

2015 Strategic Plan



MISSISSIPPI STATE
UNIVERSITY™

COLLEGE OF
FOREST RESOURCES

FOREST AND WILDLIFE
RESEARCH CENTER

Objectives

Objective 1. Maintain a highly competent faculty.

Objective 2. Obtain additional support, dedicate additional funds to important specific needs.

Objective 3. Achieve undergraduate and graduate student enrollments consistent with college and MSU goals, fiscal resources, and societal needs for professionals in forestry; sustainable bioproducts; and wildlife, fisheries, and aquaculture.

Objective 4. Maintain appropriate accreditation of undergraduate academic programs and continuously improve programmatic effectiveness, relevance, and quality.

Objective 5. Continuously improve the effectiveness, relevance, and quality of programs.

Objective 6. Increase the visibility of the research, teaching, and extension programs.

Objective 7. Develop and maintain operating procedures, administrative structure and processes that promote excellence.

STRATEGIC PLAN

College of Forest Resources
Forest and Wildlife Research Center
Mississippi State University

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VISION

We promote, support, and enable the management, conservation, and utilization of forest and other natural resources to benefit the stakeholders of Mississippi, the Nation, and the world. As a comprehensive and diverse community of learning, research, extension/outreach, and service we continually strive to collaborate and share ideas and applications as a synergistic collectivity with the highest of professional and ethical standards. We provide our students, citizens of the State, and other stakeholders with opportunities to discover knowledge and develop skills needed for productive and satisfying lives. Through our activities, and those of our graduates, we aim to improve and sustain economic, social, and environmental well-being.

To accomplish this vision, we will ensure:

- A scholarly environment that fully integrates our teaching, research, extension/outreach, and service missions
- Superior administrative support – particularly in the arena of grantsmanship – to enable and equip faculty to develop aggressive, innovative, and renowned programs
- Interdisciplinary projects, which incorporate expertise among our departments as well as with external entities
- Research programs to address current problems and challenges in natural resources, while also recognizing the value of basic research
- Proactive and innovative teaching, research, and extension/outreach programs that balance the needs of Mississippians with those of the larger regional, national, and international communities
- Excellence in graduate education through aggressive recruitment of outstanding students, renowned research projects, engaged faculty advisors, and career placement
- An atmosphere of academic freedom for all faculty
- An academic environment focused on discovery, problem-solving, critical thinking, and life-long learning
- Aggressive pursuit of extramural funding from a variety of sources, recognizing the value of funding, support, and partnerships with a diversity of external organizations, agencies, and governments
- Strong and positive relationships among instructors and students, including undergraduate, graduate, and off-campus learners
- Continuous improvement of our teaching programs through feedback from administrators, peers, students, alumni, and other stakeholders
- Recognition of the value of scholarship that provides a diversity of outputs useful to all our stakeholders, including quality publications and products in a variety of outlets
- An environment that encourages faculty and staff to continuously develop their professional skills and abilities through continuing education and other avenues
- Undergraduate involvement in research and internships to provide students ample and diverse opportunities to engage with the natural resources profession
- Aggressive programs to recruit and retain high quality undergraduate and graduate students
- The best possible learning environments, which incorporate the best of technology-based delivery and traditional hands-on approaches

MISSION

To promote, support and enable the management, conservation, and utilization of forest and other natural resources to benefit the stakeholders of Mississippi, the Nation, and the world.

Objective 1.

Maintain a highly competent faculty and staff.

- A.1.1. Fill needed faculty and staff positions with the most highly qualified individuals identified through nation-wide search processes, following University governance guidelines. Ensure that newly hired professors have adequate resources to initiate a quality research program and progress toward tenure and promotion.
- Metrics
Number of faculty and staff positions filled
Dollars allocated for start-up funds
- A.1.2. Establish additional endowed professorships and chairs in departmental areas of emphasis and excellence.
- Metrics
Number of endowed chairs
Number of endowed professorships
- A.1.3. Encourage faculty and staff development through involvement in promotion and tenure expectation workshops, sabbatical, and other leave programs and conferences, short courses, workshops, webinars, and seminars. Provide funding to support faculty development activities on and off campus.
- Metrics
Number of faculty and staff taking part in developmental activities.
- A.1.4. Encourage consulting activities, adhering to DAFVM guidelines, that result in professional development for faculty and staff.
- Metrics
Number of consulting activities approved
- A.1.5. Regularly review and set salary goals by rank consistent with maintaining excellence compared to peer land-grant institutions in the southeast region and the Southern University Group (SUG). Adjust salaries to reflect merit rather than making adjustments “across-the-board.” Report average salaries and those of peer institutions by rank.
- Metrics
Determine percentages of FWRC average salaries by rank relative to respective averages from peer and SUG institutions
Salary information reported (indicate yes/no)
- A.1.6. Encourage and facilitate faculty and staff participation in professional service (e.g., editorships, advisory boards, review teams, counsel to public and private sector partners).
- Metrics
Number of faculty and staff participating in professional service activities by type.

