



**Agricultural Economics, Sociology, and Education
College of Agricultural Sciences**

Strategic Plan

Spring 2014



<http://www.aese.psu.edu>

AESE Strategic Plan

I. Executive Summary

The Department of Agricultural Economics, Sociology, and Education (AESE) was formed on July 1, 2012, as part of the restructuring of the College of Agricultural Sciences (CAS) and the merger of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology (AERS) and Agricultural and Extension Education (AEE). As a new unit created from two pre-existing departments it does not have a unique past history of strategic planning. Thus this is the first joint strategic plan that builds on the existing programs from the previous two departments and strives to create new partnerships and collaborations.

This AESE strategic plan has both thematic and operational goals. Thematic goals entail identifying specific scholarly substantive areas to address with our expertise across all missions with new initiatives in three thematic areas: agricultural and food systems, environment and natural resources, and human, community, and regional development. Operational goals relate to creating a functioning unit that encompasses the applied social sciences in the College and striving for excellence in focused, interrelated substantive areas. A total of eighteen goals are identified along with specific objectives, strategies, and actions.

II. Mission, Core Values, and Vision

Mission: We create and extend knowledge in the social sciences through nationally and internationally recognized research, teaching, and outreach activities. We achieve this through excellence in three key social science disciplines: Agricultural Economics, Rural Sociology, and Agricultural and Extension Education.

Values: AESE subscribes to core values that reinforce and emerge from its academic mission. These include a commitment to excellence, innovation, sustainability, and relevance in our scholarship; respect for diversity and difference in approaches to scholarship; collaboration and responsiveness to stakeholders; and transparency and inclusiveness in our operations.

Vision: Excellence and leadership in teaching, research, and outreach in applied social sciences within and across disciplines, programs, and thematic areas, domestically and internationally.

III. Strategic Planning Process

This strategic plan began with the announcement of a new department formed from the combination of two units. Subsequently, planning has continued through both formal and informal processes with an emphasis on broad participation and input. Mission, values, and vision were extensively discussed at a facilitated department wide retreat held in January 2013. Subsequently, the mission was voted on and the vision and values were discussed at faculty meetings. The department head, associate head, and elected faculty advisory committee (FAC) have led the formal planning process. The overall departmental plan is informed by component planning efforts focused on issues specific to the three core disciplines (also called clusters: Agricultural & Resource Economics, Agricultural and Extension Education, Rural Sociology), Extension and the disciplinary and interdisciplinary instructional programs. The component planning was organized and led by the appropriate cluster representative, committee chair or educational program coordinator. Department-wide planning included analysis and incorporation of portions of the component plans and integration by the FAC, with participation and feedback from the entire faculty. Faculty meetings, forums, and a half day retreat have been used to generate ideas, discuss issues, and

ultimately to develop and determine support for initiatives and goals. Facilitators from Penn State's Office of Planning and Institutional Assessment (OPIA) were engaged to assist in planning and facilitating department-wide processes.

IV. Achievements under the Current Plan

As a newly formed department, there is no current plan under which to report achievements. A major accomplishment is the formation of the new unit in response to the Core Council and the CAS reorganization and the growing areas where we are successfully working together and integrating our scholarship. The new unit has identified three signature themes that cut across the disciplinary clusters: Agricultural and Food Systems, Environment and Natural Resources, and Human, Community, and Regional Development. These are described in greater detail in Section V.A. The new unit builds on the foundations of strong and successful programs and faculty from the prior units; their accomplishments give history and context to the new unit. At the same time, recognized unit strengths have resulted in the addition of several new programs to existing and established programs. The Entrepreneurship and Innovation (ENTI) program is now housed in and under the leadership of AESE. Recent approval of the ENTI minor and program efforts involving students (Ag Springboard, Harbaugh Forum) have led to emerging success. The Civic Engagement and Sustainability Leadership minors are now housed in AESE and directed by AESE faculty and staff. A new online version of the successful Agribusiness Management major is under development and will be launched through World Campus in 2014. Our combined programs produce the largest number of baccalaureates in the college (almost 25%), the most PhDs granted in the College over the last ten years, a large and diverse portfolio of externally funded research, innumerable contributions to state extension programs, and substantial service across the college, university, and beyond. The first AESE annual report from 2012-13 presents an extensive list and baseline information about the unit's achievements in terms of our research, teaching, and outreach missions at the time of our formation.

In addition to research, teaching, and outreach contributions furthering the College and University's core mission, numerous faculty members provided important service across the college, university, the Commonwealth, nationally and internationally. Our faculty have taken on PSU leadership roles as heads and members of departments, centers and institutes (Women's Studies, Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, Environment and Natural Resources Institute, Center for Economic and Community Development, Consumer Services Information System, Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness, Better Kid Care) and dual title graduate degree programs, Faculty Senate service, Extension leadership, CoAS assistant and associate deans, University Vice Provost, UNESCO Chair program, among others. Further, our faculty are active leaders in their scholarly societies, on editorial boards, and as members and leaders of U.S. and international policy and review panels.

V. Strategic Opportunities and Challenges

A. Thematic areas for Research, Education and Extension/Outreach

The department has identified three thematic areas that form the basis for identifying future directions, opportunities and challenges for the social sciences represented by AESE in the College of Agricultural Sciences. Bridging all three are unique capabilities and domains of expertise on which we will capitalize in the years ahead.

