

**Strategic Initiatives**

# **PLANNING GUIDE**

**2021-2024**

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**This is the first in a recurring series of major planning efforts for the FY21/24. These are done at three-year intervals. Year one includes creation and adoption of the three-year plan; year three includes assessment and evaluation.**

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**Consideration of various forces anticipated during the next three years has led to the following assumptions.**

- /// **University Enrollment.** Considering current demographics, enrollment is projected to drop about 1-2%/year in the next three years.
- /// **Unit Enrollment.** Our current enrollment is 1740 undergraduates and about 236 graduate students. Our ideal enrollment should be about 10% higher (roughly 200 more students). We need to work towards this mark over the next three-five years.
- /// **Economic Projections.** Institutional financial fortunes are linked to external forces. Though impossible to predict, given the current state of the economy, budgets are likely to tighten.
- /// **Institutional Resources.** West Virginia University has always run on a very “tight” budget. Large sums of additional monies are considered unlikely.
- /// **Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design Resources.** Significant gains in resources could be improved in the planning period by attention to three main foci:
  - /// **Focusing on student recruiting and retention.** WVU is very dependent on student tuition and fees (roughly 84% of our budget comes from tuition and fees). As mentioned in the unit enrollment statement, increasing our students by 10% in the next 3-5 years is crucial to increasing our support.
  - /// **Focus our programs; what we should do, what we should not do.** To make better of the resources we have we need to critically evaluate all aspects of our programs/majors and determine efficacy.
  - /// **Focus on research.** We need to successfully compete for external grants; doing our part to maintain WVU's Research I rank.

**An intermediate set of goals of the Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design is set forth below.**

- /// To maintain the highest possible standards of quality instruction.
- /// To seek the greatest possible diversity of faculty, staff, students and their experiences.
- /// To foster inclusion in every undertaking.
- /// To create a positive atmosphere of collegiality and goals-based management; to foster the qualitative and quantitative growth of the Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design and its students, faculty and staff.

The faculty and staff of the Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design worked together and constructed the plan that follows. In November 2020, there was a call for strategic initiatives and 46 initiatives were submitted. In January 2021 all initiatives were presented over three listening sessions. At that point some initiatives were combined, and others gained team members. Action Plan Teams formed and began to develop a plan for initiative execution. In February 2021 all initiatives were submitted to become part of our first Davis College Planning Guide. Included herein are the final **22 strategic initiatives**, each with a description and action plan.

**Review of the Previous Plan**

**\*This is the first planning effort. Future planning guides will include this review.\***

## TEACHING, CURRICULA, ONLINE PROGRAMS

### 1. ONLINE PROGRAM FOR EACH DIVISION

- // **Team Members:** L. Williamson, J. Anderson, M. Strager, L. McDonald, H. Ghadimi, J. Jaczynski
- // **Description:** As fully online programs grow at WVU, it's incumbent on Davis College, and each of the Division Directors, to come up with a plan for a fully online program that their division "owns."
- // **Action Plan:** Meet on a quarterly basis to discuss all things online at Davis College. Create an online Virtual Campus/Website with all things online, courses, certificates and fully online programs. Create online program assessment plans that will be implemented once online programs are launched. Ensure there are faculty resources/training for both new faculties teaching online and current faculty who are moving to an online modality. Ensure that the process for creating online programs is clear — create a process sheet that delineates all aspects of the online program development process. By the end of the 3-year period, at least 8 fully online offerings; 2 certificates, 4 bachelor's programs, 2 master's programs.

### 2. UNDERGRADUATE RECRUITMENT: GROWING TRANSFER STUDENT ENROLLMENT IN DAVIS COLLEGE

- // **Team Members:** R. Conneway, L. Muncy, L. McDonald, N. Freshour, M. Minch, C. Smith, E. Purdue, C. Rota, J. McNeel, G. Dahle, K. Gazal, J. Schuler, B. Stephens, C. Moretz and T. Richmond.
- // **Description:** Investing time and resources strategically to grow enrollment through transfer student recruitment.
- // **Action Plan:** Our team will work together to efficiently review community college syllabi in batches and form draft articulation agreements. In year 1, we will: Focus our efforts on 3-5 top feeder schools: Garrett College, Blue Ridge CTC, Hocking College, Allegany College of MD, and TBD. Research additional schools to pursue that could help to increase our minority/diversity of transfer students. Discuss college culture regarding transfer students, program curriculum as it relates to transfer feasibility, amendments to Degreeworks curriculum to accommodate transfer credits, and evaluate the need for additional recruitment staff.

#### **The following team members will be responsible for:**

- // Louis McDonald – All PSS related courses
- // Emily Purdue – All AGEE and EDUC related courses
- // Colleen Moretz – All DS, FDM, ID, LA related courses
- // Nettie Freshour – All HN&F related courses
- // Margie Minch – All ANS and BIOC related courses, excluding Equine
- // Crystal Smith – All Equine related courses
- // Chris Rota – All WFR related courses
- // Barry Stephens – All REM related courses
- // Greg Dahle, Kathryn Gazal, Joe McNeel, Jamie Schuler – DFNR related courses, excluding WFR
- // Renee Conneway and Lauren Muncy – Contacting community colleges, reviewing course catalogs and requesting needed syllabi, disseminating information, assigning tasks, submitting equivalencies, and drafting articulations.
- // Taylor Richmond – Liaison to OUR and coordinating addition of course equivalencies to transfer database.

