of the Livestock Disease Diagnostic Center and Regulatory Services.

Key Indicators, by 2014 the College will have:

1. Enhanced and refined an accessible, easily understood database of Extension outcomes, with annual data reported for each priority program area of Cooperative Extension.
2. Sustained or increased grantsmanship in Extension or Integrated Projects as evidenced by numbers of proposals funded and total funding amount.
3. Sustained Cooperative Extension Service contacts at or above 6 million.
4. Increased or sustained accession and sample numbers at Livestock Disease Diagnostic Center and Regulatory Services.