

FORESTRY

Mission

The Forestry Department enhances the social, ecological and economic value of forests and associated natural resources for the citizens of Oklahoma and the nation through professional and public education and basic and applied research.

Vision

The Forestry Department is a regional leader in forest resource education and research by:

- Maintaining accredited undergraduate professional forestry degree programs;
- Maintaining a graduate program in support of the Department's research strengths;
- Continuing to build research capacity, attracting extramural funding and capitalizing on Division and University strengths; and
- Focusing extension programs on wise use and management of forests and associated natural resources emphasizing opportunities for economic development.

Core Values

Excellence - We seek excellence in all our endeavors, and we are committed to continuous improvement.

Intellectual Freedom - We believe in ethical and scholarly questioning in an environment that respects the rights of all to freely pursue knowledge.

Integrity - We are committed to the principles of truth and honesty, and we will be equitable, ethical, and professional.

Service - We believe that serving others is a noble and worthy endeavor.

Diversity - We respect others and value diversity of opinions, freedom of expression, and other ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Stewardship of Resources - We are dedicated to the efficient and effective use of resources. We accept the responsibility of the public's trust and are accountable for our actions. We conduct scientific inquiries into the nature of forest and associated natural resources and their sustained use by mankind. We are committed to sustainable management and utilization of forest ecosystems.

Goals, Critical Success Factors, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal 1. Quality of Life/Economic Development - Improve the quality of life of Oklahomans by promoting economic development through engaged educational and research programs that are focused on the utilization and sustainability of forests and associated natural resources.

Critical Success Factors:

- Completion of 5 clientele-based workshops each year.
- Publication of 5 fact sheets or professional articles on under-utilized species each year.
- Participation by faculty in at least 3 statewide economic development activities relative to natural resources each year.
- Participation by at least 3 faculty in annual Forest Utilization Conference.

Objectives:

Objective 1.1: Accurately assess the needs of forest landowners and managers in Oklahoma and provide accurate, timely educational assistance for improvement of management practices to optimize and sustain benefits obtained from forests and associated natural resources.

Strategies

- Participate in a wide variety of Oklahoma and regional forestry community meetings and discuss salient observations during departmental meetings.
- Review county level planning inputs relating to forest landowners and forest industry needs as part of the planning process for statewide research and extension activities.
- Review possible benefits of the formation of a departmental advisory board representing forestry industry, landowners, and other stakeholders.

Objective 1.2: Develop technology to provide for utilization of economically marginal woody plant material, thereby providing for additional economic return to landowners and improved management of the land resource.

Strategies

- Cooperate with small and mid-size wood products manufacturers to improve their production processes.
- Develop training programs to educate landowners and manufacturers with problem solving approaches.

Objective 1.3: Provide instructional curricula that meet the needs of both on-campus and off-campus clientele.

Strategies

- Maintain departmental accreditation by the Society of American Foresters.
- Annually assess effectiveness of curriculum options.
- Improve communications and networking activities between the Cooperative Extension Service and non-industrial private forest landowners.

Objective 1.4: Address the issues of both economic development and resource sustainability within the State and region.

Strategies

- Enhance working relationships with responsible individuals and functioning units in the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, Oklahoma Department of Commerce, Economic Development Districts, and the Resource Conservation Districts to provide for increased synergism relative to problem identification, assessment, and solution attainment.
- Develop working relationships with responsible individuals and units of the United States Forest Service responsible for economic development and resource sustainability.
- Collaborate closely with other OSU research and extension efforts directed toward economic development and community leadership.

Goal 2. Healthy Living - Promote healthy living for citizens of the State through wise use and management of forests and associated natural resources in both rural and urban environments.

Critical Success Factors:

- Have at least 1 faculty serve as linkage with Urban and Community Forestry Council.
- Increase number of students enrolled in Urban and Community Forestry academic option to a minimum of 8.
- Develop and deliver at least 5 educational programs per year relating to timber and non-timber resources for Cooperative Extension Service educators or other resource professionals.
- Provide at least 2 presentations per year to lay audiences regarding forests and associated natural resources.

