

**Department of Agricultural Economics
The University of Tennessee**

Strategic Plan

**Prepared by the Faculty and Staff of the Department of
Agricultural Economics and the Ad Hoc Strategic Planning
Committee.***

**Approved and Adopted by the Faculty
June 15, 2007**

***Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee: Charles R. Hall, Kimberly L. Jensen,
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Department of Agricultural Economics Strategic Plan Adopted June 15, 2007

Historical Perspective of the 2006-2007 Strategic Planning Process

Seeing that six years had passed since the Department of Agricultural Economics had completed its previous strategic plan, Dan McLemore (Department Head) began the process of developing a new strategic plan on May 1, 2006 when he appointed an Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee and called a meeting of the Committee for May 3. Members of the Committee were Charles Hall, Kimberly Jensen, Dan McLemore, William Park, and Roland Roberts. The Committee agreed that McLemore should contact the University of Tennessee Office of Employee and Organizational Development with a request to facilitate a SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis for the Department. Over a period of several weeks, David Bowman and Rebecca Sailor Dawson from that office joined the Committee in a series of meetings to plan the SWOT analysis.

On July 20, after requesting and receiving information about the summer schedules of potential SWOT participants, McLemore invited selected individuals to attend the initial SWOT meeting on August 9, 2006. Invited to attend were all Departmental faculty and selected representatives of the administrative, research and extension staff, as well as selected representatives of the Area Farm Management Specialists. On July 26 prior to the initial SWOT meeting, Bowman and Dawson distributed materials to all faculty, all professional and administrative staff and all Area Farm Management Specialists associated with the Department describing the SWOT process and inviting their anonymous brainstorming input. Individuals were asked to state their perceptions of the three most important items in each of the SWOT categories and to return their e-mail responses by August 4. This anonymous input allowed all persons associated with the Department the opportunity to participate in the strategic planning process.

At the initial SWOT meeting held in the Johnson Animal Research and Teaching Unit Conference Room, participants categorized the anonymous brainstorming input, did further brainstorming, and categorized all input into major sub-categories within each SWOT category. Bowman and Dawson provided the summary of results found in Appendix A. Time was insufficient in the first meeting for participants to prioritize the sub-categories to a level that would allow goal writing.

A second SWOT meeting was held on August 25, 2006. Those who were invited to the initial SWOT meeting were invited to participate in the second meeting. Bowman and Dawson continued in their roles as facilitators. In preparation for the meeting, they distributed a goal worksheet with typical goal setting procedures and definitions of terms in the goal setting process. The meeting's purposes were to prioritize the sub-categories within each SWOT category and use the prioritization results to begin writing Departmental goals. Participants were successful in achieving these purposes.

Another meeting was convened on September 8 to attempt agreement on a set of Departmental goals. In preparation for the meeting, the Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee used the results

from the two SWOT meetings to write a set of preliminary draft goals. This set of draft goals was distributed to SWOT participants on September 1 with a request for further input. Input was received and the draft goals were revised and distributed to the SWOT participants on September 7. Participants discussed the draft goals during the meeting on September 8 and had another opportunity to revise them. All participants who attended the meeting had an opportunity to vote on accepting the “spirit” of the revised goals for inclusion in the Department’s strategic plan. After discussion and further minor revisions, the spirit of the goals was accepted by a majority vote.

Action-plan writing committees were appointed by McLemore on September 28. Their charge was to 1) refine, clarify, and restate the goal (within the spirit of what the faculty adopted) and develop a paragraph that elucidates and explains the goal, 2) develop a detailed, step-by-step action plan to accomplish the goal, and 3) provide a written report "suitable for framing" by December 1, 2006. The committees were further requested to 1) identify resources needed to execute the action plan, 2) clarify who is responsible for executing and participating in the actions, and 3) include a timetable for actions and for reaching the goal. The action-plan writing committees delivered their draft action plans to the Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee as requested. After further revisions, a draft strategic plan was provided to all SWOT participants on January 5, 2007 for review, with further input requested by January 19. The draft strategic plan was revised by the Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee and, following Departmental bylaws, was distributed to the faculty three working days before the February faculty meeting. The mission statement, goals and action plans that follow were reviewed, discussed, revised and approved by a majority vote in a series of six faculty meetings ending with the faculty meeting of June 15, 2007. A summary of the approved strategic plan is found in Appendix B.

The strategic plan includes seven goals with accompanying action plans that advance the mission of the Department as found in the Mission Statement that follows.

Department Mission Statement

The Department of Agricultural Economics seeks to be nationally recognized as an outstanding academic unit that provides: a) research to expand economic knowledge that can be used by individuals, businesses, and public officials in decisions regarding allocation of resources for production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services related to agriculture and natural resources and improvement of standards of living in rural areas, b) extension educational programs that develop and deliver current relevant information to decision makers involved in these areas, and c) resident and nonresident instruction programs that provide students with thorough understanding of economic and business aspects of agriculture, food, natural resources, and rural economies and that lead to acquisition of problem-solving skills commensurate with B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees.

Goal 1: Address the Needs of Stakeholders

Action-Plan Writing Committee: Hall (Chair), Gerloff, Larson, Rawls, Ray, and Roberts

Goal 1—Strengthen our ability to address the needs of stakeholders in agriculture and the food/fiber industry in Tennessee and the United States by enhancing our marketing, production, and management expertise

Justification

The Department has traditionally been a leader in conducting and developing innovative applied research and outreach educational programs to meet the needs of stakeholders in the areas of marketing, production, and farm management. However, a dramatic decline in Departmental FTE's dedicated to these subject matter areas has severely constrained the Department's core competencies that have been the distinctive competitive advantages upon which its reputation regionally and nationally was based and the Department's clientele have come to depend upon. Goal 1 of this strategic plan addresses this deficiency and puts into motion an action plan to ensure stakeholder satisfaction. Successful implementation of this plan will lead to greater internal support administratively and enhanced external grassroots appreciation of the impacts of the Department's research and outreach programs.

Objectives

- I. Employ two marketing faculty members and a commercial agriculture Extension faculty member.
- II. Employ faculty members to maintain strength as vacancies occur.
- III. Conduct a needs assessment of stakeholders to ascertain future needs relating to marketing, production, and management.
- IV. Institute an annual Departmental report of innovative research, teaching, and Extension accomplishments to be distributed via the Departmental website to former and prospective students, agribusiness leaders, key legislators, university administrators, and others, with a shorter document (in brochure format) being mailed to selected individuals.

Action Plan to Achieve Objectives

- I. Employ two marketing faculty members and a commercial agriculture Extension faculty member (Excludes positions authorized by December 2006).
 - A. The Department has experienced declining FTE's in the marketing (-2.0 FTE) and farm management (-4.5 FTE) subject matter areas over the last decade. These personnel changes are summarized in Tables 1 and 2.

- B. Develop and submit position descriptions to UTIA Administration (Department Head, Fall 2007).
- II. Employ faculty members to maintain strength as vacancies occur. This would involve developing a hiring system that is initiated as soon as retirement intentions are announced. Another related action is to develop a system for reemploying retiring faculty on a part-time basis to capture the tacit knowledge and institutional memory of the retiring faculty member (Department Head, Summer 2007).
 - A. Secure permission to search and complete the hiring process as quickly as possible when a retirement potentially creates a faculty vacancy. Faculty members nearing retirement are encouraged to discuss prospective retirement dates with the Department Head. Once a retirement timeframe is established, the Department Head, after consultation with Department faculty, should develop a job description and initiate discussions with the Administration concerning faculty needs to address the research, extension and/or teaching void resulting from the prospective faculty vacancy. Upon favorable action by the Administration, a Departmental search committee would be developed. This process would ensure that the new faculty member would come onboard as near the effective retirement of a retiring faculty member as practicable.
 - B. Consider reemploying the retiring faculty member on a part-time basis to serve as a mentor for the newly hired faculty member or to help bridge the time between the retirement and the arrival of the new hire.
- III. Conduct a needs assessment of stakeholders to ascertain future needs relating to marketing, production, and management (Ad hoc committee assigned by Department Head, Spring 2008).
 - A. The needs assessment will be conducted periodically by an ad hoc committee assigned by the Department Head.
 - B. Topics would include issues that are critical to the success of agricultural and agribusiness firms in the state in the areas of production, management, and marketing.
 - C. Either a mail survey or focus group could be used.
- IV. Institute an annual Departmental report of innovative research, teaching, and Extension accomplishments to be distributed electronically via the Departmental website to former and prospective students, agribusiness leaders, key legislators, university administrators, and others, with a shorter document (in brochure format) being mailed to selected individuals (Department Head with faculty input, March/April annually, beginning in 2008). The report would ideally contain the following:

- A. General summary of Department's activities during the year including changes in FTE's (new hires, vacancies, and retirements), faculty and staff honors and recognition, one-paragraph summary of activities of each faculty and professional staff member, major Departmental events held during the year, status of centers, and future directions.
- B. Summary of research projects and related impacts (annual impact statements may be one source), assistantship numbers, extramural funding obtained, and publications output (refereed journals, books, theses/dissertations, research reports, etc.)
- C. Summary of teaching activities, teaching-related grants, student numbers, degrees conferred, curriculum changes (new courses) and/or degree program development, internships obtained, and positions taken by recent graduates.
- D. Summary of outreach-related activities including workshops held, selected key presentations, new initiatives, international projects, key partnerships, user requests, and extramural funding.

Table 1. Marketing/Agribusiness Departures and Additions, 1997-2006.

Date	Name	Appointment	Specialty	Reason
Departures:				
1999	Charles Farmer	100% E	Marketing/Grains	Retired
1999	Bob Jenkins	100% E	Marketing/Fruits & Vegetables	Retired
2000	Greg Pompelli	80% R 20% T	Marketing	Resigned for USDA-ERS position
2000	Wes Harrison	80% R, 20% T	Finance/Agribusiness	Resigned for position at LSU
2001	Phil Kenkel	100% E	Agribusiness	Resigned for position at Oklahoma State
2005	David Eastwood	76% R, 24% T	Marketing/Consumer Demand	Retired
2006	John Brooker	62% R, 38% T	Marketing/Fruits & Vegetables	Retired
Additions:				
1999	Wes Harrison	80% R, 20% T	Finance/Agribusiness	Hired from LSU
1999	Phil Kenkel	100% E	Agribusiness	Hired from Oklahoma State
1999	John Riley	100% T	Finance/Marketing	Assigned from CASNR Dean's position
2002	Steven Yen	75% R, 25% T	Marketing/Food Safety	Hired from Nevada
2002	Charles Hall	100% E	Marketing/Green Industry	Hired from Texas A&M
Full time Equivalent FTEs		Net Changes		Current Total^a
	Extension		-1.00	2.00
	Research		-1.43	1.51
	Teaching		0.43	1.49
	Total		-2.00	5.00

^aCurrent total Extension FTE assumptions: Gerloff 50% Marketing, 50% Farm Management=0.50 Marketing FTE; Hall 50% Marketing, 50% Agribusiness Management=1.00 Marketing FTE; Rawls 75% Marketing, 25% Farm Management=0.50 Marketing FTE. Current total Research FTE assumptions: Jensen 0.76 FTE and Yen 0.75 FTE=1.51 Marketing Research FTEs. Current total Teaching FTE assumptions: Jensen 0.24 FTE, Riley=1.00 FTE, and Yen 0.25 FTE=1.49 Marketing Teaching FTEs.

Table 2. Farm Management/Production Economics Departures and Additions, 1997-2006.