Most issues and problems facing society involve multiple, interrelated processes calling for multidisciplinary efforts to address these societal concerns. Our faculty conduct science that increases basic understanding of the causes and consequences of societal issues, and contributes to policy formation, decision making, and evaluation. The optimal design and delivery of programs is

one key element of these efforts. A second is evaluating policy and programs to measure the impact (both positive and negative) to see if intended targets and goals are met and to identify and determine the impacts of unintended consequences of policy. Additional cross-cutting strengths include international scholarship and programming in highly advanced and impoverished regions alike; expertise in spatial data modeling and analysis which faculty apply to research on topics including land use, population health and well-being, and community and economic development; and the social and economic implications of disparities in opportunities, income, wealth, influence and resources.

The three thematic areas are:

Agricultural and food systems. The food and agricultural system is a substantial share of the U.S. economy, accounting for nearly one-fifth of the GNP and close to 25% of the labor force. It is comprised of vital market inter-connections among food producers, processors, distributors, retailers, consumers and regulators with a goal to create a wholesome, safe, affordable, and accessible food supply for all. Given rapidly changing science and technology and this system's crucial importance for economic, environmental, and human well-being, scholars are challenged to develop and adopt new theories, analytical methods and strategies to address the issues facing the food system and a wide array of non-market stakeholders and society at large. In addition to food, the system can create undesirable outputs such as waste and pollution. The functioning of the system, and the ways in which it both influences and reflects the food choices of consumers, defines one of the interfaces between food and health. In the next five years, we will capitalize on existing strengths to address the goals below through research, education, and outreach.

Environment and natural resources. Environmental assets of land, water and air are impacted by all human activity, with current issues related to energy production, water use and contamination, and climate change. Environmental change, in turn, impacts human welfare, ecosystem services, and the integrity of ecological systems upon which we depend. As the world population grows and increases stress on our natural systems, the choice and design of public policies for energy, water, and land use have moved to the forefront of environmental science research and policy challenges. Among these challenges is evaluating economic efficiency, social equity and environmental sustainability in the face of impacts on human and ecosystem well-being. In the next five years, we will capitalize on existing strengths to address goals in research, education, and outreach.

Human, community and regional development. The social and economic well-being of children, youth and families is shaped by networks, opportunities and support systems that operate within communities and regional economies, both domestically and internationally. At the same time, individuals create and support resilient communities through civic engagement, leadership, entrepreneurship, and youth development. It is critical that scholars, policymakers, and citizens understand factors that promote positive human development at all stages of the life course. It is equally important to understand, how communities and regional economies can be developed to enhance opportunity, minimize risk and respond to change. Fostering healthy individuals and communities cuts across local and global levels, and requires knowledge of how processes of individual, community, and regional development interact. In the next five years, we will capitalize on existing strengths to address the goals below through research, education, and outreach.

B. Instructional programs: resident and online undergraduate and graduate programs.

AESE is home to five graduate programs, five undergraduate majors, six minors, and participates in five dual-degree programs (listed alphabetically).

Table 1. AESE Instructional Programs and Student Numbers		
Program	Degree(s) offered	Number of students*
Graduate Programs**		
Agricultural, Environmental and Regional Economics (AEREC)	PhD, MS	37
Agricultural and Extension Education (AEE)	PhD, MS, MEd	27
Applied Youth, Family and Community Education (AYFCE)	MS, MEd	2
Community and Economic Development (CEDEV)	MPS	150
	Graduate Certificate	79
Rural Sociology (R SOC)	PhD, MS	40
Total		335
Undergraduate Program – Majors***		
Agribusiness Management (AG BM) in residence	BS	188
Agribusiness Management (AG BM) online	BS	Opens 9/2014
Agricultural and Extension Education (AEE)	BS, Teacher Certification	75
Agricultural Science (AG SC)	BS	126
Community, Environment and Development (CED)	BS	108
Total		497
Undergraduate Programs – Minors***		
Agribusiness Management (AG BM)		73
Agricultural Communications (AGCOM)		8
Civic and Community Engagement (CIVCM)		17
Entrepreneurship and Innovation (ENTI) (new program)		25
International Agriculture (INTAG)		34
Leadership Development (L DEV)		19
<i>Minors in the process of being dropped</i>		
Environmental and Renewable Resources Minor (ERRE)		15
Youth and Family Education (YFE)		2
Total		193
* Student numbers are as of January 24, 2104		
** Graduate programs in AESE also participate actively in the following dual-title degree programs: Demography (AEREC, RSOC); Human Dimensions of Natural Resources and the Environment (RSOC); International Agriculture and Development (AEE, AEREC, RSOC); Operations Research (AEREC); Women’s Studies (RSOC).		
*** Number of students includes both officially declared majors and minors and students who have indicated their intention to declare and are advised in the department.		

C. Extension and Outreach

AESE is actively engaged in outreach and extension, extending our disciplinary-based knowledge within the state, nation, and internationally. Our outreach activities include statewide programs within Extension's Agricultural and Community Economic Development, and Family and Consumer Sciences areas, supported by faculty and staff both with and without formal extension appointments. Programs in these areas include farm and food business management, Ag Alternatives, new and beginning farmers, community decision-making, economic development, land use planning, building intergenerational relationships, diversity education, and financial and consumer literacy. AESE has active involvement in other Extension Priority Programs, including youth development, water quality, ag profitability and Marcellus shale.