*The team will meet monthly during the first year.*

### 3. EVOLUTION AND REVOLUTION OF FORESTRY, WOOD AND WOOD-BASED COMPOSITES

- /// **Team Members:** G. Oporto-Velásquez, K. Gazal, D. McGill, L. Denes
- /// **Description:** To revitalize and promote Forest Resources Management (FRM) and Wood Science and Technology Programs (WST) with the aim to improve student's retention and attract more students to these fields.
- /// **Action Plan:** Our team will work with the Community and Industry to engage young minds in natural resources with emphasis on Forestry and Wood Sciences.

**The following are the main topics to be considered in a 3-year period:**

- /// Prepare a Forest Products week "Essay Contest" and invite to participate children from elementary, middle and high school levels.
- /// Prepare simple, but attractive videos to promote FRM and Wood Sciences.
- /// Prepare short videos from industry representatives to promote opportunities available for students in the areas of FRM and WST.
- /// Organize a summer camp to promote FRM and WST areas.
- /// Prepare one online class that includes FRM and WST topics and offers it for high school students through WVU.
- /// Compile attractive material for K-12 teachers in the areas of FRM and WST.
- /// Promote International opportunities to students in general through the Special Topic Class: Sustainable Forestry in Chile.
- /// Maintain social media accounts Facebook and YouTube for FRM and WST, and add Instagram.
- /// Reinforce Hands-on in our wood laboratory through the Forest Products Society student Chapter. Small projects, big results.
- /// Open wood laboratory program – the wood laboratory will be open every semester for all interested high school students or groups with short presentations, attractive experiments, handicrafts, etc. – a kind of Hands-on Day!

**Main Milestones (tentative):**

- /// We increase the visibility of FRM and WST 100%.
- /// We increase the retention of our WST students from 65% (avg 5 years) to 85%.
- /// We increase the recruiting of WST 50% the first year and 100% the third year.
- /// We increase the recruiting of FRM 30% per year.

### 4. EXPLORE THE CREATION OF A MASTERS-LEVEL GRADUATE PLANNING DEGREE

- /// **Team Members:** M. Dougherty, H. Ghadimi
- /// **Description:** A master's degree in Environmental and Community Planning degree would complement the existing (and relatively new) bachelor's degree in the field. This would create an option for students who have already completed their undergraduate education. Initially, the effort will examine demand for a graduate planning degree and what assets are already present in Davis and throughout WVU that could be applied to such a degree.
- /// **Action Plan:**
  - /// Conduct market analysis for degree
  - /// Review existing graduate courses in Davis
  - /// Examine senior-level courses in Davis that could be adapted for graduate credit
  - /// Seek potential partners in other WVU colleges

- // Evaluate graduate courses from potential partners for fit into the proposed curriculum
- // Determine what is missing – courses and other resources – to create a robust graduate degree and one that could potentially gain accreditation)

## 5. DAVIS ADVISING TASKFORCE

- // **Team Members:** K. Barnes, A. McLaughlin, N. Freshour, G. Dahle, J. Blythe, H. Stephens, M. Minch, K. George, A. Welsh, B. Stephens, L. McDonald
- // **Description:** Improving the undergraduate advising experience for both students and faculty/advisors
- // **Action Plan:** Our team will provide recommendations on advising and mentoring structures that could be implemented in the individual units. Initially team members are gathering data from other departments at WVU and at peer institutions on advising and mentoring processes and compensation. Students will also be surveyed for their experiences as well as to explore their preferences in the advising process. These will be reviewed in context of what is the current practice in each division and how that could be improved. Evaluation of advising and compensation in annual reviews will also be reviewed, discussed, and recommended for a central process in the college.

## 6. CURRICULUM OVERLAP

- // **Team Members:** L. McDonald, K. Barnes, R. Conneway
- // **Description:** Identify area of curriculum overlap to improve efficiency, program delivery, and student outcomes.
- // **Action Plan:** Identify relevant majors, develop curriculum maps, identify areas of significant overlap; Create plans to more efficiently meet program goals.

## RESEARCH

### 1. ESTABLISHING A PRE- AND POST-AWARD OFFICE IN THE DAVIS COLLEGE

/// **Team Members:** J. Wang, M. Wilson, L. Elbakidze, C. Lituma, R. Burns, K. Hartman

/// **Description:** Obtaining externally competitive grants is getting more and more challenging to faculty nowadays. This initiative is to propose to establish a pre- and post-award office in the Davis College. This office can not only facilitate faculty in grants writing, budgetary preparation, but also facilitate faculty collaborations within the college and beyond, networking with funding agencies and stakeholders, and provide faculty necessary assistance in post-award management. Nationwide data indicate that this initiative would be able to dramatically increase the agricultural colleges' research capacity and the amount of grants dollars.

/// **Action Plan:**

/// **In 2021 spring**, initiate the plan to hire one full-time staff member in the ADR office to handle the daily operations, and hire an experienced and energetic person (part-time) to lead it;

/// **By 2021 summer**, develop a detailed work plan for next three years with clearly defined targets such as 30-50% increase of the 2020 level of the external grants received as a baseline in the college;

/// **By August 2021**, streamline existing pre- and post-award resources in the college. For example, WVU Center for Sustainable Biomaterials and Bioenergy (WVU-CSBio) has been proposed. The long-term goal is to systematically advance agricultural/forest biomass industries to establish a regional bioeconomy through a sustainable biomass to value-added bioproducts production system. The primary objectives of the Center are to provide research leadership to the agricultural and forestry sector and to promote the success of the sustainable biomaterials and bioenergy industry and economic development. The Davis ADR office and the WVU-CSBio can work together and take responsibilities for that effort;

/// **In 2021 fall** to implement the initiative, effectively communicate with leading researchers in the college to promote it, through meetings/calls on a regular basis and RFA-basis, while the office help and promote research capacity and experiences with all faculty in the college.