Date	Name	Appointment	Specialty	Reason
Departures:				
1998	Jeff Stokes	90% R, 10% T	Finance/Farm Mgmt/Prod Econ	Resigned for position at Penn State
2001	Ted Jaenicke	80% R, 20% T	Farm Mgmt/Prod Econ	Resigned for position at Penn State
2001	Becky Bowling ^a	100% E (Specialist)	Farm Mgmt/Prod Econ/Livestock	Resigned
2002	Tim Cross	100% E	Farm Mgmt/Prod Econ/Livestock	Promoted Asst Dean Extension
2002	Mark Wade	100% E	Farm Mgmt/Prod Econ/Livestock	Resigned for position in private sector
2006	Darrell Mundy	85% R, 15% T	Farm Mgmt/Prod Econ	Retired
Additions:				
2002	Mark Wade	100% E	Farm Mgmt/Prod Econ/Livestock	Hired from Florida.
2002	Ernie Bazen	80% R, 20% T	Environmental Econ/Farm Mgmt	Hired from Kentucky (Ph.D.)
Full Time Equivalent FTEs		Net Changes		Current Total^b
Extension		-2.00		2.00
Research		-2.15		2.445
Teaching		-0.35		0.388
Total		-4.50		4.833

^aBecky Bowling was a highly valued, hard-funded Extension Specialist in a non-tenure track position.

^bCurrent total Extension FTE assumptions: Gerloff 50% Marketing, 50% Farm Mgmt=0.50 Farm Mgmt/Prod FTE; Garland 100% Farm Mgmt=1.00 Farm Mgmt/Prod FTE; Rawls 75% Marketing, 25% Farm Mgmt=0.50 Farm Mgmt FTE for total Extension Farm Mgmt/Prod econ FTE of 2.00. Current total Farm Mgmt/Prod Econ Research FTE assumptions: Bazen 0.375 FTE, English 0.30 FTE, Larson 0.88 FTE, and Roberts 0.89 FTE=2.445 Farm Mgmt/Prod Econ Research FTEs. Current total Teaching FTE assumptions: Bazen 0.125 FTE, English 0.033 FTE, Larson 0.12 FTE, and Roberts 0.11 FTE=0.355 Farm Mgmt/Prod Econ Teaching FTEs. The FTE assumptions for Bazen (80% R, 20% T) were 50% of teaching and research appointments were respectively allocated to Farm Mgmt/Prod Econ and Nat Res/Environmental Econ. The FTE assumptions for English (90% R, 10% T) were 33% of teaching and research appointments were respectively allocated to the farm Mgmt/Prod Econ, Nat Res/Environmental Econ, and Rural Development.

Goal 2: Address High-Priority Issues

Action-Plan Writing Committee: Park (Chair), Cho, De la Torre Ugarte, Jensen, Schaffer, Smith, and Wilcox

Goal 2—Strengthen our ability to address high-priority issues in the areas of natural resource economics and rural development, especially those associated with bioenergy, land use and water quality

Justification

Applied economists have much to offer society in addressing existing and emerging natural resource and rural development issues. The Department now has a significant number of faculty members with expertise and interest in these areas. However, an improved organizational structure in each of the four areas below is needed. Establishing “working groups” with well defined expectations will help ensure that faculty members are effective in their collaborative efforts to achieve this goal. (This has to some extent already been done in the bioenergy area.) Additional targeted resources and institutional support are needed. An action plan to achieve this goal is outlined following brief descriptions of current issues in the following four areas:

- **Bioenergy**: Development of a bioenergy industry is a potential means to reduce the nation’s dependence on foreign oil and to reduce environmental effects of energy production. Development of a bioenergy industry could have significant economic impacts on rural areas and provide new markets for agricultural producers. As the industry emerges and energy policy decisions are made, economic analysis will be critical to decision making. Areas of particular interest as the industry and associated policies emerge include economic feasibility analysis of bioenergy feedstock production and conversion, energy policy analysis, supply/demand analysis for bioenergy and economic impacts analysis of industry development.
- **Land Use**: Rapid population and economic growth in Tennessee and the Southeast region of the United States has led to increasing residential demand for land and a sprawling pattern of development. This growth has raised many concerns about potential negative impacts, especially the loss of benefits provided by farmland and open space and higher costs of infrastructure and community services. A variety of public policy measures have been implemented or are under consideration with a view toward influencing the future pattern of land use. Analyses of the economic factors driving the pattern of residential development and the benefits and costs associated with it are needed to provide the basis for sound policy decisions.
- **Water Resources**: While much progress has been made in improving water quality in the United States over recent decades, it is clear that meeting water quality standards in many water bodies will require implementation of best management practices on agricultural land. Economic analysis is critical in assessing options for increasing the cost effectiveness of traditional policy approaches, as well as assessing the feasibility of

innovative policy approaches such as water quality trading. While water quantity issues have not been very important historically in Tennessee and the Southeast region, conflicts over water use are predicted to become more widespread and serious over the next few decades.

- ***Rural Development:*** Traditional employment opportunities in rural areas (agriculture, forestry, mining and low-skill manufacturing) continue to decline as the forces of technology and globalization advance. Rural communities must discover or develop new sources of comparative advantage if they are to survive and hopefully thrive in the 21st century. Economic analysis of factors influencing differential rates of change in population and income is needed to guide rural development policy. A particular high priority is to investigate the potential for natural amenities and increased education levels to foster economic growth in Tennessee and the Southeast region.

Objectives

- I. Establish working groups (WGs) in the following four areas: bioenergy, land use, water resources, and rural development.
- II. Secure resources and institutional support to enhance potential success of working groups.

Action Plan to Achieve Objectives

- I. Establish working groups (WGs) in the following four areas: bioenergy, land use, water resources and rural development.
 - A. Establish initial working group membership (Department Head and WG members).
 1. Solicit interest in participation by Departmental faculty members (Fall 2007).
 2. Elect chair (Fall 2007).
 3. Invite participation from outside the Department (elsewhere within UT, ORNL, TVA, state agencies, etc.) (Fall 2007).
 - B. Strengthen linkages with private and public sector stakeholders (WG members).
 1. Identify existing linkages and steps needed to strengthen them (Fall 2007).
 2. Identify potential new linkages and seek to develop them on a priority basis (Fall 2007).
 - C. Seek extramural funding for research and outreach (WG members).

1. Identify traditional grant and contract sources and develop a timetable for proposal development (Fall 2007).
2. Identify potential new grant and contract sources and pursue them as appropriate (Spring 2008).

D. Expand outreach efforts (WG members).

1. Identify opportunities for in-service training of Extension agents (Fall 2007).
2. Identify opportunities for public policy education through presentations and publications (Spring 2008).

E. Enhance the learning experience for students (WG members, Undergraduate Committee, Graduate Committee).

1. Increase attention to subject matter in existing courses as appropriate (Fall 2007).
2. Develop proposals for new courses as appropriate (Fall 2007).
3. Seek funding from stakeholders to support graduate assistantships, internships and scholarships (continuing basis).
4. Develop a suite of appropriate courses for students who wish to specialize in the area, either as a formal concentration or informal guidance (Spring 2008).

F. Establish identity and visibility (WG members, Webmaster, Seminar Committee).

1. Establish and maintain a web page with information about members and activities/impacts (Spring 2008 and update every six months).
2. Develop a simple brochure with information about members and activities/impacts (Spring 2008 and revise every two years).
3. Consider as appropriate the hosting of conferences or workshops, seminar speakers, visiting scholars, etc. (continuing basis).
4. Actively seek to have members participate and present in relevant conferences and workshops (continuing basis).

II. Secure resources and institutional support to enhance the potential success of working groups.

The increased availability of geo-referenced data and tools for managing and analyzing such data holds great potential for enhancing the usefulness of research efforts in agricultural, resource and rural economics. However, the costs of acquiring, managing and updating geographical information systems (GIS) databases are substantial. Hiring a research associate with considerable GIS expertise could greatly reduce the duplication of these costs among the faculty members whose research may involve spatial dimensions. This person would be expected to serve as a GIS and database manager and as a research

collaborator with Department faculty members. The possibility of sharing such a position with the Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries should be explored because of mutual interests in this kind of research and existing joint projects. Such a shared arrangement would also reduce the costs to the Department of obtaining professional GIS support.

- A. Hire a full-time research associate with M.S. level training in GIS (Department Head and TAES Administration, Summer 2008).
- B. Advocate the addition of three rural development regional (RD) Extension specialists with M.S.-level training (Department Head and UT Extension Administration, Summer 2008).

An RD Extension specialist (M.S. degree holder) will be placed in each Extension region to work with and through County Agents in:

- Assessing RD needs/opportunities
- Developing and implementing programs/projects, and
- Evaluating outputs/outcomes.

Other key responsibilities will include:

- Developing and enhancing collaboration with appropriate outside agencies, organizations and individuals,
- Communicating, cooperating and collaborating with UT faculty and units (CPA and IPS for example), and
- Seeking outside resources to support programs and projects.

Administratively, the procedures used to coordinate the area farm management specialist program will be used. The area farm management specialists have demonstrated the value of regional specialists. These proposed regional specialists should enhance the Department's work and the benefits to the people of Tennessee.

- C. Provide more attractive options for students to do Ph.D.-level research in these subject matter areas (Graduate Committee).
 1. Seek approval for a formal concentration in Resource Economics and Policy within the Natural Resources Ph.D. (Summer 2007).
 2. Seek to establish a partnership with the Department of Economics allowing graduate students in the Department to do fields in Agricultural Economics and/or Resource/Environmental Economics (Summer 2007).
- D. Work within UTIA to secure stable funding for the Natural Resources Policy Center (Department Head and NRPC Faculty Associates, Summer 2008).

Goal 3: Enhance the Graduate Program

Action-Plan Writing Committee: Roberts (Chair), Clark, Hall, Jensen, Lambert, Larson, and Yen

Goal 3—Attract greater numbers of high quality graduate students and enhance their learning experience

Justification

High quality graduate students are attracted to a department because of its reputation for having superior programs designed to prepare them for future employment opportunities. Simultaneously, enrolling high quality graduate students is an essential element for improving the reputation of a department's teaching, research, and extension programs. Thus, to recruit greater numbers of high quality graduate students, the Department must increase the reputation and visibility of its programs among undergraduate students within the Department, the Institute of Agriculture and other institutions. This visibility must be accompanied by an enhanced learning experience that clearly addresses the personal and occupational aspirations of the graduate students.

Historical data are available for 2001-2006 on enrollment in the M.S. program (Tables 3 and 4 and Figure 1) and the Natural Resource Economics and Policy option of the Natural Resources Ph.D. program administered by the Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries. Average data from this 6-year period will be used as the base for establishing measurable targets and objectives for this goal.

Base enrollment in the M.S. program averaged 19 students, with a high of 28 students in 2004 and a low of 13 students in 2001 (Figure 1). New enrollment (Table 3) averaged 8 students per year, with a range of 11 students in 2004-05 and 5 students in 2001-02. Undergraduate GPAs for entering students ranged between 3.40 in 2005-06 and 3.00 in 2001-02 with an average of 3.27. Among the historical data collected, the undergraduate GPA is the most reliable measure of potential success in the M.S. program because all students who enter the program must submit academic histories. Scores for the GRE are less reliable because undergraduate students from within the Department typically have not been required to submit GRE scores. Thus, average GRE scores for the base period include the scores of many international students who tend to have higher quantitative and lower verbal scores, unrepresentative of the average new enrollee. Nevertheless, objectives based on average GRE scores would provide targets for students entering from other departments and universities.

