

# Strategic Plan Progress Report–August 2012

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2007–2008, the College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences (CAHNRS) engaged in a strategic planning exercise, and in 2008, released its strategic plan to guide activities over the next six years. The plan summarized aspirations, areas of priority, major goals, and strategies and tactics for achieving each goal. The CAHNRS Strategic Plan can be accessed at <http://cahnrs.wsu.edu/downloads/strategic-plan-2008-081.pdf>. A summary of the progress we have made over the last four years to these goals follows.

Obviously, the strategic plan was developed in a different fiscal environment than we face today and without knowledge of the depth and length of the impending economic recession in Washington State. Nonetheless, despite the most challenging economic situation in our state's history, we have stayed true to our plan and made significant progress in nearly every area. This success is primarily the result of staying focused on our priorities and the commitment of our faculty, staff, and students to excellence.

The CAHNRS Strategic Plan is more tactical than most plans, containing 17 overarching goals for the college, and outlining a series of strategies and tactics for realizing each of these goals. A complete report of our progress in meeting each of these goals can be found at <http://cahnrs.wsu.edu/fs/strategic-plan-progress.html>. A summary of major accomplishments over the past four years follows.

### Academic Programs:

- Completed comprehensive undergraduate curriculum review, resulting in development of Integrated Plant Sciences degree, major revisions to seven other degree programs, and elimination of 10 majors.
- Streamlined course offerings by eliminating 104 undergraduate and 100 graduate low-enrollment and/or duplicative course offerings.
- Developed and operationalized assessment plans and learning outcomes for all academic programs.
- Expanded and modernized college and program recruiting materials to ensure a contemporary and appealing message to prospective students by incorporating social media, video, and new events/activities.
- Strengthened undergraduate research, resulting in 134 students completing formal undergraduate research experiences between 2008 and 2011.
- Increased undergraduate enrollment by 31 percent from Fall 2008 to Fall 2011.
- Expanded distance learning offerings to 158 courses and expanded on-line programs such as the Organic Agriculture Certificate Program, B.A. in Human Development, and M.S. in Agriculture.
- Increased percentage of tenure-track faculty serving as major advisors of graduate students from 74 percent in 2008 to 88 percent in 2011.
- Increased total extramural funding for graduate research and teaching assistantships over 200 percent from 2008 to 2011.

- Increased graduate enrollment by 19 percent from Fall 2008 to Fall 2011, including a 20 percent increase in Ph.D. student enrollment.
- Increased graduate students located at research and extension centers 327 percent between 2008 and 2011.
- Created an interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in Prevention Science in the Department of Human Development.
- Developed and operationalized teaching workload expectations to assure consistent teaching load assignments across the college.

### **Research and Extension:**

- Improved the visibility and stature of CAHNRS research programs within and outside WSU through use of a variety of media.
- Identified “pinnacles of excellence” within the college and for each academic unit, and assured strategic hiring by connecting hiring plans to these areas.
- Increased refereed publication productivity 32 percent between 2008 and 2011.
- Implemented a series of programs (e.g., Investment for Future Success and Emerging Research Issues grant programs) to stimulate development of extramural grant submissions and formation of interdisciplinary teams.
- Increased activities at research and extension centers by defining focus of each center, eliminating extraneous programs, and strengthening role of research and extension center directors.
- Increased extramural funding at research and extension centers 71 percent between 2008 and 2011.
- Significantly expanded interdisciplinary grant activity (23 interdisciplinary grants in excess of \$1 million were funded between 2008 and 2011).
- Strengthened relationships with agricultural stakeholder groups through formation of the Ag Kitchen Cabinet, implementation of the Unified Ag Initiative, and implementation of a comprehensive external communication plan.
- Increased financial contribution of agricultural stakeholder groups. Commodity commissions, producer associations, and agribusinesses provided an average of \$4.9 million per year in annual research funding and \$7.4 million in annual “gift grants” between 2008 and 2011.
- Increased ARC extramural grants over 72 percent between 2008 and 2011 (ARC extramural awards exceeded \$50 million in each of past three years).
- Reconfigured the college’s administrative structure, placing Extension under the leadership of the Dean of CAHNRS (now Vice President for Agriculture and Extension).
- Strengthened linkage between CAHNRS departmental faculty and extension educators through integrated planning, internal grants, and augmentation of affiliate faculty.
- Implemented Unified Ag Initiative (\$6 million in new permanent funding) and \$2 million in new permanent funding for biofuels and bio-feedstocks research and extension.
- Increased interdisciplinary scholarship, as evidenced by receipt of 23 interdisciplinary grants of \$1 million or more between 2008 and 2010.
- Fostered integration of CAHNRS and WSU Extension by implementing recommendations of Integration Task Force, including integrated hiring plans, reporting, and Federal Plans of Work.