/// **Key Outcomes:**

- An Office for Research Management in the Davis College
- Created environment of research assistance and facilitation
- Increased research capacity and externally competitive grants dollars 30-50% by fall 2022 in relative to 2019/2020 level.

### 2. LARGE RIVERS INITIATIVE

/// **Team Members:** B. Murry, C. Arantes, K. Hartman, J. Anderson

/// **Description:** Develop a focused and collaborative research initiative dedicated to providing science to support socio-ecological management of large river ecosystems. The initial phase will be intended to put WVU "on the map", regionally, nationally, and internationally within the field of large river ecosystem management.

/// **Action Plan:**

/// **Year 1-2:** *Build regional, national, and international recognition of WVU large river research by joining existing networks and develop effective collaborations.*



- Join several regional, national, and international large river and freshwater ecology consortiums, to establish ourselves and create opportunities.
- Develop collaborations with social scientists from within FNR and externally.
- Submit a SESYNC and/or NCEAS proposal to address multifaceted, socio-ecological large river issues.
- Develop a WVU large rivers website.

## **// Years 1-5**

- Increase capacity by securing critical infrastructure and equipment (boats, trucks, field and lab equipment) and increasing staff (students and post docs) through securing external funds.
- Develop externally-funded collaborative projects regionally, nationally, and internationally.

## **// Long-term**

- After building greater recognition through sustained partnerships and research successes, transition our collaborative “lab” or initiative into a more formal entity (e.g. Center, Institute, whatever is most appropriate) and work with the appropriate University offices to secure private (i.e. donated) funds to purchase river front land on the Monongahela or Ohio River (or Cheat?) and build a modest research station and an operational/maintenance endowment. A companion goal would be securing LTER or similar long-term funding program aimed at socio-ecologic balance (large rivers optimize the need for human-ecological balance, perhaps more than any other ecosystem). The station would support a thriving WVU research, teaching, and outreach program, as well as provide opportunities for external and *international* researchers as part of the *Organization of Biological Field Stations* network.

## OUTREACH (INCLUDING EXTENSION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH)

### 1. ENHANCE OUR OUTREACH THROUGH SHARING WITH STAKEHOLDERS/ ORGANIZATIONS THE OUTCOMES OF OUR APPLIED RESEARCH AGENDAS OF THE RESPECTIVE DISCIPLINES/DIVISIONS ACROSS THE COLLEGE

/// **Team Members:** P. Lewis, J. Hubbart, S. Bowdridge, J. Yost, J. Yates

/// **Description:** To identify across the College up to six (9) broad based topics which could address a relevant need of our stakeholders/organizations within the state. We would plan, organize and schedule up to 3 of these topics annually over a three-year cycle. The planning would include the most appropriate location and time of year for the respective programs.

/// **Action Plan:**

- /// Utilize the available data base (Sharon and Tom) of all active research proposals involving faculty members within the College. These would include all Hatch, McIntire-Stennis and Animal Health Project proposals as well as all external funded projects and memorandum agreements.
- /// Assess the potential for each of these projects to have results which are/might be relevant to the needs of stakeholders/organizations within our state. Determine and group these project results within and across disciplines to facilitate the development of a single day symposium, workshop, field day to effectively cover a broad-based topic of relevant need for our stakeholders/organizations.
- /// Work with Division Directors and Faculty to identify their support of these applied research areas which address priority needs of our stakeholders and organizations within the state.
- /// Work with the research project leader(s) and college support staff to organize, plan and advertise appropriate events, seminars, workshops, field days, etc. Plan and schedule up to 3 programs annually over a 3-year period.
- /// Survey where possible the appropriate stakeholder group(s)/organizations for interest and input.
- /// Encourage research project faculty to publish applied versions of these research results in White papers, Fact Sheets and Bulletins available for distribution through commodity organizations, Extension offices and state/federal agency offices.
- /// Funding support would be minimal to facilitate fees for possible facilities, food/refreshment and printing of programs. My estimate would be up to \$1,200.00 per program for annual cost of \$3,600.00.

## FACILITIES

### 1. WETLAND AND STREAM MITIGATION ACTION PLAN

/// **Team Members:** J. Anderson, M. Wilson, W. Veselka

/// **Description:** Create a stream and wetland mitigation banking site as a Statewide demonstration area to highlight career opportunities in restoration, as well as a mechanism to promote conservation while monetizing marginally productive properties for landowners. Use the site to support and grow curriculum development for multiple disciplines, including but not limited to outdoor recreation, landscape design, energy land management, civil and environmental engineering, agriculture, and wildlife and fisheries. Promote outreach to highlight applied research and learning lab capabilities for students, and as avenue to promote and preserve the open-space and cultural heritage by promoting conservation easements as a financial asset to private citizens.

/// **Action Plan:** Our team will work with the Davis College administrative team, college faculty and staff to identify tangible curriculum activities in the mitigation process. Once identified (e.g., site feasibility, LIDAR flights to document conditions, design of stream structures, inclusion of recreation trails and opportunities, native plantings, monitoring, etc.), empower professors to develop lasting classroom deliverables to boost applied curriculum. Coordinate these deliverables through Strategic Initiative committee to issue RFP to mitigation bankers for consideration in supporting this initiative through charitable donation to WVU Foundation that will allow the development of a privately-funded mitigation on University properties; creating funding, learning, and research opportunities for Davis College and an example for West Virginia citizens that will elucidate this avenue for preserving open space and enhancing ecological functions while creating an income revenue stream from their properties.