Objective 2.

Obtain additional support, dedicate additional funds to important specific needs.

- A.2.1. Employ and house a full-time Director of Development that seeks to increase assets.
Metrics
Financial and other assets acquired by the Director of Development.
- A.2.2. Provide graduate assistantships commensurate with departmental, CFR, FWRC and stakeholder needs.
Metrics
Number of Ph.D. assistantships provided by funding source
Number of M.S. assistantships provided by funding source
- A.2.3. Maintain excellent facilities including information transfer and technology. Increase classroom space for CFR courses. Ensure excellence in computer and other technological teaching laboratories.
1. Acquire funds from traditional and non-traditional sources such as endowments, gifts, and revenue from the Bulldog Forest for maintenance of buildings, grounds, and equipment.
 2. Report annually the investments made toward upgrading and maintaining laboratories and other related college facilities.
 3. The Facilities Committee will maintain a prioritized list of maintenance needs, priorities, and schedules.
- Metrics
Funds acquired from non-traditional sources
Investments in computer and other technological teaching and research laboratories
Creation and maintenance of a prioritized list on maintenance needs, priorities and schedules on the intranet
- A.2.4. Provide professional support positions including appropriate assistance in proposal preparation and other aspects of obtaining extramural support.
Metrics
Number of support positions provided
- A.2.5. Promote development of patents, copyrights, licensing agreements, fees, endowments, cooperative agreements, memoranda of understandings/agreements, and other means to generate revenue and other support for research.
Metrics
Number of items developed by category.

Objective 3.

Achieve undergraduate and graduate student enrollments consistent with college and MSU goals, fiscal resources, and societal needs for natural resource professions.

- A.3.1. Establish enrollment goals for B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. students by degree program and concentration, based on faculty FTEs by 2016. Meet the established goals by 2020.
1. The College Recruiting Committee will establish the enrollment goals.
Metrics
Number of students by degree program relative to goals
- A.3.2. Establish additional endowed undergraduate scholarships to recruit and retain highly qualified and diverse undergraduate students.
2. Secure funding for twenty \$2,000 four-year, merit based scholarships targeted to recruiting the best and brightest students to careers in natural resources.
 3. Secure funding for ten four-year, need based scholarships to enhance diversity in the student body, targeted to recruiting minorities, first generational college students and other traditionally underserved constituents to careers in natural resources.
 4. The College Recruiting Committee shall identify scholarship priorities (i.e., by professional fields or disciplines) to the CFR Director of Development annually.
Metrics
Number of new endowed undergraduate scholarships by priority area (i.e., merit-based, need-based, discipline).
Endowment amount of new undergraduate scholarships
- A.3.3. CFR Diversity Council will evaluate and revise the Cultural Sensitivity and Diversity Plan in 2016.
1. The Council will evaluate, update, and report accomplishments annually to the Dean.
 2. Compile and report demographic and other pertinent statistics on students annually.
Metrics
Plan revised (indicate yes/no).
Demographics quantified and communicated (indicate yes/no).
Number of women and minority students in the CFR by degree program.
- A.3.4. Foster academic partnerships with natural resources programs and institutions that serve minority populations (e.g., Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences [MANRRS], Minorities in Natural Resources Committee [MINRC; SEAFWA], Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Historically Hispanic-Serving Colleges and Universities, and Tribal Colleges).
1. Chair of Diversity Council will report number of programs and institutions, and students involved in these initiatives annually.
 2. Identify and engage government, corporate, and individuals partners to facilitate/fund diversity initiatives.
 3. Chair of Diversity Council and Director of Development will report number of partners engaged and success rate.
 4. The Diversity Council and Administrative Council will evaluate progress of existing partnerships and alleviate any deficiencies or constraints hindering programmatic success.
 5. Recognize and reward faculty participation in these partnerships.
Metrics
Number of students by major in these programs.
Number of new potential partners identified.
Intra- and extramural funds expended annually in support of these programs.
Faculty rewards made (indicate yes/no).

Objective 3.

Achieve undergraduate and graduate student enrollments consistent with college and MSU goals, fiscal resources, and societal needs for natural resource professions.