## Other:

- Expanded partnerships with other colleges, centers, and regional campuses to strengthen programs, including Bi-State School of Food Science (with University of Idaho), School of Environment (with College of Sciences), School of Design and Construction (with College of Engineering and Architecture), Human Development (with WSU-Vancouver), and Viticulture and Enology (with WSU-Tri Cities).
- Raised \$170 million of CAHNRS/Extension \$242 million (70 percent) campaign goal through FY12.
- Developed and utilized 35 college-level performance metrics, as well as unit-level metrics, to monitor progress and inform personnel and resource allocation decisions.
- Developed and utilized performance expectations matrices to articulate faculty expectations in research, extension, and academic programs.
- Obtained private funds and commitments for 10 endowed chairs and three endowed professorships since 2008.
- Increased the number and scope of international partnerships, including transfer of International Research and Development unit to CAHNRS. International research and development extramural funding increased to more than \$4 million per year.
- Secured more than \$20 million in private funds for major facilities projects, including \$10 million for Wine Science Center, \$9.45 million for organic farm, and \$900,000 for dryland research farms.
- Secured commitments of new/renovated facilities on Pullman campus for CAHNRS programs, including future REC #5 for basic plant sciences, portion of REC#4 for basic animal sciences, Daggy Hall for School of Design and Construction, and Johnson Annex for AMDT.

## Future Areas of Focus:

Despite these accomplishments, there is much work to do over the course of the next two to three years. Clearly, our progress toward some goals fell below aspirations, particularly in areas where funding shortfalls limited investment. Key areas of focus will include:

**Facilities.** Limited capital improvement funding has slowed investment in new research facilities on the Pullman campus and at research and extension centers. Progress on key projects such as REC #5, plant growth facilities in Pullman and at research and extension center, and scheduled renovations for AMDT and the School of the Environment will be critical over the next three years.

**Research infrastructure.** Budget shortfalls have limited investment in research infrastructure on the Pullman campus and at research and extension centers. Improvements in research equipment and core laboratories are necessary if recent improvements in research productivity are to be continued.

**Extension programming.** Continued focus on outcomes-based extension; integration of extension, research, and teaching; and developing contemporary extension delivery mechanisms is required if the college's renewed commitment to Extension is to be fulfilled.

***Experiential learning.*** Significant advancements were made in modernizing undergraduate curricula and in-class instruction. The focus moving forward will be on advancing initiatives to expand experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate students.

***Web delivery.*** Development of an integrated web presence and use of the web and other electronic media to extend college research and education is a critical short-run strategy.

***Intellectual property.*** Royalty stream income must become a larger share of the college's revenue base moving forward. In addition, the process of identifying and developing intellectual property from college researchers must be streamlined.

***International.*** WSU is behind many of its peers in terms of the internationalization of its programs. A future college focus will be to strengthen the international dimension of its teaching, research, and extension programs.

***Faculty and staff salaries.*** Four years of salary freezes have put WSU behind its peers in terms of salaries and compromised our ability to recruit and retain quality faculty and staff. Addressing this issue must be our highest priority moving forward.

***Budget balance.*** CAHNRS entered the planning period with a desire to re-balance its budget in terms of the proportion spent on salaries versus operating expenses. Despite early progress, the college now has a larger share of its total expenditures allocated to salaries than 2008.

***Alternative revenue streams.*** Significant reductions in “hard” funding from state and federal sources have required us to expand alternative sources of funding. The college must increase its acquisition of alternative revenue streams such as service fees, charges for extension programs, tuition, etc., as well as incorporate these revenues into the payment of items traditionally covered by “hard” dollars (e.g., faculty salaries).