

University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture

Strategic Plan
2003-2006

DRAFT
12/22/03

Who We Are

The College of Agriculture was founded as 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 of Agriculture 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

The College of Agriculture affirms the University of Kentucky's 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.

The 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 the 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 life-long learning, informed by scholarship and research,
- expand knowledge through creative research and discovery, and
- serve Kentuckians by sharing and applying knowledge.

The College shall sustain the land-grant heritage of impact and achievement in this challenging new century.

Goal I: Reach for National Prominence

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.

Objectives

1. The College will enhance the national prominence and impact of its research-based scholarship.
2. The College will recruit and graduate students who become outstanding leaders and scholars for our state and nation.
3. The College will sustain its nationally prominent stature in outreach, service and extension missions.
4. The College will continue to improve access to resources and infrastructure through enhanced facilities, business management and information technology.

Strategies

1. Pursue increased resources and funding for high-quality research, instructional, and service programs.
2. Strengthen the link between funding decisions, plans, and results.
3. Reorganize and modernize management, information technology and business operations for more effective support of College programs.
4. Reorganize Cooperative Extension to streamline administration, strengthen partnerships with other units on campus, and create a system that is more adaptable and responsive to rapidly changing issues and needs.
5. Develop meaningful metrics and indicators of the stature of Cooperative Extension and the Agricultural Experiment Station on a national level.
6. Engage key constituencies – particularly alumni– to help the College achieve its objectives.

Key Indicators

By 2006 the College will have:

1. Two programs ranked in the top 20 or the top quartile of public research universities.
2. Increased its total endowment by 10%.
3. Documented that the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service ranks among the top 10 in the nation.
4. Documented that the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station ranks among the top 20 nationally as indicated by NSF-reported research expenditures.

Goal II: Attract and Graduate Outstanding Students

Educating students was the earliest mission of the College and remains the most important way that we advance the future of the Commonwealth. Instruction is fully synergistic 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.

Objectives

1. The College will recruit and retain students with the highest academic and professional potential.
2. The College will provide a rigorous learning environment which is conducive to success and prepares graduates to deal with global issues.
3. The College will seek to offer the full scope of learning opportunities for all of its fields of study with access to advanced degrees, distance learning and continuing education.
4. The College must integrate the students and faculty from the former College of Human Environmental Sciences, which has been merged with the College as a new School.

Strategies

1. Provide the best possible curriculum opportunities supported by a Faculty of dedicated and skilled instructors and advisors.
2. Foster student participation in personal and professional development opportunities beyond the classroom, including student research, student and professional organization membership, international and travel experience, and internships.
3. Monitor the success of its graduates and use those findings as a part of the process driving curriculum changes.
- 4.. Continually monitor its curriculum offerings for contemporary relevance, ensuring that students are both fully engaged and performing at levels equal to or superior to students in national and international peer institutions.
5. Increase opportunities for graduate studies, distance learning and continuing education.
6. Reevaluate college-wide requirements and academic offerings to reflect the infusion of members from the School of Human Environmental Sciences.
7. Aggressively seek additional support for college-based scholarship and recruiting programs.
8. Increase faculty recognition for academic and extracurricular advising.

Key Indicators

By 2006, the College will have:

1. Increased the middle 50 per cent range of ACT scores for incoming freshmen to 23-28, as reported to U.S. News & World Report. *(Needs to be verified that data will be collected on College-level basis. Probably preferable to go with ACT median.)*
2. Increased the first-to-second year retention rate of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students by 1% per year.
3. Exceeded the predicted levels of attainment on indicators of quality undergraduate education, as reported by seniors on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).
4. Increased scholarship funding awarded by the College by 20%.

Goal III: Attract, Develop and Retain a Distinguished Faculty

The College will be recognized for its outstanding faculty working in partnership with superior staff at the county and campus levels to discover and disseminate new knowledge. The successful achievement of our mission depends upon commitment to quality, appropriate compensation, recognition of excellence, and the building of excellent support for faculty and staff.

Objectives

1. The College will recruit and develop an outstanding and diverse junior faculty.
2. The College will selectively reallocate resources to identify, recruit and support exceptional mid-career faculty who bring elevated recognition and leadership to targeted programs.
3. The College will aggressively seek to recognize and reward superior achievement and scholarship by both faculty and staff.
4. The College will improve recruitment, retention and remuneration of technical, clerical and professional staff to ensure the highest quality of support for all programs.

Strategies

1. Develop institutional policies and incentives that help retain superior faculty and staff.
2. Seek additional funding to better compensate professional staff and address the growing disparity between county agent salaries and the benchmarks.
3. Develop and implement a strategy for professional development and mentoring of new faculty.
4. Continue to review and improve evaluation and coaching procedures, with appropriate rewards, that match performance expectations for all employees.

Key Indicators**By 2006 the College will have:**

1. Decreased by half the disparity between average salary and the benchmark median for all professional categories.
2. Increased by 10% the number of faculty receiving national awards and honors.
3. Increased by one the number of active or emeritus faculty with membership in the National Academy of Engineering or National Academy of Sciences.