Objectives:

Objective 2.1: Develop and deliver educational programs regarding both timber and non-timber benefits of forests and related resources.

Strategies

- Increase in-service training opportunities for Cooperative Extension educators.
- Collaborate in regional extension projects to enhance programmatic efficiencies.
- Fill the 3 current vacancies within the Forestry Extension program and look to obtain 2 additional area natural resources specialist positions.
- Participate actively in commodity organizations and affiliated boards/committees.

Objective 2.2: Promote wise application of urban development in the context of the resources impacted.

Strategies

- Communicate “Smart Growth” concepts to interested parties.
- Maintain faculty linkage to the Urban & Community Forestry Council.
- Document community “success stories” by Cooperative Extension Service.

Objective 2.3: Enhance our understanding of the role of trees and related resources in urban environments.

Strategies

- Support faculty participation at regional and national Urban Forestry workshops, conventions, etc.
- Ensure viability of the Urban and Community Forestry academic option.
- Obtain grant funding for urban forestry research.

Goal 3. Academic Excellence - Develop and maintain excellence in teaching, research and outreach in the area of Forestry and associated natural resources to fully meet the missions of the University.

Critical Success Factors:

- Maintain unqualified Society of American Foresters accreditation.
- Establish student placement rate at or above 90%.
- Continue as an active member of the Environmental Sciences program through significant faculty participation.
- Strive to maintain alumni satisfaction ratings of 90% or greater for education received through program.
- Nominate at least 3 faculty per year for Division, University, regional and National awards.
- Have at least 2 faculty serve on refereed journal review boards each year.
- Have at least 10 papers published each year in refereed journals.
- Maintain a research program of approximately \$250,000 per year through outside grants for forestry/natural resources.
- Maintain a minimum of \$60,000 per year in graduate research assistantships provided, which provides support for 4-5 students.
- Maintain Forestry faculty at or above current level of staffing.

Objectives:

Objective 3.1: Maintain and develop research programs that focus on the strengths of the unit relative to the forest resource base and priority needs of Oklahoma and the region.

Strategies

- Have research faculty regularly work with the department head to set priorities and identify facility, technological and budget needs.
- Encourage grantsmanship by the faculty to increase research resources.
- Encourage faculty to present papers or attend conferences and symposia.
- Work more closely with state and federal agencies to set research agendas and to perform cooperative research.
- Incorporate research priorities identified by external natural resources groups such as Cooperative State Research Extension and Education Service, Southern Industrial Forestry Research Council, United States Forest Service, woodland owners associations, and others. Seek external funding to assist in meeting those priorities.

Objective 3.2: Provide appropriate on-campus courses that are directed toward both today's issues and those that will be critical in the coming years.

Strategies

- The department's Committee on Undergraduate Education will perform annual reviews of and suggest modifications to curricula and curricular options.
- Encourage participation of faculty in professional societies in order to stay current on natural resources issues.
- Incorporate suggestions made by Society of American Foresters accreditation, Cooperative State Research Extension and Education Service, and other outside curricular reviews.
- Utilize FOR 4500 Forest Problems to develop short courses that address issues as they arise.
- Assess graduates relative to needs/desires for curricular changes and image/satisfaction of those graduates relative to their educational experiences.

Objective 3.3: Provide appropriate extension/outreach programs to meet current and anticipated clientele needs.

Strategies

- Fill the on-campus Extension Forestry and Extension Wildlife positions.
- Work to refill area Extension Foresters positions in both northeast and southeast areas of the state.
- Develop additional in-service training for county level educators.
- Cooperate with and support the Oklahoma Forest Landowners Association in educational programming.
- Offer specialized workshops, conferences, and programs that promote sustainable forest management.
- Offer innovative and engaging youth programs.

Goal 4. Synergy in Use of Resources - Utilize and leverage physical, financial, and human resources effectively to attain the goals of OSU as a land-grant institution.