Our extension and outreach activities include numerous programs and centers that work directly with stakeholders and others, such as Better Kid Care, the Center for Economic and Community Development, Childcare and Youth Training and Technical Assistance Program, Consumer Services Information System, the Environment and Natural Resources Institute, the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, Operation: Military Kids, the Pennsylvania Rural Leadership Program, PROSPER: Promoting School-Community-University Partnerships to Enhance Resilience, Your Money Your Taxes and the Pennsylvania Women's Agriculture Network.

VI. Summary List of Unit Goals

AESE goals and strategies are divided into functional and operational goals and strategies. Functional goals relate to areas of excellence across missions and disciplines and focus on advancing opportunities in the thematic areas. Operational goals entail completing the integration of department functions, governance, and operations. In addition, sub-units in the department (three disciplines and related education programs, two interdisciplinary education programs, and two state extension teams) have developed strategic plans that formed the basis for discussions that led to the department-wide plan. Sub-unit plans are posted on the department intranet and are available upon request.

This section lists the goals for the department organized by thematic area and mission. Details on objectives, strategies and actions or metrics for each goal follow.

A. Thematic Initiative Goals

AESE strives for excellence and leadership in three thematic areas – Agricultural and Food Systems, Environment and Natural Resources, and Human, Community, and Regional Development. These encompass applied social science scholarship across disciplines and missions. We advance discovery and dissemination that contribute to basic understanding of the issues, policy formation, decision-making, and evaluation.

Thematic Area: Agricultural and Food Systems

Encompasses scholarship on the functioning and sustainability of the agricultural and food system, the ways in which it both influences and reflects food choices and health outcomes, and presents opportunities for entrepreneurial and innovative activities.

Initiative 1: Food, Behavior, and Health

1) **Goal:** Become a center of excellence for scholarship on food, behavior, and health.

Initiative 2: Entrepreneurship and Innovation

2) **Goal:** Grow and disseminate the Entrepreneurship and Innovation body of knowledge in food, agriculture and bio-renewables.

Initiative 3: Food Security and Food Systems Sustainability

3) Goal: Assume a leadership role in consolidating, coordinating and catalyzing social science centered scholarship, policy and action on food security and food system sustainability.

Thematic Area: Environment and Natural Resources

Seeks to enhance scholarship related to the ways in which human activities and social and economic systems (at multiple scales) influence, and are influenced by, the natural environment and the use of natural resources.

Initiative 1: Human Activity and the Environment and Natural Resources

4) Goal: Become a leader in coordinating and conducting research, and disseminating knowledge on the interrelationships between human activities and the environment and natural resources.

Initiative 2: Climate Change

5) Goal: Lead in developing disciplinary and interdisciplinary scholarship on integrated assessment of climate change.

Thematic Area: Human, Community, and Regional Development

Encompasses AESE scholarship on the positive development of individuals, families, communities and regional economies, and the interplay between processes of human, community and economic development operating at all scales.

Initiative 1: International Development

6) Goal: Become a central and indispensable contributor to research, teaching and outreach on sustainable global development.

Initiative 2: Build Capacity for Public Issue and Policy Analysis

7) Goal: Emerge as a nationally recognized hub for new research and outreach on pressing economic and social development issues and policies.

B. Goals for Resident Education Programs

The overriding mission of our resident education activities is to position students for successful careers and engaged citizenship. We have identified three operational goals across all instructional programs to achieve this end.

8) Goal: Our graduates will be effective problem solvers, using disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge to address enterprise, organizational and societal issues.

9) Goal: Instructional programs will remain current and responsive to enterprise, organizational and societal needs.

10) Goal: Graduate instructional programs will provide the highest quality disciplinary and professional training.

C. Goals for Research

Our fundamental mission is to be recognized as addressing societal interests and needs, advancing the state of the art of our disciplines, and being relevant and timely in our work.

11) Goal: Support and increase collaboration across themes, disciplines, and functions in AESE and beyond to maximize our research potential in addressing societal needs.

12) Goal: Sustain and advance disciplinary excellence, research productivity, and innovative research directions.

D. Goals for Extension

Our fundamental mission is to draw upon our disciplinary expertise to address contemporary and emerging societal interests and needs.

13) Goal: Assess and focus extension and outreach programs in AESE.

14) Goal: Enhance integration of outreach and research.

E. Goals for Departmental Operations

A number of operational issues that arose related to the creation of the new department have been addressed. Some additional work is needed to complete the integration to ensure efficient operations, collective decision-making procedures that are transparent and effective, and appropriately allocate human and financial resources.

15) Goal: Finalize a governance and management structure that maintains and strengthens disciplinary excellence, encourages cross-disciplinary efforts, ensures efficient operations, provides procedures for effective decision-making and creates avenues for participation of faculty and staff.

16) Goal: Effectively engage with stakeholders to ensure our programs address the needs of enterprises, organizations, and society.

17) Goal: Provide a supportive, collaborative environment for scholarship that encourages faculty, staff, and student excellence and career success, and maximizes contributions to disciplines, students, the university and society.

18) Goal: Hire strategically to provide high quality teaching, research and outreach.

VII. Detailed Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Actions/Metrics

A. Thematic Initiatives

Thematic Area: Agricultural and Food Systems

Initiative 1: Food, Behavior, and Health

1) Goal: To become a center of excellence for scholarship on food, behavior, and health.

