

**International Programs in the College of Agricultural Sciences
Strategic Plan 2008-2013
“Creating the Global Network”**

Addendum

Submitted by the International Programs Advisory Council
March 2009

I. Executive Summary

The International Programs Advisory Council is pleased to submit this addendum to its 2008-2013 strategic plan for the College of Agricultural Sciences. Called "Creating the Global Network," the strategic plan lays out a vision for the College to create a network of alliances and collaborative partners to advance the knowledge base, seeking creative solutions to today's complex challenges related to the food and fiber system. The plan calls for a new organizing model in the Office of International Programs to build the expertise and flexibility needed to focus on opportunities for integrated programs worldwide that combine research, teaching and service.

Since the plan was submitted in March 2008, tremendous progress has been made on many of the goals set forth in the five year plan. The Office of International Programs has adopted a new model of operation suited for the opportunities ahead and responding to the budget challenges of the College. Notable progress has been made for both our undergraduate and graduate programs and we have successfully garnered external funds from grants and donors to support our growth.

Looking ahead, we expect greater opportunities to advance our international vision and agenda. On the national scene, under the new Obama administration, it is highly likely that international development in agriculture will receive new emphasis. Indeed, during his inauguration speech, President Obama stated, "To the people of poor nations, we pledge to work alongside you to make your farms flourish and let clean waters flow; to nourish starved bodies and feed hungry minds." At both the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development there are signs of renewed appreciation for the role that the land-grant universities can play as partners in international development and new legislation has been introduced, the Global Security Act, to formalize the programs in the U.S. budget. Meanwhile, at Penn State, there is new leadership for the globalization effort on campus. Under the direction of a new Vice Provost for Globalization, Penn State is putting forth a new vision for the university. This past year also saw the opening of a new School for International Affairs at Penn State which will bring new resources and visibility to the university in the larger arena. The College, under the direction of the Director of International Programs, has been a key participant in all of these new undertakings on both the national and local scene and as such, we are poised to see additional growth in our programs.

This addendum summarizes the approach outlined in detail in the 2008-2013 strategic plan, highlights some key successes to date, and focuses on how international engagement can assist the College in reaching its broader goals in its five strategic initiatives areas and in its targeted goals and strategies.

II. Strategic Plan Summary and Implementation Progress

In March, 2008, the International Programs Advisory Council submitted its 2008-2013 strategic plan to the College. Called "Creating the Global Network," the plan laid out an approach designed to support a new vision for the College:

It is time to embrace the notion of globalization...of a network of alliances and collaborative partners to advance the knowledge base, seeking creative solutions to today's complex challenges related to the food and fiber system including energy, environment, health, economic and social well-being across all borders. It is time to embrace the notion of globalization...welcoming students of all backgrounds to our campus and providing them with the tools to succeed in an increasingly integrated and multicultural world. It is time to embrace the notion of globalization...to consider the special perspectives and needs of our Pennsylvania communities and develop programs that position our citizens to fully engage.

While the plan built on the successes of the College internationalization effort since the new Office of International Programs was created in 2000, the plan also was designed to foster dynamic change in the approach to international program development. In the last year alone, tremendous progress has been made to implement the changes and recommendations detailed in the plan:

1. **New Organizing Model.** The 2008-2013 strategic plan moves us away from the "flagship" program concept and towards a more flexible approach, allowing us to work with faculty in creating research and learning "networks" across the globe. To that end, the office has restructured and no longer includes program coordinators for Latin America or Central and Eastern Europe. IPAC will hold annual planning meetings to set key priorities for the coming fiscal year. Meetings will happen in May in order to include appropriate budget planning requests. Priorities for this year included Graduate Program Development, a China initiative, and communication and marketing. NOTE: The office also moved this year to a suite in 106 Ag Admin.
2. **Promoting Semester-Long Programs for Students.** Under the leadership of the College's Study Abroad Coordinator, the College has also made excellent progress implementing its study abroad strategic plan. We have a record number of students studying abroad for a semester this year (22), up from one (1) in 2000 and double last year's number (11). Our students are also going to more non-traditional destinations, including Senegal and Greece and we have succeeded in securing a new endowed program, "Agriculture Adventures," to support students seeking unusual international agriculture experiences.
3. **Graduate Program Development.** The Office has been working closely with the department of Entomology to make study abroad and research abroad opportunities more accessible for graduate students. In the last year, we have successfully garnered two more grants--one with France and one with Brazil--to support these types of opportunities for students in Entomology and related fields. The Office has also continued to work on developing the dual-title degree program in International Agriculture and Development and recently submitted a proposal to the USDA's Higher Education Challenge grant program for support. The proposed curriculum was also submitted to the College's Curriculum Committee for review.
4. **China initiative.** The Office is actively working with a University-wide strategic planning committee to develop a Penn State initiative with China. The Office also developed a College-wide plan for strategic engagement with China as part of the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan, with a recommendation for a focus on plant sciences. To that end, we sent a delegation to China in