Diversity of backgrounds is important for a vibrant learning environment. Of the 50 students enrolled in the M.S. program during the base period, 21 (42%) came from within the Department, 10 (20%) came from fields unrelated to economics or business, and 16 (32%) enrolled in the Agribusiness Non-thesis Concentration (Table 4). This base-period diversity of student backgrounds should be maintained as the Department strives toward increasing student numbers, undergraduate GPAs and GRE scores in an enhanced learning environment.

The Department currently has one Ph.D. student who entered the Natural Resource Economics and Policy option of the Natural Resources Ph.D. program in 2006 on a soft funded assistantship. Plans are to attract students to fill two additional soft funded assistantships by Fall 2007. Discussions are underway to explore the creation of a joint Ph.D. program between the Departments of Economics and Agricultural Economics. Given limited funds for assistantships, a tradeoff exists between the numbers of M.S. and Ph.D. students. Assistantships for the M.S. program currently come mostly from grant and contract activity. Attracting greater numbers of high quality graduate students in both the M.S. and Ph.D. programs will require increased grant and contract activity with M.S. and Ph.D. assistantships specified in the budgets.

The following measurable targets are presented as ways to track progress toward achieving the overarching goal of attracting greater numbers of high quality graduate students and enhancing their learning experience:

- Increase total enrollment of M.S. students from the base of 19 students to 23 students in 2008 (20% increase from base) and 29 students by 2011 (50% increase from base)
- Increase the annual average undergraduate GPA of new students enrolled in the M.S. program from the base of 3.27 to 3.4 in 2008 (4% increase) and 3.5 by 2011 (7% increase)
- Increase the annual average verbal GRE score of new students enrolled in the M.S. program from the base of 438 (42nd percentile) to 504 (59th percentile) in 2008 (15% increase) and 526 (66th percentile) by 2011 (20% increase)
- Increase the annual average quantitative GRE score of new students enrolled in the M.S. program from the base of 632 (55th percentile) to 664 (62nd percentile) in 2008 (5% increase) and 695 (70th percentile) by 2011 (10% increase)
- Increase the annual average analytical GRE score of new students enrolled in the M.S. program from the base of 4.1 (28th percentile) to 4.5 (47th percentile) in 2008 (10% increase) and 5.0 (67th percentile) by 2011 (22% increase)
- Maintain a minimum enrollment of new Ph.D. students at two per year (Joint Ph.D. and/or Natural Resources Ph.D. programs).

Objectives

- I. Improve knowledge about students applying and enrolled in the Department's graduate program, increase understanding about the needs of prospective employers of graduates, and use this information to increase the appeal of the graduate program and to enhance the learning experience of graduate students.
- II. Increase the general appeal of the graduate program and enhance the learning experience of graduate students.

- III. Increase the appeal of the M.S. program and enhance the learning experience of M.S. students.
- IV. Increase the appeal of the Ph.D. program and enhance the learning experience of Ph.D. students.
- V. Increase graduate student recruiting efforts by faculty.
- VI. Increase general recruiting efforts by the Department.

Action Plan to Achieve Objectives

- I. Improve knowledge about students applying and enrolled in the Department's graduate program, increase understanding about the needs of prospective employers of graduates, and use this information to increase the appeal of the graduate program and to enhance the learning experience of graduate students.
 - A. Compile data similar to baseline historical data for all future M.S. and Ph.D. applicants and enrollees, and compare them with base data starting Fall 2007 (secretary, supervised by Graduate Coordinator).
 - 1. Number of students.
 - 2. Verbal, quantitative and analytical GRE scores.
 - 3. Undergraduate GPAs.
 - 4. Undergraduate majors and numbers from each major.
 - 5. Institutions awarding undergraduate degrees and numbers from each institution.
 - B. Establish an annual exit survey of undergraduate seniors to determine job market interests and other information that might help in M.S. curriculum revision starting Spring 2008 (Undergraduate Committee in consultation with Graduate Committee). The following are examples of data that might be collected:
 - 1. Future plans for graduate school or work.
 - 2. Reasons for applying or not applying to the M.S. program.
 - 3. Perceived usefulness of undergraduate courses in preparation for graduate school or work.
 - C. Establish an annual exit survey of graduate students to determine job market interests and other information that might help in M.S. curriculum revision starting Spring 2008 (volunteer from Graduate Committee). The following are examples of data that might be collected:
 - 1. Future plans for a Ph.D. program or work.
 - 2. Address and other information about employers to allow follow-up.

3. Perceived usefulness of graduate courses in preparation for Ph.D. program or work.
- D. Periodically survey graduate student employers to obtain information that could help with curriculum revisions to maintain relevance of the M.S. program starting Summer 2008 (volunteer from Graduate Committee). The following are examples of data that might be collected:
1. Ask employers to indicate the level of importance they attribute to a graduate's background, performance, and skills to their employability in entry-level positions.
 2. Additional factors may include grade point average, activities, teamwork, communication and interaction skills, leadership experience, technical expertise related to the position, quantitative skills, international experience, foreign language skills, and farm background.
 3. Ask employers specifically about the adequacy of our students' preparation, missing skills, and most desirable skills for success in their organization.
- II. Increase the general appeal of the graduate program and enhance the learning experience of graduate students.
- A. Establish a Departmental Graduate Student Organization with defined responsibilities by the end of Fall 2007 (Graduate Committee in consultation with Department Head).
 - B. Establish an annual graduate student poster competition starting Fall 2007; put posters on display in the hall with appropriate recognition for winners; and encourage submission of winning posters for presentation at professional meetings, particularly the SAEA meeting (Graduate Student Organization).
 - C. Provide encouragement, opportunities, and resources for graduate students to present research at professional meetings and to participate in workshops and training relevant to their research programs starting Summer 2007. By doing the aforementioned, students will be making presentations in front of colleagues from other departments, increasing their chances of being recruited into Ph.D. programs in other departments, landing better jobs, and improving the Department's reputation among colleagues at peer institutions (students' Major Professors in consultation with Department Head and Development Fund Committees).
 - D. Encourage graduate students to enroll in Agriculture and Natural Resource (ANR) 512—Teaching Internship in Agriculture and Natural Resources—starting Spring 2008 (students' Work Supervisors with approval of Major Professors).

1. Agribusiness M.S. students who already help with coursework can enroll in this course to enhance their transcripts.
 2. Thesis option M.S. students bound for Ph.D. programs could take this course if they wanted teaching experience.
 3. Ph.D. students wanting teaching experience would also benefit from this course.
 4. Recruiting efforts in undergraduate courses would improve through increased interaction between graduate and undergraduate students.
- E. Establish annual joint meetings of the graduate and undergraduate committees to re-evaluate 400-level courses, assess the needs for graduate student enrollment in ANR 512 for the coming year, and other joint issues starting Fall 2007 (Graduate and Undergraduate Committees).
- III. Increase the appeal of the M.S. program and enhance the learning experience of M.S. students.
- A. Include a Natural Resource Economics M.S. Concentration in the 2008-2009 catalog (Graduate Committee).
1. Materials should be submitted to Department faculty at least three working days before the July 2007 faculty meeting and approved by the faculty.
 2. Materials should be submitted to the CASNR Graduate Council for approval by September 25, 2007 (approximate date). Once approved, revise the Department's M.S. Program Requirements booklet.
- B. Reevaluate the entire M.S. program and include curriculum changes in the 2008-2009 catalog (Graduate Committee).
1. Materials should be submitted to Department faculty at least three working days before July 2007 faculty meeting and approved by the faculty.
 2. Materials should be submitted to the CASNR Graduate Council for approval by September 25, 2007 (approximate date). Once approved, revise the Department's M.S. Program Requirements booklet.
- C. Reevaluate the M.S. program curriculum every semester using information from senior, graduate student, and employer surveys starting Fall 2007 (Graduate Committee).
- IV. Increase the appeal of the Ph.D. program and enhance the learning experience of Ph.D. students.

- A. Include a Natural Resource Economics and Policy Concentration under the Natural Resources Ph.D. Major of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries in the 2008-2009 catalog (Graduate Committee).
 - 1. Establish requirements for the Natural Resource Economics and Policy Concentration in the Natural Resources Ph.D. major.
 - 2. Materials should be submitted to Department faculty at least three working days before July 2007 faculty meeting and approved by the faculty.
 - 3. Materials should be submitted to the CASNR Graduate Council for approval by September 25, 2007 (approximate date). Once approved, revise the Department's M.S. Program Requirements booklet and rename it the Graduate Program Requirements Booklet.

 - B. With the Economics Department, pursue the possibility of including an Agricultural Economics (or Natural Resource Economics) Field under the Economics Ph.D. program in the 2009-2010 catalog (Department Head, Graduate Committee). If agreed upon by both departments:
 - 1. Establish requirements for the Agricultural Economics (or Natural Resource Economics) Field.
 - 2. Materials should be submitted to Department faculty at least three working days before the July 2008 faculty meeting and approved by the faculty.
 - 3. Materials should be submitted to the CASNR Graduate Council for approval by September 25, 2008 (approximate date). Once approved, revise the Department's Graduate Program Requirements booklet.

 - C. Reevaluate Ph.D. program curriculum every semester starting Spring 2008 (Graduate Committee).
- V. Increase graduate student recruiting efforts by faculty.
- A. Teaching faculty members emphasize the benefits of earning an M.S. degree from the Department at least three times per semester in each undergraduate class (first week of class, after midterm exams, last week of class, and/or other times) starting Fall 2007 (teachers of undergraduate courses).

 - B. Teaching faculty members personally invite the best undergraduate students in each class to consider applying for the M.S. program starting Fall 2007 (teachers of undergraduate courses).

 - C. Encourage graduate students to enroll in Agriculture and Natural Resources 512 (Teaching Internship in Agricultural and Natural Resources) and become visible in positive ways to encourage the best undergraduate students to enroll in the M.S. program starting Spring 2008 (Major Professors and teaching faculty).

- D. Extension faculty members mention the M.S. program in farmer meetings where appropriate, and emphasize the names of graduate students who were involved in gathering the information presented in the meeting starting Fall 2007 (Extension faculty).
 - E. Extension faculty members personally emphasize to clients the benefits of their children earning an M.S. degree from the Department starting Fall 2007 (Extension faculty).
 - F. Research faculty members provide research opportunities for the Department's best undergraduate students starting Fall 2007 (research faculty).
 - G. Encourage Research, Teaching and Extension faculty to include assistantship funding for M.S. and Ph.D. students in the budgets of grant proposals to attract more graduate students starting Summer 2007.
- VI. Increase general recruiting efforts by the Department.
- A. Establish a standing Department committee (Recruiting Committee) solely responsible for graduate student recruiting by the end of Fall 2007. The Chair of the Recruiting Committee would be a member of the Graduate Committee but not the Graduate Coordinator (Department Head in consultation with Graduate Coordinator).
 - B. Update recruiting materials every semester and highlight research and teaching achievements and employment of former graduate students starting Fall 2007 (Recruiting Committee).
 - C. Send letters and recruiting materials to juniors and seniors with GPAs of 3.0 or better in all Institute of Agriculture and other relevant majors (e.g., math, econ), inviting them to visit the Department's booth at Career Fair starting two weeks before Fall 2007 Career Fair (Recruiting Committee).
 - D. At the Career Fair booth, maintain a contact list of individuals who show interest in the Department's graduate program and follow up with an email (or letter) starting Fall 2007 (Recruiting Committee).
 - E. Invite all juniors and seniors in the Department with GPAs of 3.0 or better to a pizza dinner where we will present the Department's graduate program options and invite them to apply starting after Career Fair Fall 2007 (Department Head, Recruiting, Graduate, and Undergraduate Committees).
 - F. Post graduate program brochures around the Ag Campus and at bus stops starting Fall 2007 (Secretary, under supervision of Recruiting Committee).

