

NCAC-4 Meeting Minutes
Reiman Gardens, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa
June 3-5, 2018

Host: Professor Jeff Iles, Chair, Department of Horticulture, Iowa State University

Attendees:

Bill Braunworth, Oregon
Vance Baird, Michigan
Jessica Davis, Colorado
Erik Ervin, Delaware
Howard Eyre, Delaware Valley
Richrd Ferguson, Nebraska
Irwin Goldman, Wisconsin
Emily Hoover, Minnesota
Paul Johnson, Utah
Dean Kopsell, Florida
Dan Lineberger, Texas
Richrd McAvoy, Connecticut
Robert Paul, Hawaii
Greg Reighard, Clemson
Steve Reiners, Cornell
Scott Senseman, Tennessee
Candice Shoemaker, Kansas
Hazel Wetzstein, Purdue
David Wright, South Dakota
David Zlesak, Wisconsin River Falls
Rolston St. Hilaire, New Mexico
Scott Steinmaus, Cal Poly

June 3 - Sunday

A welcome was provided by Jeff Iles. Assistant Dean Theresa Cooper from Iowa State University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences provided an interactive presentation and discussion on cultivating a climate of diversity and inclusiveness that touched on many themes from our academic programs.

June 4 - Monday

Department reports were provided by representatives from each horticulture or plant science program. A brief comment from each presentation is presented after each program.

Clemson: Six departments are working together and there are a number of new faculty hires coming soon. A horticulture major remains but

there are also plant science and environmental science majors. The turfgrass major has been phased out.

Colorado State: Horticulture and Landscape Architecture is a growing department. There are three new faculty coming in August. There is an online horticulture business management major and there is growth in the horticulture major. There is interest in Cannabis, controlled environment agriculture. Online teaching now appears in some job descriptions for faculty.

Cornell: In 2014, a School of Integrated Plant Sciences was formed, with each department becoming a section. There are a total of 85 faculty; Horticulture has 30 of these, but it is declining. They have had only two new hires in 4 years. The entire college is looking at only 7 new hires, with the school only receiving 2 this year. There is a plant science major and master of professional studies that is a revenue generating program.

Cal Poly: Crop science and horticultural science comprise 300 majors with 8.5 faculty. Faculty numbers are declining and there is a very substantial 100% teaching mandate with 12 weighted teaching units required for a 9 month appointment. This means a minimum of 12 class contact hours per week for the academic year for each faculty member. Research is conducted in the summer, primarily. A new strawberry research center is being developed, funded in part by the California Strawberry Commission.

Delaware Valley: 100% teaching for the faculty. There are 4 plant science faculty and 12 class contact hours per week is considered full time. There is a strong interest in Cannabis, Turfgrass is declining, horticulture is increasing in interest as a major.

Kansas State: Significant financial challenges for the last three years, but there have been 10 years of cuts. Horticulture has had declining enrollment for the last 5-6 year though student numbers in the college are increasing. New faculty have been hired in food crops and urban food systems. Transition to a new budget model is occurring now.

Michigan: There is a 4 year horticulture major and a 2 year certificate program. Student numbers are stable. A 100% teaching appointment is considered as 12 credits per year. A new hire in grapes was recently made and 4 searches are taking place in plant resilience. Jim Hancock's blueberry royalties have now

exceeded \$10 million for the university. There is some greenhouse renovation and new construction taking place.

New Mexico: There is a large number of new administrators. The department's goal is to have approximately 170 undergraduates. A bond was issued to help fund new labs for the college. They are a Hispanic serving institution.

Oregon: A dean search is occurring now. The experiment station has its own budget line from the state. They have an online horticulture major that is entirely online. There is an organic certificate that undergraduates can obtain. A budget model has been adopted by the campus. An industrial hemp program has been developed.

Purdue: A former Ag dean is now the provost. Karen Plaut will be the new dean. They have recently completed a strategic plan for horticulture that includes sustainable horticulture, landscape systems, controlled environment horticulture. An external review has just been completed. There is a new student farm that has space for food processing. An arboretum master plan has been developed. LA studios have been renovated. Jules Janick has provided an endowment for a horticultural garden. Enrollment is starting to rise, and was up 18% last year. There are 160 students in the department but only a portion are focusing on horticulture.

An alumni – employer panel was held to discuss issues regarding our students, what skills they need for their careers in industry, and how employers see our program. The panel included:

Liz Crimmins, Nursery Manager, Country Landscapes, Ames, IA, **Sandra Gerdes**, Test Garden Manager, Better Homes & Gardens®
Des Moines, IA, **Tom Hughes**, Hughes Nursery & Landscaping, Cedar Rapids, IA, **Lynn Kuhn**, Outdoor Transformations, Granger, IA, **Jim Mason**, Des Moines Area Community College
Ankeny, IA, **Casey Scheidel**, Iowa Cubs Sports Turf, Des Moines, IA

A number of important topics were discussed, including how horticulture might be marketed and communicated to our potential students, what types of skills are necessary for students to develop while in school, and what they might expect when the move into horticultural careers.