Critical Success Factors:

- 20% of faculty with collaborative projects with other units.
- McIntire-Stennis projects are critically assessed by faculty to assure meeting of unit priorities.
- Faculty are provided opportunity to review and evaluate new positions as they become available.

Objectives:

Objective 4.1: Assure personnel and facilities are utilized in the most effective/efficient manner.

Strategies

- Work closely with Society of American Foresters accreditation process to assure appropriate courses/subjects are provided.
- Continually examine faculty expertise to assure instruction/research/extension needs are matched with personnel.
- Perform position audits as appropriate for staff and Administrative & Professional positions.
- Monitor facilities and equipment usage to maintain proper support capabilities. Requests for additional funding and personnel to be based upon these reviews.

Objective 4.2: Provide for collaboration with both internal and external partners in meeting specific goals.

Strategies

- Closely ally with clientele groups/individuals to determine forestry community needs.
- Continue to work toward establishment of a United States Forest Service presence on the OSU campus.
- Actively seek to collaborate with others in such activities as the Forest Utilization Conference, youth forestry events, Project Learning Tree, etc.
- Faculty will be active in regional and national organizations.

Objective 4.3: Assure that current and anticipated activities mesh with unit expertise and priorities.

Strategies

- Review Department/Division/University strategic plans at regular intervals to align efforts with those plans. Continue to modify the departmental plan as priorities, expertise, and support resources undergo changes.

- Perform periodic review of faculty expertise to assure appropriate matching with courses and research/extension efforts.
- Perform position description reviews as appropriate when hiring new faculty.

Goal 5. Image - Present an image of the unit and its programs that reflect positively on the contributions made by OSU to the discipline of natural resources utilization, restoration, and management.

Critical Success Factors:

- 15% of faculty in leadership roles in national organizations.
- At least 1 faculty as member of Oklahoma State Board of Registration for Foresters.
- 6 feature stories per year in university periodicals and local media about unit personnel and activities.
- 5 presentations per year by faculty at regional or national meetings.
- Continual update of the student/alumni database to track current and former students.

Objectives:

Objective 5.1: Attain recognition for faculty and staff on state, regional, national, and international levels where appropriate.

Strategies

- Provide financial support for faculty attendance at appropriate meetings, conferences, etc. Additional support to be requested from college/university levels.
- Provide mechanism for departmental nomination of faculty to committees, boards, etc. in relevant areas of expertise.
- Assure that faculty are aware of opportunities for service in local, regional, national, and international organizations.
- Encourage faculty to join and become active in professional organizations.

Objective 5.2: Assure that printed, electronic or other communications are professionally presented.

Strategies

- Work closely with Agricultural Communications in development of style and format for publications.
- Continue departmental review process to assure accuracy of material.
- Remove from circulation out-of-date or inaccurate materials.
- Include information relative to national recognition of departmental programs in prepared material.
- Maintain a high quality web site.

Objective 5.3: Assure that public presentations/appearances by faculty, staff, and students reflect well on the unit and OSU relative to expertise and achievements.

Strategies

- Provide leadership from faculty members and/or outside individuals who have significant expertise in the subject area.
- Encourage faculty/technical personnel to attend training programs relative to presentations.
- Work closely with student organizations and within individual classes to raise professionalism of student conduct.
- Encourage faculty and students to attend professional meetings and become active participants.

Goal 6. Partnerships/Collaborations - Strengthen our professional and financial partnerships with other OSU units, external clientele, government agencies and non-government organizations to provide for greater effectiveness in meeting program objectives.

Critical Success Factors:

- Collaborate with at least 4 local/state/federal agencies each year on activities related to forest sustainability.
- Collaborate with at least 5 non-governmental/industrial entities relative to forest management.
- Have at least 2 faculty serve on statewide stewardship/resource management committees.
- Coordinate establishment of United States Forest Service research presence on OSU campus.