- A.3.5. Increase student participation in academic, scientific, and relevant professional organizations.
1. Maintain a fund for undergraduate students to attend professional meetings that may be matched by student organizations.
 2. At the college-level, maintain a competitive grants program for graduate students to attend key professional meetings and give poster and/or paper presentations.
 3. Promote oral and poster presentations by graduate students at professional meetings and encourage faculty to facilitate the process.
- Metrics
Number and percentage of graduate and undergraduate students making presentations.
Number and percentage of undergraduate and graduate students participating/attending academic, scientific, and relevant professional organizations.
- A.3.6. Recognize undergraduate and graduate student excellence at the CFR awards banquet each year.
1. Provide a plaque and a tangible award for recipients.
 2. Track and report non-departmental student awards
- Metrics
Number of undergraduate and graduate awards given by department
Number of non-departmental awards received by students
- A.3.7. Provide 3 or more Ph.D. fellowships per CFR department per year.
1. Ph.D. Fellowships offered by departments will be awarded on a competitive basis among applicants.
- Metrics
Number of fellowships awarded, by department, annually.
- A.3.8. Provide distance-learning (DL) degree programs.
1. Develop new DL courses where appropriate.
 2. Collaborate with other institutions to increase course options available in the DL program
 3. Provide appropriate support for a viable distance learning program.
- Metrics
Number of DL courses and degree programs available.
Number of M.S. students graduated annually from DL degree programs.
Annual enrollment in courses and degree programs.

Objective 4.

Maintain appropriate accreditation of undergraduate academic programs and continuously improve programmatic effectiveness, relevance, and quality.

- A.4.1. Balance teaching resources with enrollment and program goals and needs and student contact hours.
1. The Dean will award teaching resources to Departments in consultation with Associate Dean and Department Heads.
 2. Justify and seek added teaching funding (10 funds) from the MSU Provost.
 3. Acquire teaching resources relative to target enrollment levels and program needs.
- Metrics
Dollars per teaching FTE (by funding source)
Dollars per enrolled student (by funding source)
Enrolled students per teaching FTE (by program)
- A.4.2. Encourage undergraduate students to gain professional experience in their chosen field by graduation. .
1. A comprehensive list of internships/cooperatives/jobs available to CFR students will be maintained on the CFR Intranet.
 2. Faculty and CFR Student Services Coordinator will inform students of available internships, cooperative education, and other professional experience opportunities.
- Metrics
List of internships/cooperative education/job opportunities on CFR Web site (indicate yes/no).
Number and percentage of undergraduate students with professional experience prior to graduation.
- A.4.3. Maintain relevant curricula through external input from advisory/peer-review/accreditation committees.
1. Each department will review and update its curricula in a timely manner.
 2. Summarize departmental advisory committee input for the three departments.
 3. Survey constituents and employers regarding alumni quality after graduation at least once every five years.
- Metrics
Plans created/updated in each department (indicate yes/no)
Surveys completed, analyzed, and distributed to all relevant parties. (indicate yes/no)
Input on student quality summarized and reported (indicate yes/no)
Recommendations implemented from external reviews (indicate yes/no)
Curricula modified as a result of actions (indicate yes/no)
- A.4.4. Further develop domestic and international exchange programs (undergraduate and graduate) with potential partner universities.
1. Encourage and promote faculty and student participation in exchange (Study Abroad) programs.
 2. Seek support for exchange students while at MSU and encourage partners to reciprocate.
 3. Establish at least one new program by 2018.
- Metrics
Number of programs in existence and newly established
Number of faculty involved in international programs (both annually and in total)
Number of students involved in international programs (both annually and in total)

Objective 4.

Maintain appropriate accreditation of undergraduate academic programs and continuously improve programmatic effectiveness, relevance, and quality.

A.4.5. Invoke and maintain strategies for retention of undergraduates in CFR majors.

1. Maintain the CFR Living Learning Community and associated First Year Experience courses.
2. Enroll incoming CFR students in common course sections whenever possible (i.e., student 'cluster' groups.)
3. Maintain one-on-one meetings between the Student Services Coordinator and academically challenged students each semester.
4. Maintain student tutor program.
5. Have yearly advising workshops for faculty

Metrics

Annual retention rate by major and concentration within majors and by year class (i.e., freshman, sophomore, junior, senior).

Number of students in cluster groups and their GPA compared to students of the same year class not in cluster groups.

Number of academically challenged students mentored by the Student Services Coordinator. Number of tutors and students tutored.

Yearly advisor workshops conducted (indicate y/n).

A.4.6. Continue and strengthen effective relationships with community colleges regarding student preparation for CFR undergraduate programs.

1. Work with community colleges to ensure their students receive necessary course material prior to transferring to MSU.
2. Meet annually with community colleges.
3. Maintain transfer guides that emphasize equivalency of courses.
4. Have a community college representative on the CFR Curriculum Committee.

Metrics

Transfer guides current (indicate y/n)

Annual community college meeting held (indicate y/n)

Community college representative on CFR Curriculum Committee (indicate y/n)

Objective 5.