- G. Invite all undergraduate and graduate students to an annual picnic and encourage graduate students and faculty to discuss the M.S. program with undergraduate students starting Fall 2007 (Department Head, Recruiting Committee, Graduate Student Organization and Faculty).
- H. Identify contacts at other institutions (regionally and nationwide) that are potential sources of graduate students, send them recruiting materials, and encourage recruiting activities during on-site visits to the institutions identified starting Fall 2007 (Recruiting Committee).
- I. Encourage students to seek high quality internship opportunities to enhance their experience and to advertise the quality of the graduate program in high visibility places starting Fall 2007 (faculty and graduate students).
- J. Participate in career days at other Tennessee schools (MTSU, TTU, etc.) starting Fall 2007 (Recruiting Committee).
- K. Explore the development of an on-site program at the Department to recruit prospective students starting Fall 2007 (Recruiting Committee).

Table 3. Students Who Applied, Were Admitted, and Were Enrolled in the M.S. Program During the Year, with Undergraduate GPAs and GRE Scores, 2001-2002 through 2006-07.

Year*	Applied	Admitted	Enrolled During Year	Mean UG GPA	Mean GRE Verbal	Mean GRE Quant.	Mean GRE Anal.
2001-02			5	3.00(5)	463(4)	595(4)	555(4)
2002-03			8	3.23(8)	443(4)	665(4)	630(4)
2003-04			10	3.27(10)	442(6)	585(6)	3.7(6)
2004-05		13	11	3.31(11)	449(8)	651(8)	4.5(8)
2005-06	23	14	7	3.40(7)	403(4)	640(4)	4(4)
2006-07	16	11	9	3.33(9)	413(4)	633(4)	4(4)
Mean			8	3.27(50)	438(30)	632(30)	4.1(22)

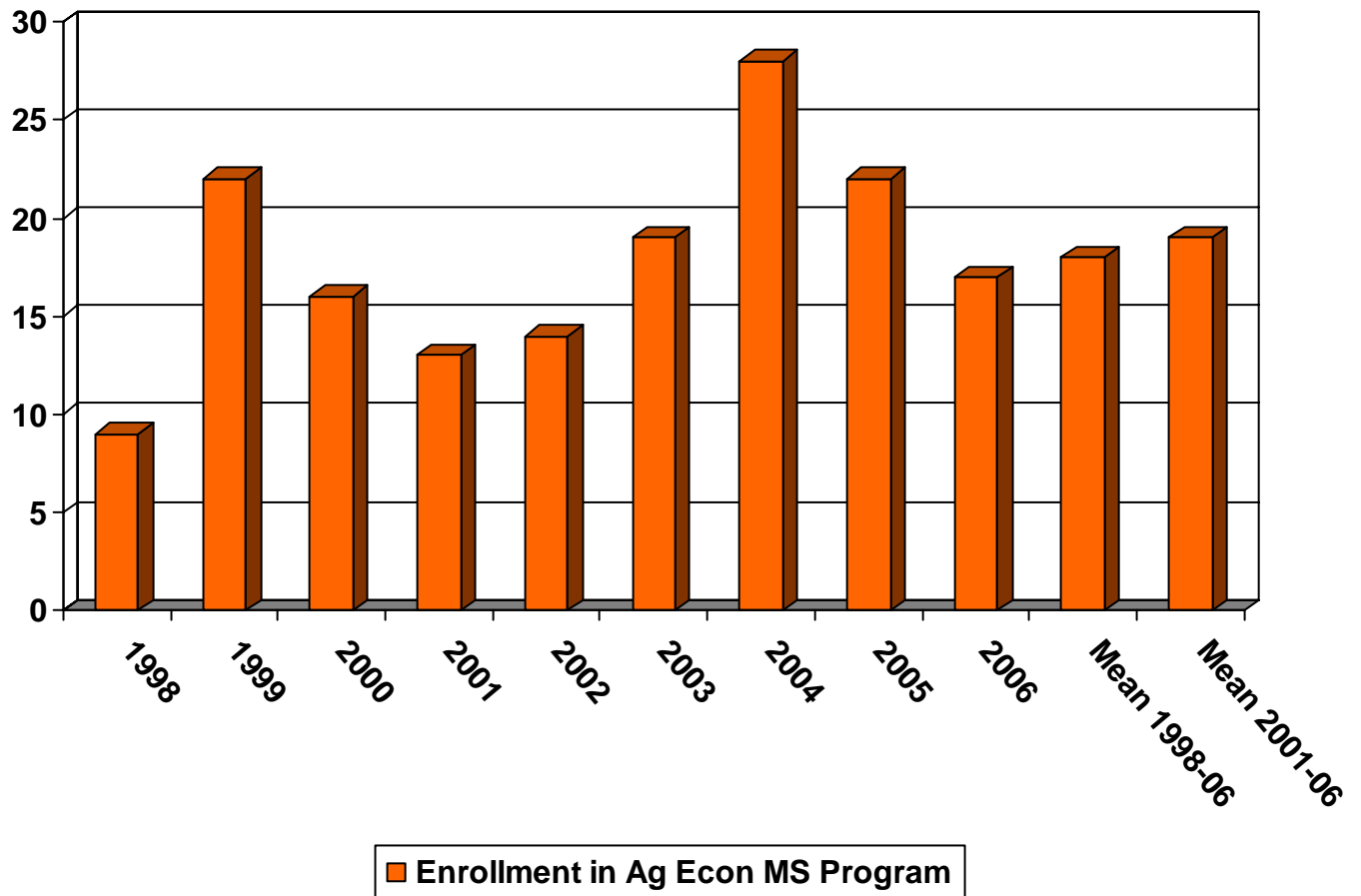
*Data are from Departmental graduate student files.

Table 4. Undergraduate Institution and Major and Numbers of M.S. Students in Ag Econ and Agribusiness Options: 2001-2002 through 2006-07.

Year*	Undergraduate Institution	Ag Econ	Ag Bus	Undergraduate Majors
2001-02	UTK(2), China, NC State, UTM	4	1	AgEcon, Econ, AgBusMgmt, Ag, AnSci
2002-03	UTK(4), Univ Belgrano, UTC, UTM, Carson Newman	5	3	AgEcon(2), Econ(3), AgEconBus (3)
2003-04	UTK(5), Tenn Tech, Murray State, UTM (3)	5	5	AgEconBus(3), LanWldBus, Ag/AgMgmt, AnSci(2), Ag/Bus, Ag(2)
2004-05	UTK(4), Visayas St Coll-Pilip, Cal State-Fres, Natl Taiwan U, K. State, Univ AL-Birm, Purdue, Purdue-Univ South	9	2	AgEcon(3), AgEconBus(4), FoodTech, Sociology, MBA(2)
2005-06	UTK(3), Ukraine FeconNat Ag, UTM, LSU, Keora Univ	4	3	AgEcon (2), AgEconBus, AgSciBus, Finance, Ag, FdResEcon
2006-07	UTK(3), NC State, CO State, Tenn Tech, MTSU, U Recife, Carson Newman	7	2	AgEcon(2), AgBusMgmt(2), Econ (2), AgComm, MusicEd

* Data are from Departmental graduate student files.

Figure 1. Total Annual Enrollment in the M.S. Program of the Department of Agricultural Economics, 1998 through 2006 and Means for 1998-06 and 2001-06.



Source: CASNR, 2006. Graduate Student Enrollment: 1995-2006. Dean's Office, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, Knoxville, Tennessee.

Goal 4: Enhance the Undergraduate Program

Action-Plan Writing Committee: Clark (Chair), Bazen, Gray, Lambert, Park, Rawls, Riley

Goal 4—Attract greater numbers of high quality undergraduate students and enhance their learning experience

Justification

Over the last nineteen years, the Department has averaged 76.5 undergraduate majors, with a high of 112 in 1990-91 and a low of 56 in 2005-2006. The number of majors has exceeded 100 in only two years (1990-91 and 1991-92), and this spike was “related to the transfer of a substantial number of students from the College of Business Administration after departments there raised their minimum GPA requirements for upper-division association with a major in 1989” (Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, 1999). Over the last ten years, the average has been 73.6 majors with a high of 93 in 2002-03. Overall, one might characterize enrollment over this 19-year period as hovering in the 60-80 range with a pair of notable spikes and a current trough. See Table 5 and Figures 2 and 3.

Increasing the number of undergraduate majors above this 10-year average would enable the Department to better fulfill its mission of discovering and enhancing the application of new knowledge by:

- Allowing the Department to routinely offer the breadth of courses appropriate to the discipline;
- Permitting specialization options within the curriculum (e.g., natural resource economics, etc);
- Providing the critical mass necessary to continuously support a number of different student-related activities, such as Departmental clubs, internships, exchange programs, career fairs, student competitions, honors and other student research programs, and so on;
- Fostering a more competitive atmosphere among the students; and
- Generating a stronger and deeper pool of applicants for the Department’s graduate programs.

Thus, the Department has set a goal of increasing the number of undergraduate majors to between 100 and 120 by the 2011-2012 academic year. While this increase represents a substantial increase over current levels, it would not exceed enrollment levels reached in the early 1990s when teaching FTEs were approximately equal to what they are now. However, increasing the number of undergraduate majors beyond 120 would strain Department resources at their current levels, in part because of an expected increase in the number of students pursuing Agricultural Economics minors associated with a college-wide increase in enrollment. The Department believes that enhancing the quality of the undergraduate experience is both a key component to increasing enrollment and an important goal in its own right.

Objectives

- I. Increase the total number of undergraduate students majoring in Agricultural Economics and Business to between 100 and 120 students by the 2011-2012 academic year.
- II. Enhance the quality of the educational experience of those students majoring in Agricultural Economics and Business.

Action Plan to Achieve Objectives

- I. Increase the total number of undergraduate students majoring in Agricultural Economics and Business to between 100 and 120 students by the 2011-2012 academic year.
 - A. Recruitment.
 1. Improve the dissemination of information on existing sources of financial aid starting Fall 2007 (Recruiting Contact; UG Committee; IT Staff) by:
 - a) Encouraging the College to collect and distribute this information and pointing to the information provided by the College and University in our material (brochures, websites, and so on);
 - b) Collecting and disseminating information on financial aid available for students in agricultural economics and/or agribusiness (see <http://animalscience.ag.utk.edu/scholarship.htm> for an example).
 2. Seek funding for endowed scholarships to be awarded to outstanding sophomores, juniors or seniors majoring in Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness starting Fall 2007 (Department Head).
 3. Develop or locate interactive agricultural economics educational module(s) for use by faculty when recruiting and/or entertaining groups of prospective students and, possibly, distribution to high school and/or community college economics instructors by Summer 2008 (Department Head; Faculty; Funding for External Development).
 4. Establish and/or improve personal contacts starting Fall 2007 (Recruiting Contact; UG Committee) with:
 - a) Individuals in a position to recommend the Department to students and/or students to the Department (such as extension agents in agriculture and 4-H, community college instructors, and 4-H teachers);
 - b) CASNR/UT students who have either expressed an interest in agricultural economics as a major or who are undecided as to a major.

