**NCAC-24**

**Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resource Applied Behavioral Sciences**

**January 9, 2020, Las Cruses, New Mexico**

Those Present: Mike Retallick, Brian Myers, Jonathan Velez, Jon Simonsen, John Ewing, Leslie Edgar, Scott Burris, Rob Terry, Frank Hodnett, Scott Scheer, Mark Balschweid, Robert Strong, Kris Boone, Michael Newman, Matt Raven, Kelly Enns, Becki Lawver, Jessica Blythe, Dave Rosch, George Wardlow, Jason Ellis, Carl Igo, Steve Fraze

Frank Hodnett provided an overview of the meeting plan and orientation to the museum.

Introductions and overview of programs present.

Chair Michael Newman called the meeting to order.

George Wardlow overviewed the NCAC 24 background. The function and charge of the committee is to serve as an administrative support committee. The intent is to look at higher education program standards across the nation and support ag ed research. Meetings are in DC every other year and opposite year meetings are at other institutions to see differing programs. Kris Boone explained that the group is not North Central but national (RAs and ERAs end at a certain time – those are multi-state programs). The NIMSS system can be accessed to see research projects and multi-state dollars.

Kris noted that she would request from experiment station directors at the next meeting that this group review behavioral science proposals, which have been being sent to other groups for review.

Michael Newman reviewed the minutes from the May meeting. No changes were noted and they were therefore approved as presented.

**Committees for Subcommittees**

Mark Balschweid – this group is a think tank of our discipline. There is no other group of individuals who come together and think and strategize about how we move forward. This is not an AAAE function this is a larger group. The name change sends the message that this is a larger group. We do not have a mechanism of someone who is scouting for us and that is the purpose of this group. What do we do in the interim between our meetings so that we can reshape and reframe the value of what we do. Everything comes down to the human dimensions of what we do. George Wardlow mentioned that our work is siloed, and we need to choose how we participate in research and projects. How do we identify needs facing “grand challenges” – a document provided at the May AAAE meeting.

**Special Guest – Steve Loring, Association Director, NMSU Experiment Station**

Brief overview of the Agriculture and Extension Education Department (AXED) at NMSU and NMSU research. Future direction of experiment stations is on multi-disciplinary and multi-state teams from its inception. Remind experiment station directors of our work, abilities, and opportunities. Educate your experiment station directors, deans, national program leaders (NPL) to inform RFPs.

Discussion regarding what others have done to inform experiment station directors. Kris recommended identifying some best practices for people of this group. *Possible future action item*.

***Subcommittee Reports***

**Report 1**

***Area 3 Subcommittee Report***

**Promote and Engage in AAAE Strategic Plan Goals to Leverage Research Success Opportunities in NCAC-024 – Next Steps**

Mark Balschweid, Leslie Edgar, Brian Myers, Travis Park, Tracy Rutherford

This committee was charged with identifying next steps to leverage research success. The subcommittee met twice—July 12 and September 4, 2019. The following goals and recommendations were identified.

Goals:

1. Identify research leadership in other Ag Ed related groups (conferences and journals) and invite them to a conversation about possible collaboration. Ensure the letter incorporates pointed questions for discussion and promotes the NCAC-24 name change as we work to set-up a meeting. A letter was drafted and an Excel sheet with research conference and journals leadership personnel contact names and email addresses were identified. *The journal and professional society contact information list may not be exhaustive and it is likely others should be added*. The draft letter and list of names/email contacts were sent to Michael Newman for his dissemination.
2. A possible way to fund a larger collaborative meeting would be through a NIFA conference grant. Conference Grants Conference Grants support scientific meetings that bring together scientists to identify research, education, and/or extension needs, update information, or advance an area of science. These activities are recognized as integral parts of scientific efforts. Support for a limited number of meetings covering subject matter encompassed by this solicitation will be considered for partial or, if modest, total support. Individual conference grants may not exceed $50,000 in total costs and are not renewable. Indirect costs are not permitted on Conference Grant awards. For all requests of $25,000 or more, applicants should consult with the program contact listed in the request for applications (RFA) regarding suitability of the application for submission to the relevant program area priority. Letter of Intent is required for all Conference Grants and must be submitted a minimum of 135 days before the conference begins. Applications must be submitted after LOI decision response and a minimum of 90 days before the conference begins.
3. Identify a research platform to promote to our faculty. Research Gate was identified as a possible platform. Researchers can add their CV, connect to published work, connect to others of similar interest, etc. We will overview the platform at the January meeting and discuss the possibilities of incorporation.