### 2. FARMS FOR THE FUTURE

/// **Team Members:** S. Bowdridge, C. Smith, J. Moritz, P. Lewis, J. Yates, J. Yost, and B. Walsh

/// **Description:** To identify specific areas where our farms can differentiate themselves as unique teaching, research and extension centers and to develop our existing resources to address programmatic needs.

/// **Action Plan:** Our team will review documents developed by ANS and PSS divisions during last farm review that specifically describe areas of emphasis for farm use. After the review of these documents we will meet at least three times. These discussions will be used to generate plans that prioritize programmatic needs identified by divisions, provide a strategy for enhanced farm planning/operation communication and develop methodologies that better link course instruction with cropping and animal production systems. The goal of these meetings is to generate a draft proposal that can be presented to college administration and faculty for their review, comment and editing so that we can ultimately present a plan to the dean that would outline critical steps needed to ensure our farms success in fulfilling the college's programmatic needs.

## 3. OUTDOOR CAMPUS LEARNING LABS

/// **Team Members:** V. Haas, J. Anderson, R. Burns, J. Deng, H. Ghasimi, E. Orr, S. Selin, D. Smaldone, C. Pierskalla, S. Staniscia

/// **Description:** We combined several proposed strategic initiatives to form one outdoor campus learning labs team, with faculty able to provide each other feedback as we integrate student experiential learning into: campus sustainability planning, greenspace design, restoration planning, and recreational trails implementation.

Our team plans to address:

- /// campus wetlands and mitigation opportunities
- /// strategies for reducing campus stormwater impacts on Popenoe Run, Core Arboretum
- /// improved campus active commuting connections
- /// opportunities for enhancing sustainability of Evansdale campus
- /// enhanced small gathering spaces on Evansdale campus
- /// public interpretation of campus restoration and greenspace enhancement efforts

/// **Action Plan:**

/// **Year 1 (Planning):**

- Identify areas of expertise of team members, and types of student-driven projects they can contribute. Refine the description for our strategic initiative to encompass our broad range of expertise and potential class contributions.
- Assess current status of previous Evansdale campus as learning lab proposals. Review previous outputs above to begin to brainstorm priorities for the Fall 2021-Spring 2022 academic year.
- Develop a list of key stakeholders who can inform the master planning process, as the Initiative Progresses. Identify who can provide feedback / critique as guest reviewers for student projects.
- Ask for input on proposed student project priorities from facilities for Evansdale campus projects and from forest researchers and farm managers.
- Use stakeholder input to prioritize student-driven projects for the Fall 2021 semester, for faculty to integrate into their courses.
- Identify competitive opportunities, both for student recognition (design competitions, presentations) and potential funding sources (grants) and organize Year 1-Year 2 deliverables to fit these targets.

/// **Year 2 (Implementation)**

- Continue to court stakeholders for broad buy in to the process.
- Use student-driven work as “what could be” for grant applications that would fund professional design / planning work.

/// **Year 3 (Research/Assessment)**

- Form research teams to assess the impact of this work, on: campus sustainability planning, ecosystem function, and student learning outcomes.

## 4. DAVIS COLLEGE MAJOR RESEARCH INSTRUMENTATION

- /// **Team Members:** M. Gutensohn, T. Kijimoto, E. Pena-Yewtukhiw, J. Hubbart, J. Jaczynski, S. Bowdridge, J. Wang
- /// **Description:** We propose to develop strategies to provide access to, maintenance of available, and acquisition of novel major research instrumentation initiative required for ongoing as well as future research projects in the Davis College. We will also develop creative approaches addressing the conflict between research needs of and resources available for major research instrumentation.
- /// **Action Plan:**
  - /// **Inventory of existing major research instrumentation:**
    - *Availability*
    - *Access*
    - *Condition (service/repair)*
  - /// **Survey of needs for major research instrumentation:**
    - *New shared instrumentation*
    - *Service and maintenance of shared instrumentation*
    - *Technical support and training*
  - /// **Develop strategies to acquire, maintain and provide access to major research instrumentation:**
    - *Identify potential funding sources*
    - *Apply to equipment grant programs*
    - *Work with Davis College and WVU to approach potential sponsors*
    - *Establish internal equipment grant program*
    - *Identify potential revenue streams*
  - /// **Collaborate with WVU Shared Research Facilities**

## DEVELOPMENT/ADVANCEMENT

### 1. DAVIS COLLEGE STORE/SHOP/MARKET

- // **Team Members:** S. Verlinden, J. Moritz, J. McNeel, J. Schuler, G. Dahle, C. Moretz, K. Gazal, S. Mehta, E. Shorrock, E. Byrd, M. Haas, B. Walsh, A. Landis, N. Waterland, D. Singh-Knights, S. Grushecky, T. Green
- // **Description:** We propose the development and implementation of a Davis College shop/store/market that sells products and services generated in our teaching, research and outreach missions.
- // **Action Plan:**
  - // **Fact-finding**
    - We will invite people from around the US who manage successful college stores/shops/markets to help us inform on the location, name, products and services, pitfalls, and benefits of operating a store front in Davis.
    - We will reach out to partners and units throughout the university to inform them of our project. We will identify potential hurdles, collaborations and synergies to help us implement the Davis College Store concept.
  - // **Fund-raising:** We will identify internal and external resources and funding that can be used to launch a Davis College Store.
    - University resources (Launchlab, Provost office, etc.)
    - Donors and Foundation (Benedum, etc.)
    - Grants (USDA Workforce Development, etc.)