5. Promote the founding of a Governor's School for Natural Resources hosted by CASNR by Fall 2008 (Department Head).
6. Develop a proposal to change the name of the Department, major and/or degree to something that would prove more attractive or informative to students by Spring 2008 (Ad Hoc Faculty Committee appointed by Department Head).
7. Consider developing a proposal to initiate a lower-division principles course that would meet the general education social science requirement by Spring 2008 (Department Head; UG Committee).

B. Retention.

1. Maintain contact with students who successfully completed AGEC110 in the Fall of each year throughout the remainder of the academic year starting Fall 2007 (AGEC 110 Instructor(s); UG Committee).
2. Host a Departmental event in both the Spring and Fall of each year at which faculty can mingle with both graduate and undergraduate students starting Fall 2007 (UG Committee; G Committee; Departmental Funds of \$1,000 per year).
3. Create an Agricultural Economics Community Organization using Online@UT to promote communication and collegiality with and among undergraduate majors (http://online.utk.edu/org_overview.shtml) by Fall 2007 (UG Committee; IT Staff).

C. Placement.

1. Create and distribute a senior brochure by Spring 2008 (UG Committee; Department Head; Departmental Funds of \$1,000 per year).

II. Enhance the quality of the educational experience of those students majoring in Agricultural Economics and Business. (This objective is difficult to quantify as there is little or no baseline data. However, we do propose to start collecting data that will serve as a baseline for similar activities in the future).

A. Diversity.

1. Have 25% or more of our undergraduate majors participate in an international study program during their time here starting Fall 2007 and achieved by Fall 2012 (UG Committee; Department Head; Departmental Funds of \$1,500 per year).

2. Increase international content in existing courses starting Fall 2007 and achieved by Fall 2012 (UG Committee; Department Head).

B. Experience.

1. Have 25% or more of the Department's undergraduate majors participate in an internship starting Fall 2007 and achieved by Fall 2012 (Internship Coordinator; UG Committee; Faculty).
2. Invite at least one industry professional onto campus each semester and promote interaction between undergraduates and these professionals starting Fall 2007 (UG Committee; Seminar Committee).
3. Have at least one undergraduate student per year participate in an outreach program with Extension faculty, e.g., CASNR Honors Research and Creative Achievements, starting Fall 2007 (UG Committee; Extension Faculty; Honors Representative(s)).
4. Have at least two undergraduate students per year participate in a faculty research project, e.g., UTK/ORNL Summer Research Internship Program or CASNR Honors Research and Creative Achievements, starting Fall 2007 (UG Committee; Research Faculty; Honors Representative(s)).
5. Revitalize the NAMA/Agribusiness Club by Fall 2007 (Faculty Advisor(s)).
6. Have students compete on an annual basis in student competitions such as NAMA (starting Spring 2008) and the SAEA (starting Spring 2008) and AAEA Quiz Bowl (starting Summer 2009) (Faculty Advisor(s); Funding for travel for approximately 20 students, estimated at \$15,000 per year).

C. Curriculum.

1. Develop a proposal for faculty consideration to adopt and/or revise undergraduate concentrations by Fall 2007 (UG Committee; Ad Hoc Faculty Committee).
2. Develop and offer on an annual basis, one or more courses for the Chancellor's Honors Program by Spring 2008 (Teaching Faculty; Department Head).
3. Reevaluate curriculum requirements and offerings in agricultural economics, economics and statistics by Fall 2007 (UG Committee).

D. Facilities.

1. Upgrade MH 212A and MH 212B to the equivalent of MH 226 by Fall 2007 (Department Head; Funding from UTK).
2. Provide a student common area for use by undergraduate majors and clubs by Fall 2007 (Space Committee; Department Head).
3. Upgrade classroom computer equipment as needed starting Fall 2008 (IT Staff; Department Head; Student Technology Fee).

E. Sustainability.

1. Establish and maintain a Student and Alumni Database by Spring 2008 (UG Committee; G Committee; Department Head; Department Staff).
2. Develop and implement a survey of Departmental alumni to collect information to improve Departmental programs by Summer 2007 (Department Head; UG Committee; G Committee; Department Staff).
3. Review and revise the written component of the senior exit interview to collect more comprehensive data on current students that can be compiled and tracked over time (convert into an online questionnaire?) by Fall 2007 (UG Committee; Department Head).

Table 5. Undergraduate Majors: 1988-89 through 2006-07.

Year*	Undergraduate Majors	Number of Graduates			CASNR
		Total	Female	Black	
1988-89	72	18	6	0	
1989-90	79	15	3	0	
1990-91	112	22	3	0	
1991-92	111	35	6	1	
1992-93	81	28	4	0	
1993-94	69	23	6	0	
1994-95	67	21	6	0	
1995-96	68	20	2	1	1127
1996-97	58	21	3	1	1066
1997-98	62	14	2	1	1035
1998-99	73	20			1047
1999-00	72	16			1038
2000-01	73	22			1000
2001-02	92	15			951
2002-03	93	13			877
2003-04	82	26			778
2004-05	70	22			816
2005-06	56				789
2006-07	63				841

Data on number of undergraduate majors for academic years 1988-89 through 1994-95 taken from Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, 1999. Data on number of undergraduate majors for academic years 1995-96 through 2006-07 taken from CASNR, 2006.

Figure 2. Number of Undergraduate Majors: 1988-89 through 2006-07.

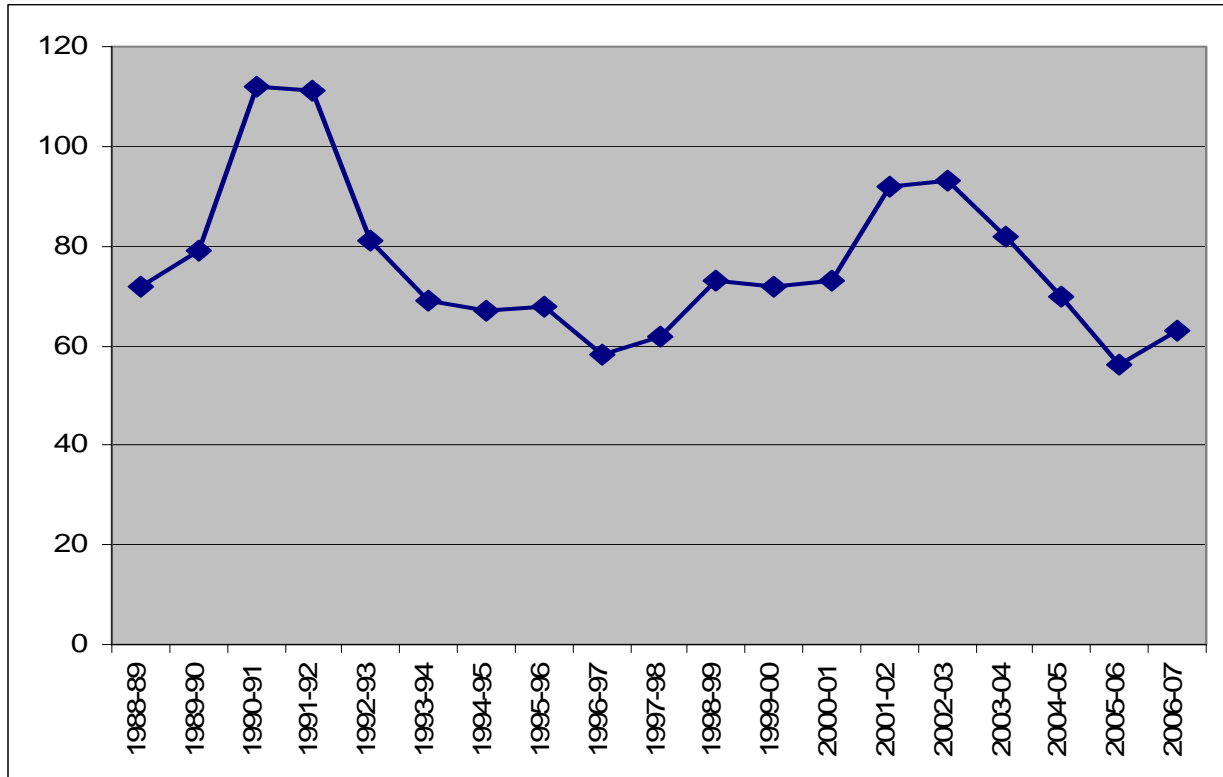
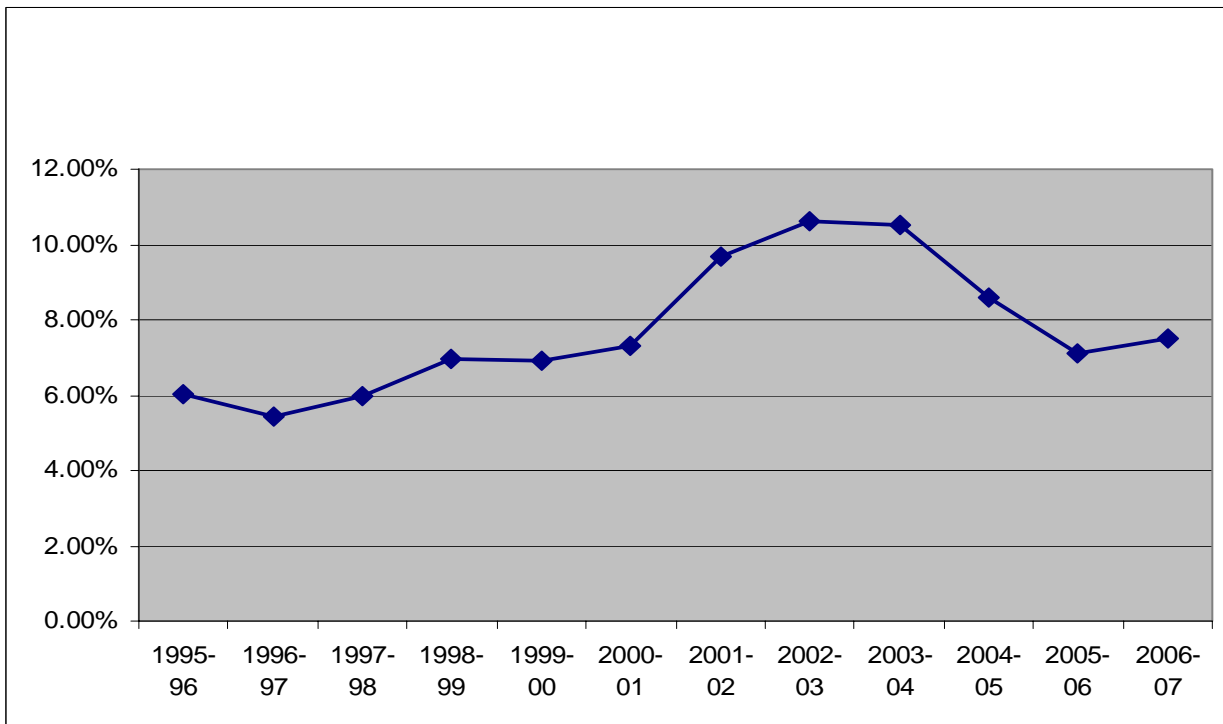


Figure 3. Agricultural Economics Majors as a Percentage of CASNR Enrollment: 1995-96 through 2006-07.



Sources

CASNR, 2006. Undergraduate Enrollment: 1995-2006. Dean's Office, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, Knoxville, Tennessee.

Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, 1999. Academic Program Review: Self-Study Document. Volume I. Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, Knoxville, Tennessee.