Other possible future goals:

1. Find meaningful, intentional ways to conference together or make other connections to collaborate on multistate projects/research/grants.
2. Assist to articulate NCAC-24 goals or broader teams outside of any specific organization to foster collaboration and identify actions to elevate research capacity.

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Report 1 Discussion: Brian overviewed how to possibility incorporate Research Gate in programs to make connections interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary teams to move our research agendas forward. Possible way to engage us in the larger research community. A handout was provided. We encourage heads/chairs/directors to suggest their faculty join Research Gate and add the NCAC-24 “lab”.

Discussion continued.

**Report 2**

**Grand Challenges Facing Agriculture**

**And How the Agricultural Education Profession May Address Them**

Committee Report Prepared for NCAC-024, January, 2020

Matt Raven, Shannon Arnold, Neil Knobloch, Rob Terry, Alexa Lamm, George Wardlow

In 2019 at the department heads / program leaders and NCAC-024 meeting at AAAE in Des Moines a committee was formed as a response to an earlier committee report charged with assessing research in the profession. The charge to this committee was to identify and discuss the research “grand challenges” facing our profession and the larger agricultural research community. These grand challenges may represent key global health and nutrition issues facing agriculture, food, and human nutrition. These include a complex set of issues including production, as well as socio-cultural elements. It is the interconnectedness of issues/problems that define these challenges as “grand.”

Because of how agricultural education researchers identify researchable problems and do research, our profession spends little time identifying these interconnected and grand challenges facing agriculture. Further, our profession is seldom considered by the larger agricultural research community as being an able contributor to the resolution of grand challenges, (local exceptions not withstanding).

The committee was charged to begin a discussion on the grand challenges facing agriculture. As a start, we were asked to each identify one or two of what we consider are grand challenges facing our world and our society to which our profession could contribute (impact) if we worked together.

The committee received a group e-mail in August, 2019 to commence this discussion. This is a summary of comments.

**Grand Challenge Ideas from Committee Members.**

1. Food security, food safety
2. Big data to solve large problems
3. Climate change
4. Health and pathogens (e.g., Zika virus)
5. Diversity / equity / inclusion in agriculture
6. Water management
7. Modern agriculture practices (of course, this can be segmented into more specific issues such as animal welfare, plant breeding, chemical use, etc.)

**Approaches for AgEd Researchers to Participate in Interdisciplinary Grand Challenge Research.**

1. **Taking the Lead**: Faculty member(s) from AAAE fields serve as project directors and organize the project. They build relationships and coordinate how faculty from science and engineering disciplines will play a role in providing technical expertise to carry out the project. They direct the project and the objectives are typically focused around communication, education, and leadership activities and people-centric outcomes.
2. **Supporting the Lead** (needs better wording): Faculty members from AAAE fields play a key role (typically as a co-PD) in carrying out a significant part of the project activities and key deliverables. An example would be providing the education / engagement component on an integrated AFRI project.
3. **Providing Research as Service**: Faculty member(s) from AAAE fields typically serve as co-directors / senior personnel / external evaluators in more specific roles such as assessing outcomes or conducting the evaluation of the project. In this role, the AAAE faculty member provides an important service for the project, but probably does not advance their research focus / scholarship.
4. **Clarify Roles** AAAE faculty can play in large grant projects and then demonstrate different examples of these roles interface with various grand challenges.
5. **Begin an AAAE Discussion**. Discuss how AAAE faculty could be experts in helping to address these grand challenges.

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Discussion continued.

Focus on research capacity of our larger group, on our contextual challenges that we can impact, and connect with other disciplinary groups.

