NCAC1 Annual Report
Department of Soil, Water and Climate; University of Minnesota
January 7-8, 2020
Carl Rosen, Head

Faculty/Administration:
The University of Minnesota hired a new President, Joan Gabel. She started July 1, 2019 as the 17th president of the University and is the first woman to hold that office. Her previous position was Provost at the University of South Carolina. She earned a law degree from the University of Georgia. We also hired a new Provost, Rachel Croson. She currently serves as Dean of the College of Social Science at Michigan State University.

The Department of Soil, Water, and Climate currently has 24 tenured or tenure-track faculty and 5 USDA-ARS adjunct faculty members. Three of the tenure track faculty carry significant administrative responsibilities including Dr. Michael Schmitt, Associate Dean for the College and Extension; Dr. Albert Sims, Director of Operations at the Northwest Research and Outreach Center/ Southwest Research and Outreach Center, and Dr. Michael Sadowsky, 50% time Director of the University of Minnesota BioTechnology Institute. Three of the tenure track faculty are located at research and outreach centers. **Retirements:** Satish Gupta, Soil Physics; **Recent Hires:** Lindsey Pease, Soil and Water Management for cropping systems in NW Minnesota (40% extension, 60% research); Vasudha Sharma Irrigation Specialist (100% Extension) - non-tenure track; Anna Cates, Soil Health Specialist (70% Extension and 30% Research) – non-tenure track; Heidi Roop, Extension Climate Scientist, tenure track; Spousal hire, Peter Neff, non-tenure track, Paleoclimatology. Dr. Neff is funded for 3 years by the provost office 50% and 50% by an endowment fund.

Budget:
As in previous years, the College is undergoing a structural deficit due to increased cost pools and debts for previous hires. Therefore, most existing positions are not being replaced. However, at the same time the legislature allocated funds for enhancing capacity in production agriculture and natural resources - Agricultural Research, Education, Extension and Technology Transfer Program (AGREETT). Funding is passed through the MN Department of Agriculture. The Extension Climate Scientist was hired as an AGREETT position.

To address the structural deficit the College is considering combining departments. There are currently 12 departments in the college. After reorganization there may be 6 or 7 departments. This will likely be a 2-3-year process before any final decisions are made.

The university has increased an enrollment cap within the college from 330 to 360, which will help to cover some of the deficit with tuition revenue. The college is looking for ways to generate more revenue. Within the department, non-recurring budget obligations are met with ICR and revenue from student credit hour generation. Recurring budget obligations met by not filling positions.

Departmental Activities/Highlights:
Open searches:
No open searches

Undergraduate program: The Department of Soil, Water, and Climate continues to provide courses for the following majors: Environmental Science, Policy, and Management (ESPM), Applied Plant Sciences, Horticulture, and Agricultural Industries and Marketing as well as a new Food Systems major, which has

just been established. Many of our courses are required or listed as recommended for these majors, which helps increase our student credit hours. ESPM is the largest of the undergraduate majors we serve with roughly 300 students enrolled over the last academic year. Soil minor is now up to 29 students due to active recruiting by a new faculty member who teaches introductory soils. Overall class enrollments have increased over the past year.

Graduate Program: There are ~35 students currently enrolled in the Land and Atmospheric Science major, Faculty members in the department are also supporting assistantships in Water Resource Sciences, Applied Plant Science, Earth Sciences, and Microbial Engineering graduate programs.