Goal 5: Address the Needs of Administrative and Professional Staff

Action-Plan Writing Committee: Goldman (Chair), English, McKinley, Menard, Riley, Schaffer, Sharp

Goal 5—Improve job satisfaction for administrative and professional staff

Justification

Employing high quality Professionals and Administrative Assistants is an essential element for maintaining and improving the day-to-day working environment of the Department of Agricultural Economics including contributing to the Department's teaching, research, and extension programs. To retain and/or employ high quality Professionals and Administrative Assistants, the Department must encourage and cultivate an atmosphere of openness of communication, a method for recognizing performance, and encourage and promote educational/professional development.

Objectives

- I. Implement a Departmental recognition system on a quarterly basis.
- II. Improve communication within the Department.
- III. Increase professional development opportunities.

Action Plan to Achieve Objectives

- I. Implement a Departmental recognition system on a quarterly basis. Begin implementation of the recognition system Fall 2007.
 - A. Utilize the UT employee recognition program—"Nominate Someone for a Job Well Done" (Department Head, Awards Committee).
 1. Have the Awards Committee make nominations for the following awards:
 - a. Team Excellence Award;
 - b. Send Roses Award;
 - c. Volunteer Spirit Award.
 2. Develop an increased awareness of other award opportunities.
 - B. Use the Departmental Friday morning socials, Departmental Christmas Party, and/or Departmental picnic as a time to recognize those individuals who were nominated in the UT employee recognition program. In addition, at these events recognize any awards received for teamwork, individual merit, and so on by other organizations, recognize those individuals who have received grants and

contracts, recognize those research and Extension professionals who have contributed to published papers, significant research efforts and Extension programs (Department Head).

- C. Include contributions of professional and administrative support staff when appropriate in external communication vehicles of the Department (Department Head).
 - D. Evaluate the development of incentives for high quality performers (Ad Hoc Committee appointed by Department Head).
- II. Improve communication within the Department.
- A. Have monthly staff meetings for administrative assistants and professional staff beginning July 2007 (Department Head).
 - B. Implement a Departmental “In/Out” on-line calendar for Departmental administrative assistants by August 2007 (Head Secretary, Department Head).
 - 1. Provide instructions to Morgan Gray to develop an On-Line IN/OUT calendar (July 2007).
 - 2. Training on use of On-Line calendar (July 2007).
 - 3. Develop policy on who has access and on what is to be entered on the calendar (July 2007).
 - C. Implement a more professional work environment starting July 2007 (Department Head, Head Secretary).
 - 1. Communicate expectations to professional staff and administrative assistants.
 - 2. Develop procedures to cover phone during work hours.
 - 3. Cross train personnel.
 - 4. Foster an atmosphere that encourages staff to assist other staff.
 - D. Assess policies affecting administrative assistants and professional staff at least semiannually starting Fall 2007 and Spring and Fall thereafter (Department Head).
 - E. Promote a newsletter at least semiannually starting Fall 2007 and Spring and Fall thereafter (Department Head).
 - 1. Assign an individual/(s) with the responsibility to publish the newsletter.
 - F. Increase the use of the Website by making commonly used or needed forms available, committee assignments, and so on, starting June 2007 (Website Committee).
- III. Increase professional development opportunities.

- A. Encourage professional meeting participation and presentation of work starting Summer 2007 (Department Head).
- B. Provide Departmental financial support for administrative assistants and professional staff to attend professional conferences or training starting Summer 2007 (Department Head).

Goal 6: Market Our Achievements

Action-Plan Writing Committee: Wilcox (Chair), Cho, De La Torre Ugarte, Garland, Tiller, Yen

Goal 6—Enhance the Department’s stature within the institute, university, state, region, nation and world

Justification

The mission of the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Tennessee includes the discovery and dissemination of knowledge in the field of applied economics. Fulfillment of the Department’s mission is directly affected by the Department’s capacity to attract and retain quality faculty, staff and students, acquire research and extension funding, and provide high-impact and relevant programming. Decisions that are critical to maintaining and enhancing this capacity are often made based on factors such as reputation, rankings and relationships. The Department recognizes that these factors hinge on our ability to inform decision makers, as well as current and potential stakeholders, colleagues, students and collaborators of our achievements. The purpose of this goal is to suggest objectives and action items that support the enhancement of the Department’s stature from within the Institute of Agriculture to across the globe.

Implementation of the action items below will not be a linear process, thus implying immediate attention or initiation when appropriate/possible. Resources required are in the form of budget line items, training and hiring an “information specialist”. Rewards and encouragement should be incentives that have a tangible impact on the individual faculty/staff member and, ultimately, the Department.

Objectives

- I. Increase cooperation between extension and research, to facilitate communication of research results.
- II. Enhance the Department’s participation in professional organizations and meetings.
- III. Foster efforts to recognize faculty for excellence at the institute, university, state, regional, national and international levels.
- IV. Promote collaboration with other units and programs on campus and relevant public/private entities off-campus.
- V. Utilize the communication infrastructure within the Department, Institute, and University more effectively.

Action Plan to Achieve Objectives

- I. Increase cooperation between extension and research, to facilitate communication of research results to stakeholders starting Summer 2007 (Department Head and other faculty as appropriate).
 - A. Reward faculty through ratings on annual evaluations, merit pay, and promotion and tenure considerations for active collaboration between research and extension faculty during the formulation of grant proposals.
 - B. Reward faculty through ratings on annual evaluations, merit pay, and promotion and tenure considerations for publishing in the popular press.
 - C. Create and/or pursue collaborative extension and research outreach opportunities throughout the state.
- II. Enhance the Department's participation in professional organizations and meetings starting Summer 2007 (Department Head and other faculty as appropriate).
 - A. Reward faculty through ratings on annual evaluations, merit pay, and promotion and tenure considerations for actively taking leadership positions and actively participating in professional organizations.
 - B. Establish a budget line item and set of formal rules for providing financial support to students who are actively participating in professional meetings.
- III. Foster efforts to recognize faculty for excellence on an institute, university, state, regional, national and international level starting Fall 2007 (Awards Committee).
 - A. Utilize the expertise of personnel from the Evaluation and Communications Departments to train staff designated to assist faculty with developing nomination packets.
 - B. Reward faculty through ratings on annual evaluations, merit pay, and promotion and tenure considerations for professional honors and awards received and recognize achievement at Department, Institute and University levels through appropriate outlets.
 - C. Encourage the Awards Committee and faculty to seek award nomination opportunities, identify appropriate faculty, and encourage/support their nominations.
- IV. Promote collaboration with other units and programs on campus and relevant public/private entities off-campus starting Fall 2007 (Undergraduate and Graduate Committees).
 - A. Develop and offer courses for the UT Honors Program to impact the overall campus and attract high quality students to the Department's graduate program.

- B. Identify and arrange quality internship opportunities for students as a way to improve their experience but also to advertise the quality of the Department's program in high visibility places.
- V. Utilize the communication infrastructure within the Department, Institute, and University more effectively starting Fall 2007.
- A. Create an active and effective Advisory Council for the Department to help the Department achieve and advertise its excellent accomplishments (Department Head).
 - B. Develop an easy-to-use SQL database for entering publications, presentations, activities, and other information required to generate an up-to-date vita, provide information to prospective students and award nomination packets (Department Head, Webmaster, Website Committee and volunteers).
 - C. Improve our system for adding material to the Department's website, to make it relevant and up-to-date, thus preventing stagnation—ask the Webmaster to meet with each faculty member a minimum of once every 3 months to identify and add material (Website Committee).
 - D. Develop recruiting materials that highlight research, teaching and extension achievements (Program Coordinators).
 - E. Hire an information specialist with skills relevant to editing academic output and marketing the Department's successes (e.g. writing news releases, putting together newsletters, assisting with award nominations, graphic design, and general communications) (Department Head).

Goal 7: Enhance Faculty Development and Retention

Action-Plan Writing Committee: English (Chair), Bazen, Tiller, Gerloff, Smith, Garland, and Ray

Goal 7—Enhance faculty development and retention

Justification

Continued professional growth is key in developing the Department. Hiring new faculty involves significant investments of resources, and retaining faculty and fostering their development maximizes the return from these investments.

Objectives

- I. Develop a Departmental Mentor Program designed to strengthen faculty development and increase faculty retention.
- II. Increase communication among Research, Teaching, and Extension.
- III. Develop a formalized system in the Department for Recognition and Rewards.
- IV. Improve the work environment on the second and third floors of Morgan Hall.

Action Plan to Achieve Objectives

- I. Develop a Departmental mentoring program to strengthen faculty development and increase faculty retention.
 - A. Incorporate in the program the expectations placed on the mentor, methods of mentor assignment, benchmarks for evaluation, and so on. Some suggestions for establishing the mentoring program include:
 1. Establish a standing Mentoring Program Committee to oversee the mentoring program (Department Head, Fall 2007).
 2. Expected standing committee activities would include writing a description of responsibilities of the mentor and mentoree (Mentoring Program Committee, Fall 2007).
 3. The written description would be presented at the Department's July Faculty Meeting (Mentoring Program Committee, Fall 2007). The recommendation is that the description should incorporate the following:

- a. Mentors should be provided with a written description of responsibilities and expectations when accepting a new mentoree.
- b. Mentors should be required to meet with the mentoree at least a quarterly.
- c. Mentors should be required to sign off on the mentoree's dossier prior to the faculty review for the annual retention and promotion meeting.
- d. Mentoree and mentor per the UT handbook should be able to request a change in mentor assignment.
- e. The Mentoring Program Committee would hold two mandatory workshops annually—one for mentors and one for mentorees. The purpose of this workshop would be to reaffirm the Department's expectations, discuss changes in the program, timelines, etc., and anything else of importance (Mentoring Program Committee, Fall 2007).
- f. Change the evaluation system for new faculty; receiving feedback once a year is not sufficient. The Department Head should hold regular (quarterly) progress meetings with the mentoree and mentor (Department Head, Fall 2007).
- g. Identification of who makes the mentor/mentoree assignment.

II. Increase communication among Research, Teaching, and Extension.

- A. The Department Head shall assign Assistant Heads for Research, Teaching, and Extension. A job description for these three new positions in the Department needs to be written prior to assignment. The job description should include such activities as reporting (five-ten minute report) to the faculty on a quarterly basis the activities taking place under each area. It would be expected that the three Assistant Heads would meet regularly with the Department Head to discuss pertinent issues (Department Head, July 2007).
- B. Develop a periodic (monthly) Departmental e-mail newsletter. A staff person (perhaps the Webmaster) would be assigned the responsibility for the newsletter. Information for the newsletter will flow from all faculty and staff. For instance, the bookkeeper could provide information on new grants and contracts, the PI could provide an abstract for the new grant or contract. Anytime articles are published a citation and brief abstract could be placed into the newsletter. Presentations at meetings should also be listed (Department Head, June 2007).
- C. Organize the Department around Theme Areas Groups (TAGs). The expectations of what the TAGs would contribute to the Departmental information stream and future planning would be established and accepted at the August 2007 faculty meeting (Department Head and Faculty, September 2007).
 1. It is expected that the members of the TAGs would meet regularly to discuss opportunities, responsibilities, and seek joint projects.
 2. One responsibility of the TAGs could be to provide a seminar once every two years on a rotating basis that displays the work being conducted by the TAG faculty.