Objectives	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
<p>To build interdisciplinary teams (e.g., economists, sociologists, demographers, food scientists, nutritionists, and others) to conduct research on food, behavior, and health.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and offer data “brown bag” sessions where researchers experienced with specific data sets will discuss data access, use, and other orientation issues. • Facilitate data access for data “newbies” and support their initial efforts by partnering with or training new data users. • Invite outside speakers to share insights into data use and research with scanner and health data. • Form and found an official center or institute on food, behavior, and health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diet/behavior/ health brown-bags held with nationally recognized non-departmental speakers on this topic. • Faculty accessing and working with new data, and writing competitive proposals and/or publishing in high quality outlets from these data. • Center or institute formed or in process.
<p>To leverage new and existing data by merging scanner data on food purchases with nutrition data and geographic data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an “extra” data survey for Nielsen panelists, and partner with Nielsen to implement the survey. • Collaborate with USDA-ERS staff (or others) who have similar data merging efforts underway. • Hire a dedicated staff person or post-doc to lead the efforts in merging data sets, and training new users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey funded, developed, and/or implemented. • Number of active or completed USDA-ERS collaborations and high quality publications on food/ behavior/health. • Generate funds to hire a staff person or post-doc to lead data efforts.
<p>To internationalize efforts on food, behavior, and health.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with international researchers to access international data sets similar to the consumer scanner data available at Penn State. • Compare food and health behavior in the U.S. with other countries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International collaborations initiated and proposals written. • Number of studies/proposals and publications that investigate international aspects of food, behavior, and health.

Initiative 2: Entrepreneurship and Innovation

2) Goal: To grow and disseminate the E&I body of knowledge in food, agriculture and bio-renewables.

Objectives	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
<p>Conduct research to grow the E&I body of knowledge in food, agriculture and bio-renewables (FAB).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the characteristics of successful innovation networks in FAB and best implementation practices. • Examine entrepreneurship and sustainability in FAB • Investigate, determine and disseminate best practices for intrapreneurship and innovation with existing FAB organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of innovation network projects and funding through the College’s E& I network and Centers. • Work with and support the extension entrepreneurship program priority team. • Examine entrepreneur characteristics, contributions, commitment, and decision-making to sustainability and their linkages with firm practices and performance.
<p>Be the center of activity for E&I in the College of Agricultural Sciences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host student programs to increase student awareness and engagement for E&I. • Be a leading participating college cluster in the University wide Minor in Entrepreneurship and Innovation (ENTI). • Facilitate engagement and interaction of students, faculty and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of facilitated student centered events and competitions supporting entrepreneurship awareness, interaction with mentors, and project development. • Administer, teach, and lead E&I undergraduate program activities within the agricultural science domain.
<p>Facilitate the research commercialization process for researchers in the College of Agricultural Sciences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide and facilitate mentoring opportunities for research commercialization and entrepreneurship. • Increase Intellectual Property (IP) and Tech Transfer activities for the College working with OTM and affiliates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate information on best practices for IP generation, protection and commercialization services offered via University offices and incubator programs. • Coordinate faculty and student mentoring with alumni; number of students matched with a mentor. • Conduct commercialization and innovations workshops. • Enhance industry relationships and direct an industry sponsored research program for the College; specific industry partners engaged in this program.

Initiative 3: Food Security and Food Systems Sustainability

3) Goal: To assume a leadership role in consolidating, coordinating and catalyzing social science centered scholarship, policy and action on food security and food system sustainability.

Objectives	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
Build a social science learning community on food security and sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold internal-to-PSU annual workshops on this topic for faculty and students to share relevant research. • Develop a proposal for a Rock Ethics program cofunded position in AESE that would address food systems ethics in conjunction with appropriate disciplinary foci. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty and graduate student participation. • Academic collaborations that emerge. • Position proposal developed and submitted.
Link household food behavior with household food insecurity, geographic indicators of food deserts, and other indicators of community health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop empirical models and methods, including spatial methods, to analyze food insecurity and household behavior. • Utilize the new Census Research Data Center to fine tune geographic factors and create novel data sets to conduct research on this topic. • Validate data-driven results and explore out-of-data issues using qualitative research methods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDC data used as basis to write proposals and publications on food/behavior/ health projects. • Qualitative studies undertaken and integrated with results from secondary data analyses.
Bring together key internal and external actors in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devote one ME John Seminar/year to a noted social science guest speaker from outside Penn State, who will speak to some facet of food security/food systems sustainability. • Convene a symposium on the topic that brings key representatives of agencies and/or funders to Penn State to present what they are doing, opportunities for collaboration and/or funding, and learn more about the relevant work of PSU faculty and graduate students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminars held. • Symposium organized and number and range of participants. • Follow-on collaborations, projects or publications in high quality outlets that result.
Organize informal working groups within AESE related to specific sub-topics within the initiative area (e.g. ag & food trade; food vs. biofuels).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce and disseminate policy briefs and position papers on these topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number, kind, and placement of outputs. • Media uptake, output dissemination.

Thematic Area: Environment and Natural Resources

Initiative 1: Human Activity and the Environment and Natural Resources

4) Goal: Become a leader in coordinating and conducting research, and disseminating knowledge on the interrelationships between human activities and the environment and natural resources.

