

Implementation Updates -- October 2005

10-10-05

Unit plans are posted on our college intranet at www.cas.psu.edu/StrategicPlanning/. Information on cooperative extension includes the six regional plans as well as a summary of program priorities. Academic unit plans also reference cooperative extension functions, e.g., the Entomology plan mentions a priority to participate in the development of a Metro Research and Extension Center and recommends that this be staffed by a cluster hire of a public health entomologist and a regional extension educator with similar educational training.

Deans have met with leaders from 15 of the 19 units to discuss the content of their plans as well as their planning process. The remaining meetings will be completed by the end of October (Ag & Bio Engineering, College Relations, Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences, and Administrative Services). The strongest plans include:

- Evidence that the college's 15 year vision was considered and the three year plan will initiate change towards the vision
- Evidence that consideration of small number of areas of excellence and ways to gain depth have been identified (signature niche)
- Evidence of discussion with other departments

Several study groups are currently addressing the short term implementation priorities resulting from a college self assessment completed in May 2005. Study group recommendations are due to the dean by December 1, 2005. The five study groups are:

- Environmental undergraduate curricula (Dave Mortensen)
- Plant Sciences graduate curricula (David Geiser)
- Communications and Marketing (Mary Wirth)
- Data and Assessment (Deanna Behring)
- Information and Technology Assessment (Neal Vines)

Notes are posted at www.cas.psu.edu/StrategicPlanning (under "summer 2005 study groups"). Dave Mortensen provided a progress report to the college leadership team in August 2005 and the other four study group leaders will provide updates during October and November. In December 2005 the college leadership team will meet to review and prioritize study group recommendations and discuss next steps in the implementation of the college strategic plan.

As we work together to achieve the college's long term vision we will focus on activities that:

- align with the college's strategy to organize our work around the interrelationship of the food & fiber system, ecosystem, and socioeconomic system

- meet strongly expressed stakeholder needs (e.g., high enrollment courses)
- capitalize on our college's strength in the functional integration of research, resident education, extension, and e-learning
- share costs or leverage funding from multiple sources

What can you this fall to do to demonstrate support for the college's vision towards mutual success?

- Study the wealth of ideas that we now have before us, including the 2004 study groups, the 2005-08 college strategic plan, and the unit plans.
- Consider how your unit's plan relates to others. What synergies exist?
- Communicate with current study group leaders to share your ideas.

What are examples where cross-cutting themes exist or could be developed? Several unit plans mention a focus on important societal issues including (but not limited to) improvement of consumer health and wellness, environmental quality, and renewable energy sources. It is easy to envision ways in which multiple disciplines and functions could contribute to areas such as:

A. Environment and Natural Resources

- Nutrient management (AERS, DAS, PS, CSS, ABE, ENRI, Cooperative Extension)
- Air and water quality (AERS, CSS, SFR, Plant Path, ABE, DAS, PS, ENRI, Cooperative Extension)
- Land use (AERS, CSS, ENRI)
- Fisheries and wildlife modeling (SFR, ENT)
- Community leadership (AERS, AEE, Cooperative Extension)
- Sustainability of natural, managed, and agricultural ecosystems (mentioned in a majority of unit plans)

B. Bio-based products and renewable energy

- Biocomposites (ABE, SFR, ENRI)
- Entrepreneurship and business leadership (AERS, AEE, Food Science, Horticulture, Cooperative Extension)
- Consumer/product interface (AERS, Food Science)

C. Metro Research and Outreach Center

- Faculty and regional extension educator expertise in Public Health Entomology (ENT, Cooperative Extension)
- Urban forestry (SFR, Cooperative Extension)
- Food safety (Food Sci, PS, DAS, ABE, Cooperative Extension)