III. Develop a formalized system in the Department for recognition and awards.

- A. Enhance the responsibilities of the standing Awards Committee. Request that the existing members of the Awards Committee develop a formalized system in recognizing both faculty and staff (Department Head, Awards Committee, Fall 2007). Items that could be considered in the formalized system include:
 - 1. A report to the faculty during faculty meetings of upcoming awards and requirements for that award.
 - 2. Potential awards and award winners should be included in the Departmental e-mail newsletter.
 - 3. Develop an awards database with dates typically used as application deadlines, documentation required, and so on.
- B. When a faculty or a staff member is nominated for an award, assign a member of the Awards Committee as a "mentor" to see that all requirements are met and all materials are collected to advance the nominee's packet to the proper destination (Awards Committee, Fall 2007).
- C. Initiate interest in advancing nominations to outside organizations such as AAEE and SAEA (e.g., Best Thesis, Student Paper, Fellow nominations, etc.) (Department Head, Awards Committee, Fall 2007).

IV. Improve the work environment on the second and third floors of Morgan Hall.

- A. There are numerous issues that the Department can not address under this objective. To prevent negative impressions of the building's interior by visitors, and to improve safety and environmental conditions employees work in, we propose the following action items (Department Head, Summer 2007):
 - 1. Consult with the safety officer on issues concerning our work spaces, especially concerning both air and environmental quality.
 - 2. Establish a formal line of communication from the Department to the Administration regarding the state of the building.
- B. The malfunctioning and loud air conditioning/heating system in Morgan Hall 301 needs to be replaced (Department Head, Summer 2008).
- C. Prioritize the processing of expense reimbursement requests (Department Head, Summer 2007).

Appendix A

Summary of SWOT Results for Major Categories: August 9, 2006

POSITIVE INTERNAL ANALYSIS

Strengths

- Collegial and cooperative faculty and staff
- Departmental leadership
- Existing and emerging subject matter core areas (policy, biomass, energy, natural resources, rural development)
- External funding capabilities
- Knowledge, experience, and dedication of faculty and staff (human capital)
- Nationally recognized faculty
- Solid academic programs
- Strong IT support for the Department
- Strong stakeholder orientation

NEGATIVE INTERNAL ANALYSIS

Weaknesses

- Absence of Ph.D. program
- Curricular and programmatic focus
- External reputation and linkages need improving
- Faculty mentoring and retention
- Grant-driven resource use
- Inadequate marketing of our program and successes
- Lack of faculty and staff diversity
- Lack of integration (between r/t/e and between faculty/staff)
- Low student numbers (undergrad and grad)
- Need for better communication
- Personnel management
- Physical work environment
- Potential retirement of faculty (loss of tacit institutional knowledge & experience)
- Quality of students (undergrad and grad)
- Recruitment of students
- Student placement services

POSITIVE EXTERNAL ANALYSIS

Opportunities

- Addressing agriculture and food industry trends
- Collegial and cooperative faculty and staff
- Curriculum development
- Develop partnerships internally (library) and with key industry groups and institutions
- Enriching the student experience/student-faculty relationships
- External funding opportunities

- Hire new faculty to reinvigorate Department
- Many new teaching, research and extension opportunities with new tools and delivery methods
- Narrow our focus to ensure relevance
- Professional development in technology and skills for faculty and staff
- Research and programming opportunities in bioenergy
- Research and programming opportunities in land use
- Research and programming opportunities in natural resources
- Research and programming opportunities in rural development
- Uncategorized items

NEGATIVE EXTERNAL ANALYSIS

Threats

- College of Business Administration linkages
- Competition with neighboring states
- Competition for students
- Declining funding (both federal and state)
- Erosion of human resources (declining fte's, faculty recruitment, loss of expertise)
- Iris (3 "iris" responses)
- Inadequate staff compensation and reward system
- Institute Administration priorities and support
- Lack of extension and institute it support
- Low morale across the university
- Perception and need for agricultural economics
- Security of personnel records and information (in general)

Appendix B

Summary of Action Plan

Goal 1: Strengthen our ability to address the needs of stakeholders in agriculture and the food/fiber industry in Tennessee and the United States by enhancing our marketing, production, and management expertise		
Action Items	Completion or Start Date	Resources/Responsible Parties
Objective I. Employ two marketing faculty members and a commercial Ag Extension faculty member		
A & B. Develop and submit position descriptions to UTIA Administration	Fall 2007	Department Head
Objective II. Employ faculty members to maintain strength as retirements occur		
A. Secure permission to search and complete the hiring process as quickly as possible when a retirement potentially creates a faculty vacancy	Summer 2007	Department Head
B. Consider reemploying the retiring faculty member on a part-time basis to serve as a mentor for the newly hired faculty member or to help bridge the time between the retirement and the arrival of the new hire	Summer 2007	Department Head
Objective III. Conduct a needs assessment of stakeholders to ascertain future needs relating to marketing, production, and management		
A, B & C. Assign an hoc committee, develop a survey instrument, determine whether to use a mail survey or focus group, and implement the survey periodically	Spring 2008	Ad Hoc Committee assigned by Department Head
Objective IV. Institute an annual Departmental report of innovative research, teaching, and Extension accomplishments to be distributed via the Departmental website to former and perspective students, agribusiness leaders, key legislators, university administrators, and others, with a shorter document (in brochure format) being mailed to selected individuals		
A, B, C, & D. Summarize general activities, research projects and related impacts, teaching activities, and outreach-related activities of the Department during the year	March/April 2008, annually	Department Head with faculty input

Goal 2: Strengthen our ability to address high-priority issues in the areas of natural resource economics and rural development, especially those associated with bioenergy, land use and water quality		
Action Items	Completion or Start Date	Resources/Responsible Parties
Objective I. Establish working groups (WGs) in the following four areas: bioenergy, land use, water resources and rural development		
A. Establish initial working group membership	Fall 2007	Department Head, WG members
B. Strengthen linkages with private and public sector stakeholders	Fall 2007	WG members

C. Seek extramural funding for research and outreach	Fall 2007, Spring 2008	WG members
D. Expand outreach efforts	Fall 2007, Spring 2008	WG members
E. Enhance the learning experience for students	Fall 2007, Spring 2008	WG members, Undergraduate Committee, Graduate Committee
F. Establish identity and visibility	Spring 2008	WG members, Webmaster, Seminar Committee
Objective II. Secure resources and institutional support to enhance potential success of working groups		
A. Hire a full-time research associate with M.S.-level training in GIS	Summer 2008	Department Head and TAES Administration
B. Advocate the addition of three rural development regional Extension specialists with M.S.-level training	Summer 2008	Department Head and TAES Administration
C. Provide more attractive options for students to do Ph.D.-level research in these subject matter areas	Summer 2007	Graduate Committee
D. Work within UTIA to secure stable funding for the Natural Resources Policy Center (NRPC)	Summer 2008	Department Head and NRPC Faculty Associates

Goal 3: Attract greater numbers of high quality graduate students and enhance their learning experience		
Action Items	Completion or Start Date	Resources/Responsible Parties
Objective I: Improve knowledge about students applying and enrolled in the Department's graduate program, increase understanding about the needs of prospective employers of graduates, and use this information to increase the appeal of the graduate program and to enhance the learning experience of graduate students		
A. Compile data similar to baseline historical data for all future M.S. and Ph.D. applicants and enrollees	Fall 2007	Secretary, supervised by Graduate Coordinator
B. Establish an annual exit survey of seniors to determine job market interests and other information that might help in M.S. curriculum revision	Spring 2008	Undergraduate Committee in consultation with Graduate Committee
C. Establish an annual exit survey of graduate students determine job market interests and other information that might help in M.S. curriculum revision	Spring 2008	Volunteer from Graduate Committee
D. Periodically survey graduate students employers to obtain information that could help with curriculum revisions to maintain relevance of the M.S. program	Summer 2008	Volunteer from Graduate Committee
Objective II. Increase the general appeal of the graduate program and enhance the learning experience of graduate students		
A. Establish a Departmental Graduate Student Organization with defined responsibilities	Fall 2007	Graduate Committee in consultation with Department Head

B. Establish an annual graduate student poster competition	Fall 2007	Graduate Student Organization
C. Provide encouragement, opportunities, and resources for graduate students to present research at professional meetings and to participate in relevant workshops and training	Summer 2007	Major Professors in consultation with Department Head and Development Fund Committees
D. Encourage graduate students to enroll in Agriculture and Natural Resource (ANR) 512—Teaching Internship in Agriculture and Natural Resources	Spring 2008	Work Supervisors with approval of Major Professors
E. Establish annual joint meetings of the Graduate and Undergraduate Committees to address joint issues	Fall 2007	Graduate and Undergraduate Committees
Objective III. Increase the appeal of the M.S. program and enhance the learning experience of M.S. students		
A. Include a Natural Resource Economics M.S. Concentration in the 2008-2009 catalog	July, Sept, 2007	Graduate Committee
B. Reevaluate the entire M.S. program and include curriculum changes in the 2008-2009 catalog	July, Sept, 2007	Graduate Committee
C. Reevaluate the M.S. program curriculum every semester using information from senior, graduate student, and employer surveys	Fall 2007	Graduate Committee
Objective IV. Increase the appeal of the Ph.D. program and enhance the learning experience of Ph.D. students		
A. Include a Natural Resource Economics and Policy Concentration under the Natural Resources Ph.D. Major of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries in the 2008-2009 catalog	July, Sept, 2007	Graduate Committee
B. With the Economics Department, pursue the possibility of including an Agricultural Economics (or Natural Resource Economics) Field under the Economics Ph.D. program in the 2009-2010 catalog	July, Sept, 2008	Department Head, Graduate Committee
C. Reevaluate Ph.D. program curriculum every semester	Spring 2008	Graduate Committee
Objective V. Increase graduate student recruiting efforts by faculty		
A. Teaching faculty members emphasize the benefits of earning an M.S. degree from the Department at least three times per semester in each undergraduate class	Fall 2007	Teachers of undergraduate courses
B. Teaching faculty members personally invite the best undergraduate students in each class to consider applying for the M.S. program	Fall 2007	Teachers of undergraduate courses
C. Encourage graduate students to enroll in Agriculture and Natural Resources 512 (Teaching Internship in Agricultural and Natural Resources) and become visible in positive ways to encourage the best undergraduate students to enroll in the M.S. program	Spring 2008	Major Professors and teaching faculty

D. Extension faculty members mention the M.S. program in farmer meetings where appropriate, and emphasize the manes of graduate students who were involved in gathering the information presented in the meeting	Fall 2007	Extension faculty
E. Extension faculty members personally emphasize to clients the benefits of their children earning an M.S. degree from the Department	Fall 2007	Extension faculty
F. Research faculty members provide research opportunities for the Department's best undergraduate students	Fall 2007	Research faculty
G. Encourage Research, Teaching and Extension faculty to include assistantship funding for M.S. and Ph.D. students in the budgets of grant proposals	Summer 2007	Research, Teaching and Extension faculty
Objective VI. Increase general recruiting efforts by the Department		
A. Establish a standing Department committee (Recruiting Committee) solely responsible for graduate student recruiting	Fall 2007	Department Head in consultation with Graduate Coordinator
B. Update recruiting materials every semester and highlight research and teaching achievements and employment of former graduate students	Fall 2007	Recruiting Committee
C. Send letters and recruiting materials to juniors and seniors with GPAs of 3.0 or better in all Institute of Agriculture and other relevant majors (e.g., math, econ), inviting them to visit the Department's booth at Career Fair	Two weeks before Fall 2007 Career Fair	Recruiting Committee
D. At the Career Fair booth, maintain a contact list of individuals who show interest in the Department's graduate program and follow up with an email (or letter)	Fall 2007	Recruiting Committee
E. Invite all juniors and seniors in the Department with GPAs of 3.0 or better to a pizza dinner where we will present the Department's graduate program options and invite them to apply	After Career Fair Fall 2007	Department Head and Recruiting, Graduate, and Undergraduate Committees
F. Post graduate program brochures around the Ag Campus and at bus stops	Fall 2007	Secretary, under supervision of Recruiting Committee
G. Invite all undergraduate and graduate students to an annual picnic and encourage graduate students and faculty to discuss the M.S. program with undergraduate students	Fall 2007	Department Head, Recruiting Committee, Graduate Student Organization Faculty
H. Identify contacts at other institutions (regionally and nationwide) that are potential sources of graduate students, send them recruiting materials, and encourage recruiting activities during on-site visits to the institutions identified	Fall 2007	Recruiting Committee
I. Encourage students to seek high quality internship opportunities to enhance their experience and to advertise the quality of the graduate program in high visibility places	Fall 2007	Faculty and graduate students