### 2. ETOWN-CITY/DEVELOPMENT AS A LAB

- // **Team Members:** H. Ghadimi
- // **Description:** ETown Integrates Six E Concepts: Energy, Environment, Electronic, Experimental, Educational, and Ecological (<https://ghadimi.davis.wvu.edu/research/e-town>)
- // **Action Plan:** Complete a Basic Study: *There are numerous questions about the scale and scope of the ETown project, and potential funding sources, not to mention a lack of clear delineation of the main features of the project and the way it may serve Davis, WVU and WV. The proposed 'Basic Study' answers some of the key questions outlined above and will: Present a clear disposition of ETown as a feasible project, forging a public-private partnership, with university/college offering brain power + land for development.*  
 The Basic Study will delineate and evaluate the two project conceptions below and outlines steps forward:
  - // **ETown as a new development**
    - Envision as an energy town, Science park + Smart city (City as a lab)
    - Envision as an Ecovillage, 'retirement community' for the like-minded people interested in sustainability (e.g. retiring WVU faculty members)
    - Envision as an E-retreat, smaller scale, high class resort (attractive to real estate developers and serving Davis/WVU sustainability goals)
  - // **ETown as a development guide for existing built environment**
    - Morgantown
    - WVU campus
    - Evansdale campus

### 3. **LOCALLY DRIVEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS FOR FOOD DESERTS AND FOOD INSECURITY**

/// **Team Members:** P. Kinder, L. Andress, P. Butler, M. Dougherty

/// **Description:** The purpose of this project is to address food deserts in West Virginia using a venture development organization (VDO) by means of a pilot project model. A food desert VDO ties together the resources available to help ventures/innovations that take account of local ideas and the needs of some of our lowest wealth communities experiencing declining socioeconomic circumstances. How we design and implement the VDO through a pilot is the central focus of efforts at this point.

/// **Action Plan:** The food desert VDO pilot project will bring about positive change by standing out as an example of how locally driven economic development solutions may work to solve food insecurity caused by food deserts.

*This pilot project will move the Food Desert VDO pilot forward by accomplishing the following activities with our partners:*

- /// Refine our goal for the food desert VDO pilot to illustrate what we want to achieve.
- /// Develop a screening set of criteria to guide our selection of a pilot community.
- /// Select the pilot community.
- /// Send in a team to begin a series of scoping and visioning sessions with the pilot community.
- /// Complete the design of locally driven economic development solutions for food deserts and food insecurity for the community.
- /// Attract impact funders for the locally created food desert VDO pilot.
- /// Highlight the pilot and these ideas in a communications and implementation toolkit for funders, informed citizens, and decision makers. This will happen through the use of the communications and implementation toolkit.

### 4. **CREATING AN INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR DIVERSITY IN NATURAL RESOURCES**

/// **Team Members:** K. Hartman, R. Burns, A. Barnes, J. Wang, P. Schaeffer, A. Collins, C. Arantes

/// **Description:** The overarching goal of this initiative is to lay the foundations for the Division of Forestry and Natural Resources and allied Davis College divisions to become “the center” for students in Natural Resources. A successful initiative would increase diversity at the University, College, and Division levels. Our goal would be to become the go-to institution for a diverse student body to obtain degrees in Natural Resources and from here to be recruited to professional positions and graduate programs nationally and internationally. The Initiative would be synergistic with the highly flexible and newly proposed B.S. degree in Natural Resources. The BS degree is supported by the Division of Forestry and Natural Resources, Plant and Soil Sciences, and Resource Economics and Management and is intended to provide students with a more broad and personalized training in Natural Resources than our traditional degrees. The Initiative would also benefit existing programs such as Environmental and Natural Resources Economics, Environmental Soil & Water Science, Forest Resources, Sustainability, Wildlife & Fisheries, Wood Science. To make the Initiative successful will require recruitment of diverse students, and to do that we need to change the face of the programs. Research has shown that students want to see themselves in the Faculty and Academic Recruiters that they interact with in deciding on, and in engaging in, an undergraduate program. The Initiative would pool resources from across several divisions and the Davis College and external grants to develop 2+2 programs, hire diverse faculty and recruiters to develop an international center for diversity in Natural Resources in the Davis College.

/// **Action Plan:** *To achieve this initiative will require several steps in the action plan:*