Objectives	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
<p>Coordinate and strengthen capability in spatial analysis of land/water issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify strengths, gaps and opportunities in existing research capabilities on spatial analysis within department, College and University. • Identify opportunities for collaboration within department. • Explore use of “big data” and visualization techniques to study these issues. • Take leadership in multidisciplinary proposals to increase capacity for and use of spatial analysis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct and distribute inventory of existing capabilities. • Explore formal relationships across units to leverage unique abilities and resources. • Integrate with current research. • Identify potential funding and data sources. • Develop multidisciplinary teams and submit competitive proposals. • Publish in high-quality outlets.
<p>Strengthen involvement of stakeholders in defining research agenda and carrying out research.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify relevant agencies, panels and match to faculty expertise to increase faculty serving on science and advisory panels. • Reach out to affected populations to collaboratively identify research needs (shared discovery). • Seek seed funding to identify emerging research issues. • Increase communication and seek resources to support projects that combine research and outreach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty serving as members of relevant science and advisory panels to agencies, NGO’s. • Existing and future projects that incorporate input from affected populations (e.g., stakeholder advisory panels). • Competitive proposals submitted that include both outreach and research functions and faculty. • Number of publications in high-quality outlets incorporating integrated projects.

Initiative 2: Climate Change

5) Goal: Become a leader in developing disciplinary and interdisciplinary scholarship on integrated assessment of climate change.

Objectives	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
Strengthen department and College research and outreach on adaptation to climate change of agricultural and forest ecosystems and the related industries and households that depend on those ecosystems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish relationships with collaborators in CAS and other Colleges. • Enhance opportunities for sharing, discussion and development of research ideas and projects. • Provide leadership in building multidisciplinary research teams and projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in seminar series. • Conduct workshops and seminars drawing on disciplinary strengths from across CAS and other colleges. • Develop active multidisciplinary teams. • Competitive proposals submitted by disciplinary and multi-disciplinary teams. • Publications in high-quality outlets authored by members of multidisciplinary teams.
Strengthen department and College research and outreach on water quantity issues related to climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop expertise in the impacts of climate change on water quantity and the implications for households, institutions, and societies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore means to enhance capacity for research and outreach on this topic.
Establish department as a leader in the University in research and outreach related to climate change impacts, mitigation strategies, and policy design.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate existing PSU resources and expertise in integrated assessment modeling and ecosystem services valuation and impact assessment, and policy analysis and mechanism design. • Encourage faculty and students to present in existing seminar series. • Develop project teams. • Identify appropriate funding opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage faculty and student participation in existing seminar series (such as EEEPC). • Conduct workshops and seminars that draw on disciplinary strengths and interdisciplinary collaborations. • Identify collaborators in other units. • Develop active project teams and submit competitive proposals. • Publications in high-quality outlets authored by members of teams.
Develop and disseminate research to assess policy approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct disciplinary and interdisciplinary research on policy design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publications in highly-visible outlets. • Communications (e.g., presentations, testimonies) to policy-makers and relevant agencies and organizations.

Thematic Area: Human, Community, and Regional Development

Initiative 1: International Development

6) Goal: Become a central and indispensable contributor to research, teaching and outreach on sustainable global development .

Objectives	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
Strengthen capacity for research in sustainable global development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Build on the UNESCO Chair Program to foster international research, teaching, and outreach. •Focus on a community-based development framework to address the thematic issues of the UNESCO program (governance/civic engagement, health/nutrition, social/economic innovation, and natural resources/sustainability). •Catalog existing research and develop an active university-wide research agenda and network in the above areas. •Encourage/support research and outreach in international policy formation and evaluation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Work with Provost, Office of Global Programs, College Office of International Programs and Associate Dean for Research, and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Teaching to garner resources to support UNESCO Chair Program activities. Confer with UNESCO. •Resource on existing research produced and disseminated. •Document faculty and graduate students included in the university-wide research network. •Competitive proposals and high quality publications in international policy formation and evaluation developed. •New collaborations established and inter-disciplinary proposals on global sustainability submitted.
Evaluate feasibility of establishing an institute for international agriculture and sustainable development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Work with the College Office of International Programs (OIP) to explore the establishment of an institute for international agriculture and sustainable development to catalyze scholarly exchange and inter-disciplinary research proposals in this area. •Establish such an Institute, if it is deemed feasible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Take leadership in partnering with Office of International Programs, College administration, and College faculty working in this area to pursue this goal.
Strengthen capacity for training in sustainable global development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Identify existing educational programs, explore sharing courses and consider feasibility of developing an online and resident education teaching agenda. •Expand/enhance and create educational programs with an international focus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Complete the development and implementation of an International Development Graduate Certificate within CEDEV and consider a stand-alone online International Development MPS. •Explore viability of Global Teacher Certificate option as part of AEE undergraduate program.
Improve global competence and employability of AESE graduates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Inventory stakeholder and employer needs and current AESE international activities in undergraduate and graduate programs and to better identify specific skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Survey relevant stakeholders for each program to determine expected intercultural and international knowledge and experiences required of our

	<p>and areas of expertise needed for our students to successfully compete in a global marketplace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Maximize opportunities for contextually relevant international experiences worldwide. 	<p>graduates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Identify faculty that are interested and active internationally to obtain their views on essential experiences our graduates must have. •Identify faculty with international activities and develop opportunities for students to interact with these faculty to increase student exposure to international research, experiences and opportunities in sustainable development. •Identify internal and external funding sources for international research, teaching, outreach and student mentorship. <p>Number of international experiences among faculty, staff and students.</p>
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Initiative 2: Building Capacity for Public Issue and Policy Analysis