Lunch

Michael Newman leads the following discussion: Where would we like to be with Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resource Applied Behavioral Sciences research? Discussion revolved around the following topic areas:

* Conduct research that impacts both within AFNRABS and larger agricultural systems
* Be seen as relevant and essential to the solution of problems
* Publish research beyond our discipline
* Other university faculty appreciate what we bring to the table
* Increase our credibility, and we are recognized as having a role in solving grand challenges with stakeholders (industry)

Discussion regarding moving forward:

* Build research capacity to meet the challenges we face
  + Measured through larger research appointments/apportionments with faculty
  + Work with other disciplines regarding our scope and how we serve in our disciplinary areas at a greater/more robust level
* Read and utilize research outside our profession
* Develop ability to identify what the big problems are
* Assess how we prepare researchers
* Re-evaluate our formal and informal reward structures
* Revise/rethink the things we value
* Increase ability to describe and measure impact
* Identify models/exemplars/best practices for impactful research
* Leadership/strong encouragement from us (administrators) to faculty to collaborate
* Identify interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research problems

What does the intersection between grand challenges (global agricultural research) and our research capacity look like?

* Providing instruction on how to apply research to the issues
* Getting the research into the hands of people who can use it
* Examples of work in our discipline who are having broader impact:
  + Water issues – Alexa Lamm
  + Regenerative ag – Matt Raven
  + Meat science – Todd Brashears
  + Landscape water use – Laura Warner
  + Other groups without an identifiable lead were mentioned

**Special Guest – Scott Angle, NIFA Director**

*NIFA Update and Research Priorities and Funding Opportunities*

Moved to Kansas City, lost between 75-80% of staff. Two main goals: 1) keep the mission up and running and 2) seek to hire new individuals (KC is a good area to target individuals) and train them. Have had to prioritize work due to lack of staff—may be delayed up to two months. Challenges has been felt, especially in tribal colleges. Undergoing a reimagining process, led by APLU (SWOT analysis). NIFA is committed to making changes. Must work through congressional mandates and are committed to reviewing needs. Requested applicants for biological and social science leaders. Received many biological sciences applicants and only a few with social science so that application was closed. It will be opened soon. Budget trends are looking good, Feb 10th presidential budget will be released. NIFA distributes funds that are appropriated. Efficiencies that are gained in the reimagining process will be used to increase NIFA research capacity/programs. DC individuals will be liaisons and KC people will serve as program leaders. This group can work with NIFA (and AFRI) beyond the traditional programs. Encouraged participants and others to call program leaders and ask questions about how their expertise can fit into specific calls. There is a trend at institutions where social scientists are becoming more prominent in proposals. Need more social scientists engaged with bench scientists on program proposals. If possible, engage with your lobbyists to understand your work and your needs. Impact – quantitatively/qualitatively show modification/change in someone’s life. Need to know that citizens are getting a “bang for the buck.” We should develop big (grand) goals and push our story.

Continued future discussion regarding needs and the committee’s role.

Friday, January 10

Michael reviews the letter written as part of subcommittee report 1 to the larger group. Discussion occurs and suggestions for modifications. Motion to send letter – George, second – Mark. Verbal vote to approve. Motion to modify letterhead to include the new name of the organization, second – George. Verbal vote to approve. Suggested that the group send additional individuals/organizations to receive the letter and other groups/areas to target. Consider including experiment station directors on the invitation letter.

Nominations for vice-chair Brian Myers and secretary Tracy Rutherford. Verbal votes to accept were unanimous.

Discussion regarding hosting locations for the January 2021 and 2022 meetings. Motion to host the 2021 meeting in Gainesville, FL. Verbal vote to approve. Motion to host the 2022 meeting in Kansas City at NIFA. Verbal vote to approve.

Discussion regarding hosting a workshop at AAAE. Motion to host a discussion regarding grand challenges in the larger disciple at the 2020 AAAE meeting by Brian, second by Mark. Discussion continued on two action items: 1) presentation proposal at AAAE (co-chairs-Brian Myers and Leslie Edgar and committee members Dave Rosch, George Wardlow, Matt Raven, Rob Terry, Mark Russell) and 2) dissemination of NCAC-24 mission/vision/reach to other groups. Action item #1 primary audiences are researchers, graduate students. Make sure the invitation in AAAE is broad enough so all can understand it is open to all individuals.

Thank you to Frank for his assistance and organization of this meeting.

Recommendation to encourage AAAE Research Committee to initiate a revised research agenda.

Discussion around departmental needs, opportunities, and networking.

Meeting adjourned.