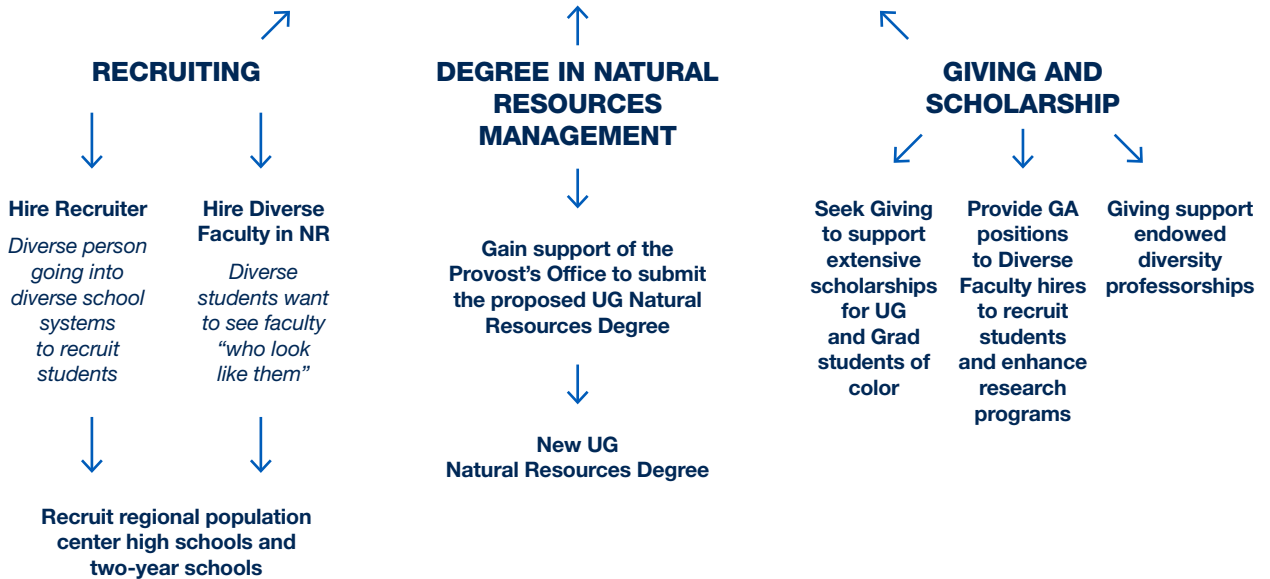
- /// With the support of Dean Donahue, Drs. Dahle, Smaldone, (ESWS and RESM - TBD), and Hartman re-submit the Natural Resources Management B.S. degree intent to plan in CIM. *(Note: the intent to plan for this proposed major was returned to us in January 2021 citing the need for this degree to be implemented in the Davis College Strategic Planning- hence the support request from Dean Donahue).*
- /// Identify current diversity metrics in Faculty and Student Body and establish benchmarks for evaluating success goals for the initiative. (Summer 2021)
- /// In 2021, A. Barnes develops Diversity in Natural Resources gift giving campaign to provide scholarships to diverse undergraduate students in Natural Resources majors.
- /// Dr. Burns/Dean Donahue hire a recruiter (of color) to specifically target diverse students from larger urban high schools and 2-year programs. (Summer 2021)
- /// A team of Co-PIs (initially led by Drs. Wang, Hartman, Burns, Collins, Arantes, and Stephanie Hines) will submit a USDA NIFA proposal to support a program to bring diverse High school students to WVU for a summer camp in Natural Resources with AP credit.
- /// A team of Co-PIs (initially led by Drs. Wang, Hartman, Burns, Arantes, and Stephanie Hines) will submit a USDA NIFA proposal to support the Natural Resources Degree. It will collaborate with others in the College and with individuals at targeted 2-year institutions (Allegheny College, Hocking College and 2-year schools in urban areas) to develop a 2+2 program from these schools into the NRM degree. (Early 2022 deadline)
- /// New recruiters target regional population center high schools and 2-year schools to set up visits (virtual or in-person) for prospective students in the NRM and other natural resources-related degrees. (Begins summer 2021)
- /// Dean Donahue / Director Burns approve a total of 3 diverse faculty hires in support of the Center for Diversity in Natural Resources. (Spring 2022))
- /// A. Barnes extends Diversity in Natural Resources gift giving campaign to provide endowed professorships to diverse faculty in Natural Resources. (2022-2025)
- /// New Faculty receive 1 GA position each specifically for a student identifying as diverse— the assistantship would be to aid in recruiting. GA thesis or dissertation would support the research endeavor while providing additional role models for the new, diverse NRM student body.

/// **Key Outcomes:**

- An Office for DEI in Natural Resources within the Davis College
- Created environment of inclusivity
- Increased research capacity with trans-disciplinary efforts
- Supports the Dean's broader initiative to focus on DEI efforts
- Increased student enrollment and diversity in the Davis College



**INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR DIVERSITY IN NATURAL RESOURCES**



Flow chart outlining the how the 3 aspects and action items support the International Center for Diversity in Natural Resources. Feedbacks exist between Giving and Scholarship that help to feed the Recruiting effort and success.

## COMMUNICATION

### 1. DAVIS COLLEGE BUDGETING

- // **Team Members:** D. Donahue, T. Green, M. Wilson
- // **Description:** Help administrative team, division directors learn more about the budgeting process for WVU and Davis College.
- // **Action Plan:** The team will work to provide training to the administrative team and each division director to have a basic understanding of the process for university and Davis College budgeting. We will have three workshops for discussion of these ideas during FY21.

### 2. CENTRALIZING EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION EFFORTS INTO AAO

- // **Team Members:** M. Haas, L. Willey, P. Butler, D. Smaldone, S. Verlinden, P. Byrd, S. Staniscia, C. Moretz, A. Uriyo
- // **Description:** Focus on improving and expanding experiential education opportunities at Davis College by shifting certain responsibilities to AAO and providing more resources to faculty members.
- // **Action Plan:**
  - // Learn about faculty experiences relative to offering and participating in experiential education opportunities.
  - // Identify existing opportunities and the obstacles that faculty face when offering them.
  - // Develop solutions to said obstacles. This could be handing off a portion of responsibilities to AAO office, removing financial barriers for students, providing funding opportunities for faculty, etc.
  - // Implement solutions.
  - // Evaluate the effectiveness of solutions and continue to adjust.
  - // Conduct research into experiential education at peer institutions and start to consider ways to expand our offerings.
  - // Create new opportunities.
  - // Repeat steps 2-5.