Objectives:

Objective 6.1: Maintain close liaison with commodity organizations in the field of forestry and associated natural resources.

Strategies

- Advise and educate the members of commodity organizations relative to forestry and forest products.
- Organize in-service training programs to assist forest product manufacturers.
- Organize conferences at state level covering different aspects of forestry and associated natural resources.

Objective 6.2: Work closely with state and federal agencies in areas of interest and increase formal contracts with these agencies.

Strategies

- Prepare research proposals with the cooperation of small and mid-size manufacturers for submission to government agencies such as United States Department of Agriculture and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- Develop targeted programs in natural resources within the interests of government agencies potentially leading to funding support for the department.

Objective 6.3: Provide opportunities for all clientele groups to become more closely engaged in the teaching, research, and extension missions.

Strategies

- Organize specific workshops targeted to clientele groups.
- Offer regular meetings with different clientele groups to exchange information and develop networking.

- Invite speakers from the industry and major clientele groups to present success stories to clientele groups about their experiences.

Goal 7. Student Development - Enhance students' professional and technical competencies, knowledge, skills, and abilities for effective leadership and career success.

Critical Success Factors:

- Offer or participate in at least 3 off-campus recruiting events each year.
- Retain students completing summer camp above the 90% level.
- Increase membership in student organizations to above 30%.
- Provide faculty leadership and departmental support for at least 2 student extracurricular/professional organizations.
- Provide at least \$8,000 per year in scholarships to deserving graduate and undergraduate students.
- Offer minimum of 1 study abroad course each year.
- Have at least 15% of the department's students participate in a study-abroad program.

Objectives:

Objective 7.1: Recruit and retain students who exhibit potential for academic success within the forestry/natural resources profession.

Strategies

- Enhance freshman and transfer scholarships by increasing endowments through seeking increased alumni support.
- Develop a Power Point presentation for off campus recruitment use.
- Place recruitment Power Point presentation on the departmental home page.
- Work with the Forestry Club and the student Society of American Foresters chapter to increase freshman and sophomore involvement.

Objective 7.2: Strengthen the department's ability to provide international learning experiences for undergraduate students.

Strategies

- Seek funding for international course development and reconnaissance.
- Seek OSU membership in organizations focused toward international resource management (e.g., the Organization for Tropical Studies).
- Offer courses in international natural resource conservation and development both on-campus and with international travel.
- Mentor students for international awards such as the Fulbright United States Student Program.
- Recruit international students to the B.S. programs.

Objective 7.3: Expand opportunities for graduate students in terms of financial support, discipline choices, and degree availability to provide high quality educational experiences for those pursuing more specialized degrees.

Strategies

- Develop and offer additional graduate courses.
- Acquire dedicated extramural funding for graduate research assistantships and scholarships.
- Strive to increase Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station graduate research assistantship funding from a minimum of \$60,000 to \$100,000.
- Evaluate need and opportunities for funding support for Forestry teaching assistantships through the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources.

Objective 7.4: Enhance collaborative relationships with other units/programs to provide additional learning experiences.

Strategies

- Continue to maintain a close relationship with the College's Environmental Sciences Undergraduate Program.
- Continue to offer "Forest Environmental Science (FOR 3643)" annually to the University community.
- Continue support for the Plant Sciences Graduate Program.
- Continue support for the Environmental Science Graduate Program.
- Participate in the development of a focus on ecosystems at a landscape level and the impacts of changes in these ecosystems.
- Encourage cooperative research activities with other University units.

Objective 7.5: Enhance student competencies related to understanding and use of technologically advanced equipment and methods.

Strategies

- Provide, to the extent possible, leading-edge equipment technology for use by students both on-campus and at summer camp.
- Continue to update Geographic Information Systems capabilities within the department for both student and faculty use.
- Continue to seek and utilize external gifts to upgrade expensive, needed, equipment.

Objective 7.6: Enhance student organizations to provide quality extra-curricular experiences.