October to investigate issues related to reintroduction of the chestnut tree. We also hosted a delegation here in December interested in IPM and bio-control. Both received funding from USDA.

5. **Communication and Marketing.** The Office's new website was launched in April 2008.

In addition, during the 07/08 fiscal year, the office worked with departments and units to secure a total of \$431,612 in external grants. For this fiscal year to date, we have succeeded bringing in an additional \$172,287.

III. College Goals and Strategies

The 2008-2013 plan as submitted in March 2008, was also designed to meet the College's key goals, particularly in the following areas:

a. **Extension Natural Work Groups.** One of the main functions of the Office of International Programs is to provide leadership for the internationalization of extension. To that end, the Office serves as a gateway for opportunities and programs for extension educators to develop expertise and global perspective relevant to their clientele's needs as described and represented by the natural work groups. Building on the success of the state-wide series of conferences held in 2006, the Office is working with a group of educators to provide in-service training at the March, 2009, conference. In addition, the Office continues to integrate extension educators into other College international projects via the Tag Along Fund, in particular. Since the program was created in 2004, 23% of the Tag Along awards has been for extension educators (following graduate student awards at 48%). Our educators have consistently received campus recognition for their international contributions. This year, Andrew Martin, extension educator in Mifflin County, will receive the LaMarr Kopp award for international service. Nancy Crago, Allegheny County, was the recipient in 2007.

b. **Enhancements to the student experience for resident, distance, and extension students.** IPAC believes that providing international opportunities to our students is critical for our programs for the future. The 2008-2013 Strategic Plan called for a focused effort on enhancing the graduate student experience. In partnership with the units, the Office secured two multi-year grants (totaling roughly \$400,000) to provide international experiences to our graduate students in the last year. In addition, the Office provided leadership in developing a new dual-title degree program for graduate students in international agriculture and graduate students continue to receive the bulk of the Tag Along awards to support their international education opportunities. At the undergraduate level, the 2008-2013 strategic plan included the first-ever strategic plan for internationalizing the undergraduate experience. The last year saw the doubling of the number of undergraduate students studying abroad (23).

c. **Assessment of student learning outcomes.** The College is committed to graduating "globally competent" students. Under the leadership of the Dean's office, the Office undertook the development of a global competency assessment measure and process. With IRB approval, the measure was administered to the incoming class for the academic year 2009-2010 and will be re-administered in four years.

d. **Implementation of cost-savings, cost-avoidance and revenue generation.** The Office of International Programs has always approached its work with an eye to cost-avoidance. Faculty, staff and students traveling with the Office are required to turn in actual expenses--the office does not reimburse full per diem. Because of wide-ranging per diem rates by location and varied trip lengths, it is difficult to calculate an accurate average of the cost-savings based on this policy. However, we estimate that the policy saves roughly \$1,000 per person per average trip. The Office recommends that this become a College-wide policy.

e. **Enhancements to the recognition, reporting, and distribution of the impact of our programming.** As called for in the IPAC 2008-2013 strategic plan, the Office launched a new and improved website to draw better attention to the scope and quality of our international programs and experiences. The Office also improved its communication efforts by regularizing its newsletter in electronic form and consistently seeks opportunities to highlight our international programs in regular College publications.

f. **Contributions to the framework to foster diversity.** The Office believes that internationalizing our programs is an excellent way to support the College's efforts to foster diversity. Our goal is to bring new perspectives and appreciation for alternative cultural approaches and values to the issues discussed in the classroom. Moreover, the Office makes every attempt to broaden participation in our program offerings to students from a range of backgrounds and to create opportunities for staff to participate and contribute. Much of the fund-raising for international programs is designed to ensure that student participation in our programs is "equalized" and accessible to students of all socio-economic backgrounds. The Tag Along funds are open to staff to participate in programs--currently 23% of the awards are for staff.