### 3. DIGITAL MARKETING

- // **Team Members:** L. Willey, R. Conneway, M. Haas, J. Hubbard and M. Olfert
- // **Description:** These days, almost everyone is virtually connected via social media, smartphones and Google searches. The Davis College stands to benefit from digital marketing, specifically in the area of student recruitment.
- // **Action Plan:**
  - // **Invite WVU digital marketing experts to educate our committee.** Tony Dobies, director of university marketing, and Rickie Huffman, senior marketing specialist, will help us better understand:
    - What is digital marketing?
    - What is the time commitment?
    - What manpower is needed?
    - Are there ways to expedite the process?
    - What is the budget commitment?

- Sample cost breakdown per platform
- How do we develop a plan and goals?
- How do we measure success?

**// In the first phase, we plan to focus on student recruitment for these majors:**

- Human Nutrition and Foods
- Environmental, Soil and Water Sciences

**// Conduct research to understand target audience, competition and select the best platform(s).**

- Develop content and schedule for ads or campaigns.
- Implement
- Analyze ad or campaign metrics (link clicks, reach, impressions, etc.).
- Reevaluate and assess.
- Repeat steps for one or two more majors/initiatives. Once we have a better understanding of digital marketing and some tangible metrics to look at, we can then move to potentially creating a more robust digital marketing plan.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (FACULTY AND STAFF)

### 1. EXPANDING DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) IN DAVIS COLLEGE

// **Team Members:** D. Donahue, M. Olfert, B. Walsh, L. Kass

// **Description:** Support of expanding DEI work through understanding, engagement and presence in our Davis College Community.

// **Action Plan:** Our team will work with the Davis College administrative team, college faculty and staff, graduate and undergraduate students and our extended community who engage/support our college, to provide more educational opportunities, understanding, and creation of a sense of community and belonging over the years to come. In Year 1, we will provide a college-wide survey seeking to understand the current variety of needs and presence of DEI in Davis College, with a goal of engaging input from all layers. This survey will help to lay the groundwork by informing the development of a strategic DEI plan for Davis over the next three years.

### 2. DAVIS COLLEGE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

// **Team Members:** P. Shingleton, K. Lawson

// **Description:** To maintain high standards of quality instruction and foster the qualitative and quantitative growth of faculty and staff, the Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design is launching a strategic initiative process beginning 2021. This professional development strategic initiative will require a continuous active partnership between leaders and employees as well as ongoing feedback and coaching to enable employees to be fully engaged and to reach their full potential. This initiative will aid in increasing employee appreciation and recognition efforts, fuel employee empowerment, drive coaching and feedback, and recognize and reward high performers, all areas which were considered low scoring behaviors during the previous WVU Culture Survey. This is a 3-year action plan with year three including assessment and evaluation.

// **Action Plan:**

// **Leadership will assess the needs of their division.**

- Through the strategic planning process, leadership will work to determine their division's goals and developmental needs over the next 3-year period. Leaders will also ensure their division goals align with the overall goals and objectives of the Davis College and the University.
- As part of this need's assessment, leadership should also consider any potential future retirements within the division in an effort to begin identifying workforce planning strategies.

// **Employees within each division of the Davis College will conduct a self-assessment of their qualifications, skills, interests, and professional development needs.**

- Employees will monitor their performance to include skills, abilities, strengths, weaknesses, and interests. This self-assessment will aid in determining a direction for the employee's professional development plan.
- The HR Partner will aid in identifying self-assessment tools to assist with this step through web-based research and consultation with WVU's Leadership and Organization Development unit. Employees may also gain insight into their performance by referencing previous performance evaluations.

## **// Leadership will develop an assessment of the employee's skills, interests, and professional development needs.**

- Based upon the employee's performance, leader observations, and the employee's self-assessment completed in step 2, leadership will determine if the employee's skills, abilities, interests and professional development needs align with the College/division goals and the leader's assessment of the employee.
- Leadership should consider if the employee's behavior and performance exemplify the core Mountaineer Values of Respect, Curiosity, Appreciation, Accountability, and Service.
- Leadership should determine if the employee is considered to be a valuable performer. Is the employee successful in the three aspects of work that are indicative of a valuable performer (job duties, demeanor, and people skills)?

## **// Leadership will meet with employee and work collaboratively to develop an Individual Professional Development plan.**

- Leadership will meet with the employee to review their self-assessment completed in step 2, and the leader's assessment of the employee's performance completed in step 3. An active partnership between the employee and leader will begin in order to develop a strategy that aligns both with the employee's professional development goals and the strategic goals and objectives of the College and division.
- Leadership will collaborate with the employee to determine development opportunities, required resources, and any potential barriers. Development opportunities could include, but are not limited to:
  - Educational opportunities through WVU Leadership and Organization Development
  - Developmental relationships (e.g. mentoring)
  - Participation in professional organizations and committees
  - New job assignments/projects
  - Increased duties and responsibilities
  - Research
- The HR Partner will provide coaching to leaders to ensure they are equipped to have these crucial conversations with employees. The HR Partner will also provide resources and tools to aid in the development of the employee's Individual Development Plan.
- After each developmental activity, leadership will conduct a post activity debrief meeting with the employee to determine 2-3 key learnings during the activity, how they will apply it to their work, assess progress towards goals, and provide coaching and feedback.

## **// Establish a timeline for accomplishing each step within the professional development initiative.**

- Determine the key milestones within this three-year initiative. In collaboration with the employee, identify completion dates for each step over the next 3-year period.