After lunch, a presentation was made by **Dr. Jeff Johnson**, President and CEO of the ISU Alumni Association. Dr. Johnson talked about how we view our alumni. Not all graduates are alumni- some are simply graduates or former students. Dr. Johnson encouraged us to consider our current students as “alumni in residence.” He sees the degree as “stock” and the alumni as the stock holders. In this analogy, faculty are the stock brokers. Dr. Johnson discussed the difference between involvement and engagement. He encouraged us to ask in exit interviews: “Who are the one, two, or three people from our department who made the biggest impact on you? How about from outside our department?”

Dr. Johnson also discussed graduate relations and career satisfaction, pointing out the difference between a job, a career, and a calling. He said our goal should be to help our students find their calling.

We toured the ISU Horticulture Research Station during the afternoon, seeing high tunnels, grape cultivation, prairie restoration, water management on the horticulture farm, and many other projects.

June 5 – Tuesday

Wisconsin River Falls: David requested that departments send him their curriculum so that assessments can be made about the Certified Professional Horticulturist program. He asked for this information by July 1.

Vance Baird discussed surveys and data collection, providing information from Michigan State University on their surveys of horticulture students. They used learning outcomes from the Marvin Pritts paper that was published in HortTechnology a few years ago (which came out of an NCAC-4 meeting). The surveys are conducted online. The group discussed ideas for questions: some ideas included “where you prepared compared to colleagues? Emily Hoover asked what do we really want to know and what do we really want to do with this information? A question might be “What would you have liked to take? What skills, activities did you learn? How much in the way of soft skills did you learn? Would you do this again? How adaptable can you be outside of formal training? How do you find information and the quality of that information? “I wish I would have known about....” Our goal may really be to teach

them how to learn. Dan Lineberger mentioned that horticulture assessments have been published in HortScience by VanderZanden and others.

South Dakota: Several disciplines are together; Horticulture, Agronomy, Soil Science, Entomology, Pathology. Hort has 7% of 280 students with about 4 or 5 faculty. Horticulture is not getting new faculty positions. The future is uncertain as numbers are not large. There is a new organic farm and a local foods program. There is a viticulture program and a non-technical entomology course.

Texas: A new vice chancellor for agriculture (which appears to be a unique position compared to many of our institutions) has been named- Patrick Stover from Cornell. Texas A&M is trying to get to the top ten of AAUP research institutions. Premium agriculture is now a focus; health benefits and wellness. There is a healthy south Texas initiative, which fits well with the Vegetable and Fruit Improvement Center, established in 1992. There are about 130-140 hort majors. The department does a lot of service teaching. PhD student numbers are up. A new garden is opening which will eventually be 31 acres and cost \$60 million. There is a trend toward non tenure track professionals, and new extension hires are not on the tenure track.

Connecticut: It is a period of uncertainty. The president is leaving, there is an interim dean and a new provost. The financial trends are not positive. Raises have been stagnant for a number of years. The state provides 22-24% of the budget but this is declining. Four retirements are occurring this year. There is a goal to develop an MLA program that will generate revenue. Some 55% of the faculty in the college are near retirement age. A hemp program has been started. The department is involved in a number of reviews and planning exercises.

Delaware: 28 faculty in horticulture, agronomy, plant pathology, soil science, LA, and plant biology. The faculty are unionized. A BLA program is being developed. There is a plant science major but they are also creating a new major called food systems and sustainability. The goal is to grow enrollment.

Florida: Florida has a huge influx of people- some 1,000 move to the state each day. The state is 93-94% urban. Environmental Hort has 28 faculty while the Horticultural Sciences department has 60 faculty. Half of the Environmental Hort faculty are in Gainesville and half are out of state. There are 5 multi-departmental programs

in the plant sciences, with 3 of these in Environmental Hort. Placement is good for students. The financial climate is good. Faculty positions are rehired. The university has a goal of filling 500 positions in 5 years to bolster teaching capacity. There is an open turf position and an open palm position, as well as an arboriculture position.

Hawaii: There are more administrators and less faculty. A hemp production program has been started. The faculty are unionized. Student quality is very good. Pineapple production is going elsewhere. "Tropical Plant Sciences" was created when the college went from 11 to 6 departments. They are now moving toward a core with multiple certificates.

Minnesota: They have a writing enriched curriculum project. An online floral design class with 60 student and an online organic gardening class are taught with 60 and 70- students, respectively. There are two majors- a plant science major and a food systems major. The department head doesn't have a lot of control over who teaches courses in these majors since they are multi-departmental. The dean instituted a budget model that works out to \$60 per student credit hour. They have a "4+1" program where a student can get an undergraduate degree and a MS degree in plant breeding. There has been a 2% salary pool for the last four years.

Tennessee: Scott Senseman gave the update for the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture. Also, Tennessee will be the host institution for our NCAC-4 meeting next year.

Utah: Paul Johnson gave the update for Utah State University.

Wisconsin: David Zlesak gave the update for the University of Wisconsin – River Falls.