Continuously improve the effectiveness, relevance, and quality of programs.

- A.5.1. Maintain a system for identifying, developing, implementing, and evaluating priorities for FWRC/CFR programs
1. Maintain departmental-level plans for identifying, developing, implementing, and evaluating priorities for departmental programs. The system should result in departmental plans which are communicated to the Administrative Council and to stakeholder groups.
 2. Maintain program relevance through planning that includes needs assessments using external input from advisory committees and from other relevant external and internal sources.
 3. Develop a mechanism to obtain Center-level guidance from constituents and collaborators, including input from Extension system, on research issues, needs, and priorities.

Metrics

Center-level plan developed and integrated (indicate y/n)

Departmental plans developed (indicate y/n)

Needs assessments conducted (indicate y/n)

Research guidance mechanism developed (indicate y/n)

- A.5.2. Develop, maintain, and communicate research guidelines within each department that define general expectations for scientists regarding research quality, productivity, and ethics.

1. The College and Department Promotion and Tenure Committees will link departmental research guidelines with the promotion and tenure process.

Metrics

Guidelines developed (indicate y/n)

Research guidelines linked to departmental and college P&T process (indicate y/n)

Objective 6.

Increase the visibility of the research, teaching, and extension programs.

- A.6.1. Publicize undergraduate and graduate teaching programs to increase recruitment of students in relation to goals.
1. Ensure that high school counselors, community college representatives, parents/guardians, and appropriate others have complete information on career opportunities and alumni successes, as well as current information on entrance and course requirements.
 2. Ensure all relevant information is available in multiple formats (i.e. print and Web-based).
- Metrics
Brochures and Web site kept current (indicate y/n).
Number of innovative Web-based products developed
- A.6.2. Publicize student and faculty activities and accomplishments. Encourage high-visibility activities. Publicize technology transfer, technical assistance, and continuing education activities and accomplishments. Awareness should be addressed on campus, within the state and region, and nationally and internationally where appropriate. Use electronic media as well as other media effectively in this process.
1. Publish a college-level annual report and periodic newsletters comparable to the FWRC annual report.
 2. Publicize faculty and staff receiving awards through brochures, the CFR web site, and other appropriate media.
 3. Publish the Dean's Notes for internal use.
- Metrics
Number of student and faculty activities and accomplishments publicized on CFR web site
Number of news releases produced
Annual report sent to constituents (indicate y/n)
- A.6.3. Communicate CFR/FWRC accomplishments and benefits internally and externally.
1. Report accomplishments and benefits of research projects.
 2. Develop synthesis of accomplishments and benefits.
- Metrics
Accomplishments and benefits reported (indicate y/n)
Synthesis developed
- A.6.4. Communicate and distribute results from appropriate FWRC research on forestry, natural resources and environmental conservation, sustainable bioproducts, and wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture to the state of Mississippi, legislators, and its constituents.
- Metrics
Number of programs, publications created and distributed, participants, and other extension/outreach activities.
- A.6.5. Offer K-12 events annually (e.g., Wood Science Magic Fair, Youth Summer Camps).
1. Publicize these camps through various media.
 2. Involve CFR departments, faculty, and students as instructors.
 3. Evaluate camps annually to enhance and update.
- Metrics
Number of camps convened annually.
Camps evaluated and modified accordingly (indicate yes/no).

Objective 7.

Develop and maintain operating procedures, administrative structure and processes that promote excellence.

A.7.1. Recognize excellence with an annual award in undergraduate and graduate teaching, advising and mentoring.

1. Encourage and recognize faculty pedagogical teaching and scholarship.
2. Student Services Coordinator will develop guidelines for effective advising of undergraduate students.
3. Publicize award winners in newsletters and annual reports.

Metrics

Number of faculty conducting and rewarded for pedagogical efforts and advancements

Advising guidelines developed (indicate y/n)

Award winners publicized(indicate y/n)

Number of presentations or publications about pedagogical teaching

A.7.2. Maintain an effective recruitment program.

1. The admissions coordinator will develop and annually update a recruitment plan for each major.
2. The recruitment plans should target highly qualified and diverse students.

Metrics

Recruitment plan developed for each department (indicate y/n)

Annually report on enrollment changes

A.7.3. Encourage professional development of administrators and administrative staff.

Metrics

Number of professional development workshops/seminars and training sessions attended

A.7.4. Ensure the distinction among service, consulting, and continuing education activities, as they relate to compensation, is communicated and enforced.

Metrics

Division consulting policy communicated and enforced (indicate y/n)

A.7.5. Adhere to and periodically review all policies.

1. Adhere to the "Process for Developing FWRC Policies and Procedures."
2. Publish all policies.

Metrics

Number of policies reviewed

All policies published (indicate y/n)