7) Goal: Emerge as a nationally recognized hub for new research and outreach on pressing economic and social development issues and policies

Objectives	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
<p>Increase the unique impact and timeliness of research on public issues and policy analysis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Work with AESE’s Center for Economic and Community Development (CECD) to identify current policy-relevant issues. •Use the unique data available through the PSU Research Data Center (RDC) to conduct new research on social and economic problems, including those that estimate and project local and regional policy impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the development of policy-relevant proposals that use data available through the RDC; number of proposals submitted for funding. • Publications using RDC data to estimate policy impacts.
<p>Increase the dissemination of high impact policy-relevant research and practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Work with CECD to develop new informational materials and develop a dissemination plan to make reports on pressing public policy issues accessible. •Increase visibility of CECD with policy makers at local, state and national levels. •Incorporate research and practice knowledge generated from existing extension and outreach programs (e.g. Better Kid Care, Military Family Readiness, Economic and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Develop an electronic working paper series, fact sheets or briefs, and supplemental materials to convey key points of policy-oriented research and outreach/practice. •Enhance human resources to prepare reports and materials. •Meet with faculty and educators working in existing extension and outreach programs to identify collaborations to produce policy-relevant reports and

	Community Development extension) into policy-relevant reports and briefs.	briefs. Document downloads, citations, and usage of policy papers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Number of invited policy papers and research reports. Policy papers published in leading outlets.
Take better advantage of multi-disciplinary character and capacity of AESE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Foster inter-disciplinary communication and collaborations among faculty and students doing work in this area to ensure relevant research and policy issues are addressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Establish a faculty and student working group in this area. •Number of faculty and students affiliated with the CECD. •Hold regular meetings of CECD affiliated faculty.
Enhance student involvement in our research and dissemination work in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reach out to all relevant graduate and undergraduate programs in AESE and beyond to recruit students to work as interns, for course credit and/or as volunteers on these projects. •Grow resources to support student involvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Increase visibility of student productivity through professional outputs and presentations on campus and beyond. •Establish a “Research Lab” to encourage shared-learning and team work and to facilitate inclusion of graduate and undergraduate students in research and materials development on public issues and policy analysis. •Number of students affiliated with CECD and listed as coauthors on publications.

B. Goals and Strategies for Resident Education Programs

The overriding mission of our resident education activities is to position students for successful careers and engaged citizenship. We have identified two operational goals to achieve this end.

8) Goal: Our students will learn to be effective problem solvers, effectively using disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge to address enterprise, organizational and societal issues.

Objectives	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
Regularly assess the quality and needs of existing undergraduate and graduate academic programs, and use that information in decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Develop and adopt clearly articulated impact/outcome and program quality measures, data collection and reporting methodologies to continually review and improve AESE graduate and undergraduate programs. •Seek feedback from potential employers about how to improve our educational programming. •Seek college support for external review of graduate programs, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Create an online syllabi library available to department faculty, staff and students. •Continue the AESE peer teaching review process and SRTE monitoring. •Survey employers and stakeholders. •Conduct reviews if receive CAS support.

	conducted over the five-year plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Track student job placements. •Conduct external review of at least one graduate program a year.
Conduct regular follow-up with alumni to determine program success, curriculum needs, and professional development opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Administer AESE alumni surveys to program graduates on a regular basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Analyze data and write and distribute summary report of survey results.
Strengthen AESE connections to potential employers to enhance the quantity and quality of professional development and internship experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Explore new strategies to match students to internships and track their progress and experiences. •Draw upon faculty relationships to build new partnerships with multiple companies/groups to support internship opportunities. •Create stronger contacts with the College internship office, the academic advisers, and internship coordinators for the minors. •Enhance scholarly integration of internships with educational programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Track number and diversity of student internships. •Provide opportunities for student scholarly reflection on internships. •Track student job placements. •Work with CAS internship coordinator to increase opportunities for students in AESE majors.
Explore additional study abroad opportunities, international experiences and funding options for these activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Assess the current international elements of each resident academic program, and identify possible improvements or needs. •Maximize awareness and use of funding sources to support student, staff and faculty participation in study abroad programs. •Provide opportunities for student scholarly reflection and sharing of these experiences. <p>See Goal 6 for additional strategies related to internationalizing educational programs and student experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Student conference/meeting to discuss these experiences (through CED, AGBM and AEE student clubs). •Encourage students to take advantage of international agriculture office and other funding and study abroad opportunities. •Number of AESE student international experiences sponsored by the College and Department.
Enhance opportunities for graduate and undergraduate student research and engagement outside of the classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Hold regular faculty-student meetings and forums to share and discuss on-going research activities. •Encourage faculty to identify and offer opportunities for undergraduate and graduate student research. •Encourage use of competitive funds to involve undergraduate students in applied research. •Encourage students to participate in CAS and university research fairs and other opportunities to present research. •Grow funds for student travel and presentations at professional meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Create a regularly updated ‘one-stop’ listing of student research opportunities, hosted in the AESE Undergraduate Office. •Invite undergraduates to AESE seminars. •Support CED research journal. •Support student presentations at professional and disciplinary conferences and through outreach forums. •Encourage student journal publications for research and outreach.

9) Goal: Instructional programs will remain current and responsive to enterprise, organizational and societal change.