Goal IV: Discover, Share and Apply New Knowledge

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. These pursuits will bring recognition to the College as a premier institution providing knowledge-based solutions.

Objectives

1. The College will aggressively pursue targeted strategies to increase extramural research funding from all sources, with particular emphasis on federal competitive funding.
2. The College will provide state-of-the-art facilities and equipment to increase our capacity for cutting-edge science.
3. The College will integrate discovery science and applied research and technology in teaching, technology transfer and outreach activities to solve problems and generate economic, societal, or environmental benefits at the state and national levels.
4. The College will attract and enroll highly qualified doctoral students and postdoctoral scholars.

Strategies

1. Identify and support targets of opportunity in research areas where cutting-edge science and critical mass exist to achieve national and international prominence.
2. 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).
3. Develop a process for compiling and reporting impacts of research.
4. Secure resources to enlist young scientists' contributions to the research program at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
5. Advocate resource and facility needs to a wide audience.

Key Indicators**By 2006 the College will have:**

1. Increased federal competitive grant awards from 27% to 35% of the College's extramural funding portfolio.
2. Secured authorization to renovate research and service facilities or to construct a new building for research activity.
3. Increased the number of doctoral students supported by external funds by 10%.
4. Increased the number of postdoctoral scholars by 15%.
5. Increase the dollar value of external awards by 10%.

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

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, of culture and all human differences is the cornerstone of all our actions. To implement its mission, the College must model the ways in which diversity, fairness and equity in policies and practices are essential to learning, discovery and engagement.

Objectives

The College will establish structures, implement processes, and focus its resources to:

1. sustain an institutional climate wherein differences are valued,
2. create work and learning environments wherein every person has opportunities to achieve their highest potential, and
3. support an inclusive institution responsive to the needs of all students, staff, faculty and citizens.

Strategies

1. Adopt an implementation plan for the recommendations of the College of Agriculture Diversity Review and Planning Task Force (April, 2003: "Diversity Issues in the College of Agriculture": www.ca.uky.edu).
2. Annually review and report on the progress toward implementing the recommendations of the College of Agriculture Diversity Review and Planning Task Force.
3. Establish a network of partners with 1890 land-grant universities for recruitment of students, faculty and staff.
4. Continue to review, evaluate and optimize resources and operations of the Office of Diversity, in support of recruitment and retention.
- 5.. Increase the financial resources committed to recruiting and retaining a diverse student body, faculty and staff, including county agents.

Key Indicators

By 2006 the College will have:

1. Met the enrollment and persistence goals of the Kentucky Plan for Equal Opportunities in Higher Education.
2. Met the employment goals of the University Affirmative Action Plan.
3. Complete favorable USDA-CSREES civil rights reviews as appropriately scheduled.
4. Increased the fraction of minority undergraduate students, graduate students and faculty by 10% (e.g., from 5% to 5.5%).

Goal VI: Elevate the Quality of Life for Kentuckians

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 system.

Objectives

1. The College will advance sustainable agricultural, food and natural resource systems.
2. The College will help Kentucky's youth develop the character traits to be successful citizens.
3. The College will improve the economic, social, and physical well-being of individuals and families through lifelong educational programming.
4. The College will improve the capacity of communities to address critical issues through programs in leadership development, civic engagement, and economic development.

Strategies

1. Sustain traditional Extension strengths while offering innovative new programs in health and wellness, business, engineering, and humanities, to serve increasingly diverse stakeholders.
2. Promote new or enhanced linkages between Cooperative Extension and partner agencies and programs within and outside the University.
3. Link all Kentucky communities and the University through Cooperative Extension offices and agents in every county, applying leadership to address societal issues.
4. Establish or refine program impact measures to provide a sound baseline of consistent and easily communicated outcome-based results indicators for assessing impact of Extension programming efforts.
5. Statewide, seek to enhance recruiting, retention, training and support for local and regional outreach personnel.
6. Fully implement the "Re-Envisioning CES" process adopted July 1, 2003, including Regional Issues Response team formation.
7. Enhance the Livestock Disease Diagnostic Center and Regulatory Services.
8. Promote development and commercialization of intellectual property by College faculty.

Key Indicators

By 2006, we will have:

1. Developed or expanded at least three major outreach partnerships as indicated by formal agreements and/or new or enhanced outcome measures related to joint programming.
2. Increased annual Extension or outreach related grant support obtained by 30%.
3. Enhanced and refined an accessible, easily understood database of Extension outcomes, with baseline data reported for each program area of Cooperative Extension, including such measures as producer adoption of new practices, life skills acquired through 4-H Youth Development programs, individuals or families following recommended health, nutrition, or safety practices, and program participants acquiring new or improved skills in communication, problem-solving, or group processes.
4. Increased knowledge of Extension programs, as indicated by a 5% increase in familiarity measures in statewide surveys.
5. Increased by 10% the number of patents filed by faculty, and spin-off three new start-up companies based on College research.