IV. Strategic Initiatives

The International Programs Advisory Council in this addendum also advocates for wider recognition among the planning groups in the College for the role that international partnerships and experiences can play in the realization of the College's five strategic initiatives. IPAC puts forward the following for further consideration and refinement:

1. **Energy.** IPAC urges the planning groups to specifically consider the "lessons" that can be learned from other countries and their energy policies and practices, particularly regarding green energy, energy independence, community development impacts of energy choices, primary and secondary product development, as well as crop production and environmental impacts of bio-energy.
2. **Entrepreneurship.** IPAC suggests that there is tremendous opportunity to explore the concept and approaches to entrepreneurship in both developing and developed countries, such as in the European Union. In the developing world, IPAC suggests investigation of informal economies, micro-financing, and rural development in the face of overurbanization.
3. **Food, Diet and Health.** There are two key aspects of this area that IPAC recommends the planning groups develop. First, in the area of addressing global hunger, IPAC suggests mobilization of faculty to develop research in staple foods and adapted germplasm. IPAC also suggests more emphasis be placed on the integration of these scientific solutions to hunger with

the social science research needed to ensure the translation of research and technical dissemination. Secondly, the area of food safety should also be carefully considered in this era of global trade. IPAC suggests that training and outreach programs may be reconstituted to reach a global audience.

4. Water Quality and Quantity. Water quality and quantity, and access to water, moreover, are critical issues globally and will increasingly be at the root of social unrest and conflicts around the world. Most contemporary global problems are related to water quality/quantity issues. Examples include: industrial water supply issues; irrigation; extreme hydrological events; land degradation; water-borne diseases; and energy. Penn State should focus its international engagement on those areas where we have expertise and with countries or regions of the world that face problems similar to our own where we might learn from others. For example, the College and collaborating units have particular strength in the analysis and modeling of soil-water interaction and collaboration with the College of Engineering brings significant strength in domestic water supply and treatment through tertiary stages. Scientists in the College working in conjunction with Huck Institutes have significant capacity in the epidemiological aspects of water-borne and/or water-related diseases. Penn State strengths in regard to global climate change pertain strongly to destructive aspects of extreme weather events and extended droughts that are expected to be exacerbated by instabilities of global climate. Small and large-scale hydro-power are directly linked to broad-spectrum aspects of addressing energy diversity as a thrust of Penn State Institutes for Energy and Environment with programs in the College. Land degradation leading to upland erosion and sedimentation of water storage capacity are components of landscape-level management of vegetation through forest and agriculture practices for sustainability.

5. Pest Prediction and Response. As with the food safety issue, IPAC suggests that planning groups in this area consider the issue of invasive species in this era of increased global agriculture. For the best research, it is critical for faculty to have linkages overseas to incorporate understanding of the country of origin into our solution matrix. This is particularly true for Asia and regulatory aspects. Similarly, IPAC believes that the general area of Integrated Pest Management presents great opportunities for international collaboration and can help prevent the contamination of our imports. Penn State currently enjoys a huge strength in modeling of pests and migration—a technical approach that would be helpful to developing countries.

V. Indicators

- a. Number of new opportunities for undergraduates
- b. Number of undergraduate students studying abroad
- c. Number of graduate students studying or researching abroad
- d. Number of international students
- e. Number of alumni and other benefactors engaged and supporting international programs
- f. Number of PSU Cooperative Extension with international experience
- g. Number of students enrolling in the INTAG minor
- h. Number of students enrolling in the INTAD dual-title degree program
- i. Amount of outside funding raised
- j. Number of faculty with international experience
- k. Number of courses with international content

VI. Prioritized List

As discussed above, the IPAC strategic plan set forth a new operating model for the office and the internationalization of the College. The new model was designed to create a smaller, more flexible executive office that could respond more readily to opportunities via partnerships with the units. As such, in the last year, the office downsized to reduce emphasis on its "flagship" programs. Further, for this year, the focus areas have been graduate program development and China. The next IPAC strategic planning meeting will be held in May 2009. Possible priority areas include a continuation of graduate program development (with a particular emphasis on building the infrastructure for more exchange and integrated programs) and possibly a focus on coordinating our Africa programs to link into expected new initiatives at Penn State.