Strategies

- Provide faculty leadership and departmental funding in support of student extracurricular/professional organizations considered important to the unit.
- Provide funding to the level possible for student organizational members to attend national conferences, and assist student efforts to obtain their own support.

Goal 8. Diversity - Provide an educational environment that fosters human diversity and provides for a genuine respect of individual beliefs.

Critical Success Factors:

- 30% of the student body as women or minorities within the next 5 years.
- 25% of faculty/staff as women or minorities within the next 5 years.
- At least 2 extension programs per year targeted to non-traditional clientele.

Objectives:

Objective 8.1: Provide financial and program opportunities that encourage minorities and women to make natural resources a career choice.

Strategies

- Provide financial support to organizations such as Retired Educators for Youth Agricultural Programs that focus on minority recruitment to agriculture careers.
- Actively participate in the Society of American Foresters Student Diversity Scholarship Program.
- Focus on minority recruitment as an important part of the overall recruitment program for both students and faculty/staff.

Objective 8.2: Provide an open working/academic environment that assures inclusiveness in faculty, staff, and student activities.

Strategies

- Assure that, as a minimum, University guidelines and policies regarding diversity and minority opportunities are fully met.
- Assure that open lines of communications are maintained within the department among all faculty, staff, and students.
- Respond swiftly and positively to any issues arising relative to inclusiveness and diversity.

Objective 8.3: Assure that extension/outreach programs meet needs of non-traditional clientele.

Strategies

- Review ongoing and planned programs with minority landowner groups to determine unmet needs and refocus.
- Maintain communication and cooperation with natural resources programs at Langston University.
- Cultivate opportunities for cooperation with tribal entities as they arise.

Goal 9. Human Resources - Recruit, retain and develop an outstanding cadre of faculty and staff to meet the educational/research priorities of a multi-faceted forestry and associated natural resources unit.

Critical Success Factors:

- Encourage faculty to participate in sabbatical leave program.
- Allow staff at least 3 days per year for training.
- Offer at least 3 in-service training opportunities for county Cooperative Extension Service educators.
- Establish department mentoring program for younger faculty.

Objectives:

Objective 9.1: Provide competitive opportunities for attraction of outstanding personnel to the OSU Forestry and associated natural resources programs.

Strategies

- Publish, locally and nationally, success stories of current faculty to enhance our national reputation.
- Assist faculty in getting recognition for their accomplishments.
- Develop research endowments to enhance recruitment competitiveness.
- Provide salaries and merit raises to recognize faculty productivity.
- Encourage application and ensure full consideration of women and minorities in the hiring of departmental personnel.
- Provide career advancement criteria for extension faculty that equates extension accomplishments to research/teaching accomplishments.

Objective 9.2: Enhance teaching, research, and extension skills of staff leading to a higher level of job performance.

Strategies

- Prepare professional development plan for each staff person specific to the person's responsibilities.
- Assign existing staff to mentor newer staff members relative to opportunities identified as critical to individual development plans.
- Provide opportunities for staff to practice and demonstrate new skills.
- Seek funding for professional development programs.

Objective 9.3: Enhance the abilities of county-level personnel in the natural resources arena.

Strategies

- Refill the Extension Forestry and Extension Wildlife positions.
- Provide in-service trainings for county level educators.

- Encourage county level participation in natural resources programming at venues beyond the county level as funding allows.
- Encourage hiring of forestry-trained personnel by the Cooperative Extension Service as county educators.

Objective 9.4: Enhance the skills of young and mid-career faculty to allow them to fulfill their potential as members of an academic unit.

Strategies

- Encourage faculty attendance and professional presentations at regional, national, and international meetings.
- Encourage sabbatical opportunities and provide relief from duties of the unit.
- Encourage attendance at workshops, continuing education opportunities, and other professional development activities as they become available.
- Assist in finding funding for the above items.
- Provide for mentoring of the junior faculty by the senior faculty with regard to academic expectations, university/departmental protocol, career advancement, etc.