Administrative Council for Extension and Experiment Station Research Meeting
Friday, February 7, 2025
1:30-2:30 p.m.
130 Burruss Hall Conference Room

AGENDA

Participants
Jeff Earley, Tim Hodge, Brennan Shepard, Cyril Clark, Paul Winistorfer, Mike Gutter, Mary Burrows, Lauren Augustine, Elizabeth Hooper, Simon Allen, Mallory Miller, Mario Ferruzzi, Beth Ebel, Dan Givens, Dan Sui

Welcome and Introductions (Cyril Clarke)

Discussion Items

Approval of Meeting Minutes (Cyril Clarke)
The December meeting minutes were electronically distributed with the agenda. The minutes were reviewed and approved by the council.

Potential for Arrowbrook Partnership with VCE in Northern Virginia (Mario Ferruzzi and Mike Gutter)
Mario Ferruzzi presented an opportunity for a partnership between VCE and Arrowbrook in Northern Virginia. The location could allow for VCE programming to better reach the North Virginia audience. The partnership would entail a financial commitment. The details of that financial commitment are not clear at this time and further investigation into the partnership and the land is needed. The location could allow for VCE programming to better reach the North Virginia audience. However, alternative approaches may exist to reach that audience with a lower financial commitment.

The council suggested that VCE consider the opportunity against its priorities. The council also discussed, based on programmatic interest, VCE could investigate alternatives to offering program in the region.

Unit Updates

Virginia Cooperative Extension (Mike Gutter)
Mike Gutter provided an update on VCE strategic planning, which is nearing the end. Virginia Tech and Virginia State University are working together to have one plan for field work. Mike shared the core initiatives identified through this work: agricultural production and innovation, agribusiness management (inclusive of Agri-tourism and risk management), small-scale farms and local food systems, health and family wellbeing, community resilience, natural resources and environment, and positive youth development.

Mike shared that VCE is meeting with leadership from the College of Science (COS) to talk about partnerships as COS wants to engage more in the community.

Agricultural Experiment Station (Mary Burrows)
Mary Burrows provided an update on AES leadership meetings and work being done on HABII.

Deans
The dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Science (CALS), Mario Ferruzi, provided an update on searches with in the college. He also shared that Virginia Tech and Virginia State University will be making visits to DC prioritizing the passing of the farm bill which will provide funding capacity.

Mario shared that the Agriculture Technology degree is going through an external review. The program is considering feedback and looking ways to innovate the program and leverage ARECs.

On April 14, 2025 Virginia Tech, Clemson, and NC State will meet to start coordinating regional program and discuss infrastructure to better collaborate across state lines. The hope is to include University of Tennessee Knoxville in the future.

The dean of the College of Natural Resources and Environment (CNRE), Paul Winistorfer, provided an electronic update that was distributed to the council prior to the meeting.

CNRE is advancing key initiatives, including faculty hires in invasive species and packaging research, with negotiations ongoing for a dual-career hire in Fish and Wildlife Conservation.

Facility upgrades in Cheatham Hall have created new lab and office spaces, while future plans include a fire lab in Center Woods and an expanded packaging research lab at the Brooks Center.

The college will celebrate 100 years of forestry education with the inaugural John F. Hosner Distinguished Lecture on February 25.

Paul shared that Virginia Tech will host the 2025 International Association of Packaging Research Institutes Conference, themed The Future of Packaging is Circular, featuring a keynote by alumnus Omar Asali.

The dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine (VetMed), Dan Givens, provided an update on searches within the college.

Dan also shared positive feedback on the communications from the Provost Office and Office of Research and Innovation related to the Presidential Executive Orders.

Budget and Finance
The AVP for budget and financial planning, Tim Hodge, shared that each chamber of the Commonwealth of Virginia has approved their respective amendments to the Governor's budget proposal from December. Tim provided a overview of items that may impact Agency 229 including, salary increases, bonus programs, health insurance premiums, larger animal veterinarian program, innovative agriculture equipment, and DEQ groundwater research.

The group discussed the funding associated with the compensation actions in more detail.

Tim shared that the state budget process should come to a close by the end of February.

OVPRI
The senior VP for research and innovation, Dan Sui, provided an update on the university's response to the Presidential Executive Orders related to research.

Government and Community Relations
Lauren Augustine shared that the university is working closely with stakeholders and government to track and understand the impact of the Presidential Executive Orders.