Objectives	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
Respond to the changing instructional and program needs and demands of undergraduate and graduate programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct five- and ten-year projections and plan of faculty resources and instructional needs across all academic programs in AESE. • Use the projections and plan to identify and pursue high priority faculty positions to meet instructional needs. • Monitor faculty excellence and adaptability to changing student, program, and instructional needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic updated reports of instructional needs. • Proposals and requests for hiring submitted to the college. • Continue and further develop the AESE peer teaching review process. • Monitor SRTE reports.

10) Goal: Graduate instructional programs will provide the highest quality disciplinary and professional training.

Objective	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
Increase the quality and diversity of the applicant pool for all graduate programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate funding to implement strategies to increase the quality and size of applicant pools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased recruitment visits and activities. • Successful recruitment and enrollment of top student choices. • Increased diversity of graduate students.
Improve systems to track graduate student progress through the M.S. and Ph.D. granting programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with graduate program coordinators and staff assistant to develop tracking system. • Revise and update graduate program handbooks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain graduate student database. • Update handbooks yearly. • Number of student presentations, journal articles, and other scholarly outputs.
Strengthen faculty mentoring of graduate students for online and resident teaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek teaching assistantships and teaching opportunities for graduate students. • Expand pilot project of apprenticing graduate students as teaching assistants in a course prior to teaching it themselves. • Increase number of faculty offering this teacher mentoring opportunity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase numbers of students who have teaching assistantships and the numbers who take the opportunity to teach a course. • Number of faculty mentoring graduate students for teaching.
Seek additional sources of funding for graduate research and teaching assistantships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest new department resources when possible in funding graduate students. • Write graduate students into grants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased numbers of funded graduate students across the department.

C. Goals and Strategies for Research

Our fundamental mission is to be recognized as addressing societal interests and needs, advancing the state of the art of our disciplines, and being relevant and timely in our work.

11) Goal: Support and increase collaboration across themes, disciplines, and functions in AESE and beyond to maximize our research potential in addressing societal needs.

Objective	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
Create opportunities for engaging and sharing in ongoing research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold regular forums within substantive theme areas and across disciplines and functions to communicate and discuss opportunities for collaboration in research and extension. • Establish a seed fund for new intra-department ventures across disciplines and themes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See objective under department governance. • Seed fund establishment and disbursement.
Determine where collaborations occur currently and assess possibilities for enhancing these and building new collaborations within and outside AESE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and update network analysis of faculty collaborations to determine where collaborations occur currently, and identify areas for new collaborations within the department and across the college and university. • Take advantage of seed funding available through University Institutes and Centers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed and updated network analysis. • Track proposals submitted for seed funding and full proposals.

12) Goal: Sustain and advance disciplinary excellence, research productivity, and innovative research directions.

Objective	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
Sustain and encourage professional development opportunities. Support faculty research agendas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support faculty participation and travel for professional development activities, presentations, disciplinary, and interdisciplinary advancement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of professional development fund. • Numbers of publications in high quality outlets, presentations, disciplinary and professional service and honors.
Document and promote high levels of scholarly excellence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and reward publication in top tier peer reviewed journals (top 20% of their field; low acceptance rates, high impact factors, etc). • Encourage and reward funding through 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles published in leading journals. • Highly competitive grants obtained. • Research awards won. • Invited research presentations.

	<p>highly competitive and prestigious sources (ex., NSF).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable our faculty to be visible, recognized leaders in their fields of research. • Discourage publication in substandard outlets. • Encourage faculty leadership and participation on grants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations at professional meetings. • Faculty appointed or serving on the external advisory boards of funders, government agencies, etc. • Faculty serving as PIs and coPIs on grants. • Translational materials produced. • Number of downloads, citations, and usage of research publications (such as number of newspaper articles referring to the research). • Invited policy briefings, and other evidence that the research is contributing to public policy decision-making.
Mentor junior faculty for success in research and grantsmanship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a pool of senior faculty willing to review and provide comments on draft proposals and manuscripts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior faculty who read and review scholarly work of junior faculty.

D. Goals and Strategies for Extension and Outreach

The mission of our Extension and Outreach activities is to use our disciplinary expertise to address contemporary and emerging enterprise, organizational and societal interests and needs.

13) Goal: Assess and enhance targeted extension and outreach programs in AESE.

Objective	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
Assess AESE contributions and support to extension and outreach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify specific extension and outreach programming to which AESE contributes and levels and forms of AESE support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document contributions to extension in posted annual report.
Identify ways and incentives to encourage all AESE faculty to engage in extension and outreach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catalog existing outreach and extension activities conducted by AESE faculty, including informal activities conducted outside of the traditional Extension system. • Identify and address barriers and disincentives for faculty to participate in outreach and extension activities. • Establish a regular forum for bringing together faculty and extension educators to keep each other informed of ongoing projects and activities, and explore possibilities for collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posted annual report. • Discuss barriers with college extension administration. • Forum held, collaborations developed.

14) Goal: Enhance integration of outreach and research.