## STRUCTURE

### 1. FINALIZE COLLEGE STRUCTURE

- // **Team Members:** A. Collins, R. Burns, L. Elbakidze, R. Dailey, J. Wasserman
- // **Description:** Create need a final structure for the college that the faculty and staff can live with and operate under for at least the next few decades.
- // **Action Plan:** *There are two simultaneous action plans for this initiative:*
  - // Combine with the Elbakidze led initiative of “Keep disciplinary units autonomous” to meet with the Dean about his vision for the Davis College structure moving forward, and
  - // Work with unit representatives on the Davis College Faculty Executive Committee to push this committee to continue to move forward with the planning process college structure started at the college wide meeting in Feb 2020

### Forestry and Natural Resources

- // Anderson, J. (1, 2, 3, 4)
- // Burns, R. (1, 2, 3, 4)
- // Chaves-Arantes, C. (1, 2)
- // Dahle, G. (1, 2, 3)
- // Denes, L. (1)
- // Deng, J. (1)
- // Gazal, K. (1, 2, 3)
- // Grushecky, S. (1)
- // Hartman, K. (1, 2, 3)
- // Lituma, C. (1)
- // McGill, D. (1)
- // McNeel, J. (1, 2)
- // Murry, B. (1)
- // Oporto-Velasquez, G. (1)
- // Pierskalla, C. (1)
- // Richmond, T. (1)
- // Rota, C. (1)
- // Schuler, J. (1, 2)
- // Selin, S. (1)
- // Smaldone, D. (1, 2)
- // Veselka, W. (1)
- // Wang, J. (1, 2, 3)
- // Welsh, A. (1)

### Animal and Nutritional Sciences

- // Bowdridge, S. (1, 2, 3)
- // Dailey, R. (1)
- // Freshour, N. (1, 2)
- // George, K. (1)
- // Jaczynski, J. (1, 2)
- // Landis, A. (1)
- // Minch, M. (1, 2)
- // Moritz, J. (1, 2)
- // Olfert, M. (1, 2)
- // Purdue, E. (1)
- // Schaeffer, P. (1)
- // Smith, C. (1, 2)
- // Walsh, B. (1, 2, 3)
- // Yates, J. (1, 2)

### Plant and Soil Sciences

- // Gutensohn, M. (1)
- // Hubbart, J. (1, 2, 3)
- // Kass, L. (1)
- // Kijimoto, T. (1)
- // McDonald, L. (1, 2, 3, 4)
- // Pena-Yewtukhiw, E. (1)

// Verlinden, S. (1, 2)

// Waterland, N. (1)

### Administration

- // Barnes, A. (1)
- // Barnes, K. (1, 2)
- // Conneway, R. (1, 2, 3)
- // Donahue, D. (1, 2)
- // Green, T. (1, 2)
- // Haas, M. (1, 2, 3)
- // Lewis, P. (1, 2)
- // McLaughlin, A. (1)
- // Muncy, L. (1)
- // Willey, L. (1, 2)
- // Williamson, L. (1)
- // Wilson, M. (1, 2, 3)
- // Yost, J. (1, 2)

### Design and Community

- // Blythe, J. (1)
- // Butler, P. (1, 2)
- // Byrd, P. (1)
- // Ghadimi, H. (1, 2, 3)
- // Haas, V. (1)
- // Mehta, S. (1)
- // Moretz, C. (1, 2, 3)
- // Orr, E. (1)
- // Shorrock, E. (1)
- // Staniscia, S. (1, 2)
- // Uriyo, A. (1)
- // Wasserman, J. (1)

### Resource Economics and Management

- // Byrd, E. (1)
- // Collins, A. (1, 2)
- // Dougherty, M. (1, 2)
- // Elbakidze, L. (1, 2)
- // Kinder, P. (1)
- // Singh-Knights, D. (1)
- // Stephens, B. (1, 2)
- // Stephens, H. (1)
- // Strager, M. (1)

### Other Faculty/Staff

- // Andress, L. (1)
- // Lawson, K. (1)
- // Shingleton, P. (1)

### **TEACHING, CURRICULA, ONLINE PROGRAMS**

- // Evolution and Revolution of Forestry, Wood and Wood-based Composites
- // Explore the Creation of a Masters-Level Graduate Planning Degree
- // Online Program for Each Division
- // Undergraduate Recruitment: Growing Transfer Student Enrollment in Davis College
- // Davis Advising Taskforce
- // Curriculum Overlap

### **RESEARCH**

- // Establishing a Pre- and Post-Award Office in the Davis College
- // Large Rivers Initiative

### **OUTREACH (INCLUDING EXTENSION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH)**

- // Enhance our Outreach Through Sharing with Stakeholders/Organizations the Outcomes of our Applied Research Agendas of the Respective Disciplines/Divisions Across the College

### **FACILITIES**

- // Davis College Major Research Instrumentation
- // Farms for the Future
- // Wetland and Stream Mitigation Action Plan
- // Outdoor Campus Learning Labs

### **DEVELOPMENT/ADVANCEMENT**

- // Creating an International Center for Diversity in Natural Resources
- // Davis College Store/Shop/Market
- // ETown-City/Development as a Lab
- // Locally Driven Economic Development Solutions for Food Deserts and Food Insecurity

### **COMMUNICATION**

- // Centralizing Experiential Education Efforts into AAO
- // Davis College Budgeting
- // Digital Marketing

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (FACULTY AND STAFF)**

- // Davis College Professional Development
- // Expanding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in Davis College

### **STRUCTURE**

- // Finalize College Structure