J. Participate in career days at other Tennessee schools	Fall 2007	Recruiting Committee
K. Explore the development of an on-site recruiting program	Fall 2007	Recruiting Committee

Goal 4: Attract greater numbers of high quality undergraduate students and enhance their learning experience			
Action Items	Completion or Start Date	Resources/Responsible Parties	
Objective I. Increase the total number of undergraduate students majoring in Agricultural Economics and Business to between 100 and 120 students by the 2011-2012 academic year			
A. Recruitment	1. Improve the dissemination of information on existing sources of financial aid	Fall 2007	Recruiting Contact, Undergraduate (UG) Committee, IT Staff
	2. Seek funding for endowed scholarships to be awarded to outstanding sophomores, juniors or seniors majoring in agricultural economics and agribusiness	Fall 2007	Department Head; Funding 2 students each year at \$2,000 per year for 3 years would require about \$300,000, assuming a 4% return
	3. Develop or locate interactive agricultural economics educational module(s)	Summer 2008	Department Head, Faculty, Funding for external development
	4. Establish and/or improve personal contacts	Fall 2007	Recruiting Contact, UG Committee
	5. Promote the founding of a Governor's School for Natural Resources to be hosted by CASNR	Fall 2008	Department Head
	6. Develop a proposal to change the name of the Department, major and/or degree to something that would be more attractive or informative to students	Spring 2008	Ad Hoc Faculty Committee appointed by Department Head
	7. Consider developing a proposal to initiate a lower-division principles course that would meet the general education social science requirement	Spring 2008	Department Head, UG Committee
B. Retention	1. Maintain contact with students who successfully completed AGEC110 in the Fall of each year throughout the remainder of the academic year	Fall 2007	AGEC 110 Instructor, UG Committee
	2. Host a Departmental event in both the Spring and Fall of each year at which faculty can mingle with both graduate and undergraduate students	Fall 2007	UG Committee, Graduate Committee, Departmental Funds of \$1,000 per year
	3. Create an Agricultural Economics Community Organization using Online@UT	Fall 2007	UG Committee, IT Staff

C. Placement	1. Create and distribute a senior brochure	Spring 2008	UG Committee; Department Head; Departmental Funds of \$1,000 per year
Objective II. Enhance the quality of the educational experience of those students majoring in Agricultural Economics and Business			
A. Diversity	1. Have 25% or more of undergraduate majors participate in an international study program	Fall 2007-Fall 2012	UG Committee, Department Head, Departmental Funds of \$1,500 per year
	2. Increase the international content in existing courses	Fall 2007-Fall 2012	UG Committee, Department Head
B. Experience	1. Have 25% or more of undergraduate majors participate in an internship	Fall 2007-Fall 2012	Internship Coordinator, UG Committee, Faculty
	2. Invite at least one industry professional to campus each semester and promote interaction with undergraduate students	Fall 2007	UG Committee, Seminar Committee
	3. Have at least one undergraduate student per year participate in an outreach activity with Extension faculty	Fall 2007	UG Committee, Extension faculty, Honors Representative(s)
	4. Have at least two undergraduate students per year participate in a faculty research project	Fall 2007	UG Committee, Research faculty, Honors Representative(s)
	5. Revitalize the NAMA/Agribusiness Club	Fall 2007	Faculty Advisor(s)
	6. Have students compete on an annual basis in student competitions, such as NAMA and Quiz Bowl at SAEA and AAEA meetings	Spring 2008, Spring 2008, Summer 2009	Faculty Advisor(s), Funding travel for 20 students would require about \$15,000
C. Curriculum	1. Develop a proposal for faculty consideration to adopt and/or revise the undergraduate concentrations	Fall 2007	UG Committee, Ad Hoc Faculty Committee
	2. Develop and offer on an annual basis at least one Chancellor's Honors Program	Spring 2008	Teaching faculty, Department Head
	3. Reevaluate curriculum requirements and offerings in agricultural economics, economics and statistics	Fall 2007	UG Committee
D. Facilities	1. Upgrade MH212A and MH212B to the equivalent of MH226	Fall 2007	Department Head, UTK Funding
	2. Provide a student common area for use by undergraduate majors and clubs	Fall 2007	Space Committee, Department Head
	3. Upgrade classroom computer equipment as needed	Fall 2008	IT Staff, Department Head, Student Technology Fee
E. Sustain-ability	1. Establish and maintain a Student & Alumni Database (SAAD)	Spring 2008	UG Committee, G Committee, Department Head and Staff

	2. Development and implement an alumni survey to collect information to improve Departmental programs	Summer 2007	Department Head, UG Committee, G Committee, Staff
	3. Review and revise the written component of the senior exit interview to collect more comprehensive data on current students that can be compiled and tracked over time	Fall 2007	UG Committee, Department Head

Goal 5: Improve job satisfaction for administrative and professional staff		
Action Items	Completion or Start Date	Resources/Responsible Parties
Objective I: Implement a Departmental recognition system on a quarterly basis		
A. Utilize the UT employee recognition program- "Nominate Someone for a Job Well Done"	Fall 2007	Department Head, Awards Committee
B. Use the Departmental Friday morning socials, Departmental Christmas Party, and/or Departmental picnic as times to recognize individuals deserving of recognition	Fall 2007	Department Head
C. Include contributions of professional and administrative support staff when appropriate in external communication vehicles of the Department	Fall 2007	Department Head
D. Evaluate the development of incentives for high quality performers	Fall 2007	Department Head, Ad Hoc Committee
Objective II: Improve communication within the Department		
A. Have monthly staff meetings for administrative assistants and professional staff	July 2007	Department Head
B. Implement a Departmental "In/Out" on-line calendar for Departmental administrative assistants	July-August 2007	Head Secretary, Department Head
C. Implement a more professional work environment	July 2007	Department Head, Head Secretary
D. Assess policies affecting administrative assistants and professional staff at least semiannually	Fall 2007	Department Head
E. Promote a newsletter at least semiannually	Fall 2007	Department Head
F. Increase the use of the Website by making commonly used or needed forms available, committee assignments, and so on	June 2007	Website Committee
Objective III: Increase professional development opportunities		
A. Encourage professional meeting participation and presentation of work	Summer 2007	Department Head

B. Provide Departmental financial support for administrative assistants and professional staff to attend professional conferences or training	Summer 2007	Department Head
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Goal 6: Enhance the Department's stature within the institute, university, state, region, nation and world		
Action Items	Completion or Start Date	Resources/Responsible Parties
Objective I. Increase cooperation between extension and research, to facilitate communication of research results to stakeholders		
A. Reward faculty for active collaboration between research and extension faculty during the formulation of grant proposals	Summer 2007	Department Head, Other faculty
B. Reward faculty for publishing in the popular press	Summer 2007	Department Head, Other faculty
C. Create and/or pursue collaborative extension and research outreach opportunities throughout the state	Summer 2007	Department Head, Other faculty
Objective II. Enhance the Department's participation in professional organizations and meetings		
A. Reward faculty for actively taking leadership positions and actively participating in professional organizations	Summer 2007	Department Head, Other faculty
B. Establish a budget line item and set of formal rules for providing financial support to students who are actively participating in professional meetings	Summer 2007	Department Head, Other faculty
Objective III. Foster efforts in recognizing faculty for excellence at the institute, university, state, regional, national and international levels		
A. Utilize the expertise of personnel from the Evaluation and Communications Departments to train staff designated to assist faculty with developing nomination packets	Fall 2007	Awards Committee
B. Reward faculty for professional honors and awards received and recognize achievement at Department, Institute and University levels through appropriate outlets	Fall 2007	Awards Committee
C. Encourage the Awards Committee and faculty to seek award nomination opportunities, identify appropriate faculty, and encourage/support their nomination	Fall 2007	Awards Committee
Objective IV. Promote collaboration with other units and programs on campus and relevant public/private entities off-campus		
A. Develop and offer courses for the UT Honors Program to impact the overall campus and attract high quality students	Fall 2007	Undergraduate and Graduate Coordinators
B. Identify and arrange quality internship opportunities for students to improve their experience and advertise the quality of our program in high visibility places	Fall 2007	Undergraduate and Graduate Coordinators

Objective V. Utilize the communication infrastructure within the Department, Institute, and University more effectively		
A. Create an active and effective Advisory Council for the Department to help achieve and advertise its excellent accomplishments	Fall 2007	Department Head
B. Develop an easy-to-use SQL database for entering publications, presentations, activities, and other information	Fall 2007	Department Head, Webmaster, Website Committee, Volunteers
C. Improve our system for adding material to the Department's website, to make it relevant and up-to-date	Fall 2007	Website Committee
D. Develop recruiting materials that highlight research, teaching and extension achievements	Fall 2007	Program Coordinators
E. Hire an information specialist with skills relevant to editing academic output and marketing all of our successes	Fall 2007	Department Head

Goal 7: Enhance faculty development and retention		
Action Items	Completion or Start Date	Resources/Responsible Parties
Objective I. Develop a Departmental mentoring program to strengthen faculty development and increase faculty retention		
A. Establish a standing Mentoring Program Committee, write a description of responsibilities of the mentor and mentoree, and present the written description to the faculty for approval	Fall 2007	Department Head, Mentoring Program Committee
Objective II. Increase communication among Research, Teaching, and Extension		
A. The Department Head shall assign Assistant Heads for Research, Teaching, and Extension	July 2007	Department Head
B. Develop a periodic (monthly) Departmental e-mail newsletter	June 2007	Department Head
C. Organize the Department around Theme Area Groups	Aug.-Sept. 2007	Department Head, Faculty
Objective III. Develop a formalized system in the Department for recognition and awards		
A. Enhance the responsibilities of the standing Awards Committee to develop and implement a formalized system for faculty and staff recognition	Fall 2007	Department Head, Awards Committee
B. When a faculty or a staff member is nominated for an award, assign a member of the awards committee as a "mentor" to see that all requirements are met and all materials are collected to advance the nominee's packet to the proper destination	Fall 2007	Awards Committee
C. Initiate interest in advancing nominations to outside organizations such as AAEA and SAEA	Fall 2007	Department Head, Awards Committee

Objective IV. Improve the work environment on the second and third floors of Morgan Hall		
A. Consult with the safety officer on issues concerning our work spaces and establish a formal line of communication from the Department to the Administration regarding the state of the building	Summer 2007	Department Head
B. The malfunctioning and loud air conditioning/heating system in Morgan Hall 301 needs to be replaced	Summer 2008	Department Head
C. Prioritize the processing of expense reimbursement requests	Summer 2007	Department Head