Objective	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
Proactively assess stakeholder needs, existing field-based and other resources available to support outreach and extension efforts, and alternative means of program delivery to identify areas where AESE can increase contributions to outreach and engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with stakeholder groups about their interests and needs. • Work with stakeholder groups to identify which of these can be best addressed by AESE faculty, extension associates and extension educators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacts (both one time, and on-going) with appropriate stakeholder groups. • Collaborative efforts with stakeholders to support outreach and extension program development and delivery.
Increase internal and external visibility of AESE extension program impacts and scholarship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly highlight existing outreach and extension activities in formal AESE communications to stakeholders and alumni. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of stories or highlights about outreach programs posted on the AESE website, in alumni newsletters, webinars, college materials, and other communications.
Increase joint research and outreach-oriented projects, and translational materials, such as publications, websites, presentations, videos.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage development of working groups that include research and extension faculty and educators to identify, develop and submit relevant and timely proposals and subsequent publications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal working groups created and sustained over time, number of participating faculty and staff. • Funded proposals that combine research and outreach related goals. • Projects combining research and outreach related goals. • Translational materials created.
Identify strategies to increase collaboration with other CAS department faculty, staff and county-based educators and staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate ways to integrate across functions, including involving extension faculty and educators in research and teaching activities, and teaching faculty in extension activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in partnerships of research and extension faculty and educators across missions.

E. Goals and Strategies for Departmental Operations

A number of operational issues arose prior to, during, and following the merger and the creation of the new departmental structure. Most of these have been addressed, yet some additional work is needed to complete the integration, ensure efficient operations, improve collective decision-making procedures that are transparent and effective, and appropriately allocate human and financial resources.

15) Goal: Finalize a governance and management structure that maintains and strengthens disciplinary excellence, encourages cross-disciplinary efforts, ensures efficient operations, provides procedures for effective decision-making and creates avenues for participation of faculty and staff.

Objectives	Strategies	Action/Metrics
Complete development of departmental governance structure and operating systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and finalize bylaws. • Establish charges and description of duties for all disciplinary clusters, department committees, programs, and subunits. • Complete the integration of the operations and management of the former two units. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed and posted bylaws, policies, and procedures.

16) Goal: Effectively engage with stakeholders to ensure our programs address the needs of enterprises, organizations and society.

Objectives	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
Evaluate and plan external communications and public relations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an external departmental advisory committee of key stakeholders, alumni, and others. • Assess interest in a departmental Communications Committee to determine needs and supervise external communications. • Consider creating an occasional webinar series for stakeholders, focused on current research, extension and education programs and translational issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External advisory committee established. • Made decision about creating a Communications Committee. • Assessed feasibility and interest in a webinar series.
Engage stakeholders in department activities and planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and strengthen alumni networks for each of our undergraduate programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of communications with and events held for alumni. • Numbers of alumni who participate in alumni network activities, such as subscribing to newsletters, participating in webinars, attending events, etc.

17) Goal: Provide a supportive, collaborative environment for scholarship, career success, and contributions to disciplines, students, the university and society.

Objectives	Strategies	Actions/Metrics
Seek improved ways to mentor faculty during the promotion and tenure process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess effectiveness of mentoring, examine different models. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment completed. • Existing mentoring approach revised, if appropriate, based upon assessment information. • Success in promotion and tenure, retention.
Support faculty in pursuit of awards, fellowships, and other recognitions of their accomplishments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a database of university and professional association awards. • Develop departmental mechanisms for increasing the nomination of a wide range of faculty for awards. • Regularly recognize and celebrate awards and other major accomplishments at faculty meetings and other forums. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of award nominations. • Awards publicly recognized and celebrated within the department.
Increase mutual respect and collaboration among faculty, staff, and students, across the disciplines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold regular brownbag luncheons of faculty to share and learn about each other's activities. • Continue holding regular department-wide social events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of brownbag lunches and other informal gatherings held. • Number of department-wide social events.

18) Goal: Strategically hire to provide high quality teaching, research and outreach programs.

Objective	Strategies	Action/Metrics
Add faculty and/or staff to build or rebuild areas of strength and maintain critical mass in key areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue co-hires when possible. • Identify future directions and areas to maintain or enhance discipline and program strengths and excellence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty searches and hires (requires CAS support). • Staff searches and hires.

F. Subunit plans for the disciplinary clusters (Agricultural & Resource Economics, Agricultural and Extension Education, Rural Sociology) and interdisciplinary programs (CED, CEDEV, Extension) are available on request.

VII - XI. Remaining items

7. Diversity planning. The Department contributes to college and university goals and challenges in a number of ways, most notably through scholarship that examines diversity in rural America and beyond, curricula that fosters U.S. and international cultural competencies (see goals and initiatives) and through an increasingly diverse faculty and student body. We will continue to support and strengthen these approaches to diversity planning during this strategic plan period and seek additional means to increase diversity where appropriate.

8. Undergraduate learning outcomes assessment. The five undergraduate programs have worked with the College of Agricultural Sciences to meet college and university learning outcomes goals and will continue to do so throughout the planning period.

9. Practices that promote integrity and ethical behavior. From instructional programs that emphasize integrity and ethical behavior to Scholarship and Research Integrity (SARI) training for graduate students, AESE upholds the highest standards for integrity and ethical behavior, incorporates these issues into its scholarship, and will continue to do so. We will be seeking a cohire with the Rock Ethics Institute and perhaps another unit within the college to better incorporate ethics issues in ongoing research, education and outreach.

10. Contributions to sustainability. Sustainability is an integral part of the curricula in AESE instructional programs and is a central concern of research, extension, and outreach agendas. See specific goals and objectives throughout the plan.

11. Key investments. These are scattered throughout the plan and represent areas of current and future strength. Identification of needed investments in faculty and staff will result from planned activities to assess instructional needs and gaps in essential research expertise.