

# **The Applied Economic Program**

## **STRATEGIC PLAN (2015-2019)**

### **The Applied Economic Program will:**

- ❑ be recognized as one of the most highly respected departments of agricultural economics in the KSA, attract outstanding students, and recruit outstanding faculty and staff;
- ❑ uphold our deep-rooted commitment as a research-intensive department and enhance opportunities for new faculty discoveries to complement learning and to better prepare students to compete in a knowledge-based society;
- ❑ prepare society-ready graduates with the ability to think analytically, learn independently and to be able to apply economic concepts effectively in their professional and personal decision making;
- ❑ strengthen our basic and applied disciplinary and multidisciplinary research contributions through and with the active participation of graduate and undergraduate students; and
- ❑ pro-actively participate and tangibly contribute to local, regional, and state social and economic growth and development efforts.

The Applied Economic Program will target and actively seek inherent complementarities among all its activities so as to link successes in one domain as an instrument to leverage success across other domains.

## OUTCOMES, ASSESSMENT METHODS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

**Outcome 1: Increase Student Enrollment, Access to Higher Education and Preparedness**

### Assessment Methods:

- ☐ Following up target student Enrollment of graduate students.
- ☐ Following up target student Enrollment of undergraduate students.

### Objectives:

*Objective 1.1: Hire, promote, and retain excellent faculty and staff.*

#### Strategies:

- ☐ Enhance funding opportunities to increase the number of faculty and staff by developing program.
- ☐ Sustain compensation for faculty and staff consistent with their high productivity and our peer institutions by conducting periodic market reviews of salaries for commensurate productivity and performance measures.

*Objective 1.2: Provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.*

#### Strategies:

- ☐ Increase faculty development leaves, foreign work activities and staff development opportunities.
- ☐ Encourage faculty and staff to apply for currently available opportunities.
- ☐ Acquire additional faculty and staff to be able to take advantage of potential opportunities without compromising the integrity of current program.
- ☐ Participate in international research efforts to interact with foreign scholars and highlight international research output and funding in annual faculty evaluations.

*Objective 1.3: Diversify faculty, staff, and student body.*

#### Strategies:

- ☐ Recruit graduate students, staff and faculty from non-traditional, as well as traditional sources of candidates by increasing the number of recruiting visits and efforts by current faculty, staff and graduate students.

- ☐ Continue to enhance the professional research reputation of the department to be able to attract increased numbers of non-traditional staff and graduate students.
- ☐ Strategically amend or introduce course offerings in the department to reach out to and increase the visibility of the department across campus in order to enhance diversity of the student body.

## **Outcome 2: Enhance Academic Quality and Reputation**

### General Assessment Methods:

- ☐ Hire additional faculty members.
- ☐ Increase diversity.
- ☐ Increase the number of staff.
- ☐ Achieve salary parity for faculty and staff, benchmarked against appropriate skill sets and professional research areas.
- ☐ Achieve the departmental award of scholarships and raise the levels of scholarship stipends.
- ☐ Increase the number of students involved in study abroad and exchange programs with international institutions.
- ☐ Increase the number of undergraduate students joining the accelerated program.
- ☐ Increase student participation in internships .
- ☐ Offer distance learning courses.

### Assessment Methods in the Undergraduate Degree Programs:

- ☐ Increase undergraduate student retention, of students with 2.0 GPA or higher.
- ☐ Increase rate of students receiving scholarships.
- ☐ Increase the number of undergraduate students involved in research projects.
- ☐ Increase the number of undergraduate students in other departments who minor in Applied Economic Program.
- ☐ Graduates with job offers, will report an initial starting salary in excess of the national average of all *agricultural college* graduates.
- ☐ Increase number of students whom will answer “yes” to the question: “Did your degree academically prepare you to pursue a graduate/professional program?”
- ☐ Increase number of students in Senior Research Paper whom will be able to: Express clearly in written communications, use examples to illustrate issues, logically- support arguments, accurately use economic/business terminology, and demonstrate appropriate use of economic/business analytical tools.
- ☐ Increase number of students participating in the Exit Interview whom will “agree” with the question: Would you recommend the degree program to an entering college freshman?
- ☐ Increase number of students participating in the survey whom will answer “yes” to the question: Would you recommend taking a specific departmental course?

- ☐ Increase number of students participating in the Exit interview will “agree” that: Applied Economic Program prepared them effectively to obtain employment.

Objectives:

*Objective 2.1: Recruit and retain the best and brightest students.*

Strategies:

- ☐ Increase the focus on mathematical, science and computer skills in undergraduate recruiting of high school students.
- ☐ Continue graduate student recruiting through professional meetings, advertisements, and professional ties with universities that have not traditionally served as sources of graduate students.
- ☐ Increase research productivity in reputable peer-reviewed journals and professional reports to recruit graduate students.
- ☐ Increase research funding to attract and recruit graduate students.
- ☐ Amend or introduce higher level course offerings to attract non-traditional students from across campus and enhance graduate student recruitment.
- ☐ Increase research activities and funding with faculty to expose new students to our department.
- ☐ Reinforce student advisement and mentoring by faculty.

*Objective 2.2: Enhance educational access to campus and off-campus students using appropriate educational delivery technology.*

Strategies

- ☐ Upgrade/enhance multimedia hardware and software in classrooms as needed.
- ☐ Initiate development of selected subject-matter materials for distance delivery that lend themselves to that format
- ☐ Monitor and report development and application of distance delivery materials and other use of teaching technology.

*Objective 2.3: Provide specialized educational access for individuals interested in refining their skills through professional development and continuing education.*

Strategies:

- ☐ Provide short courses, conferences, and intersession courses as needs arise.
- ☐ Evaluate the development of a distance-based Masters of Agribusiness program for professionals .
- ☐ Continue to explore the possibility of offering a 4-year degree program .

*Objective 2.4: Enhance students' knowledge of and preparation to deal with global issues and environmental and other natural resource issues through increased involvement in internships and study abroad and exchange programs.*

Strategies:

- ☐ Expose students to internships and foreign study opportunities available.
- ☐ Increase research and teaching collaborations with foreign scholars and highlight these efforts in annual faculty evaluations.
- ☐ Increase national research funding and highlight these efforts in annual faculty evaluations.

*Objective 2.5: Revisit and redesign, if necessary, minor requirements for undergraduates.*

Strategy:

- ☐ Evaluate the instances where our minor requirements can enhance other objectives for undergraduate education and professional outreach.

*Objective 2.6: Establish more scholarships and fellowships for non-Saudi students and raise stipends.*

Strategy:

- ☐ Work in conjunction with development efforts to increase the level and number of donations for Non-Saudi students scholarships.

*Objective 2.7: Increase involvement of undergraduate students in research.*

Strategies:

- ☐ Identify research topics conducive to undergraduate research projects.
- ☐ Increase student research opportunities by establishing the more Research Centers.
- ☐ Increase research with faculty across campus as this often enhances undergraduate research in the early stages.
- ☐ Utilize Centers of Excellency at the college to locate emerging topics or demonstration projects to facilitate undergraduate research and improve cross-disciplinary participation in undergraduate research.
- ☐ Highlight undergraduate research efforts in faculty annual achievement reports.

### **Outcome 3: Expand and Enhance Research, and Further Outreach and engagement**

Assessment Methods:

- ☐ Publish the equivalent of top-ranked journal articles per year, encompassing disciplinary, multidisciplinary, and inter-institutional research activities.
- ☐ Publish more papers in top-ranked journal articles with (or by) graduate students.
- ☐ Publish more papers in top-ranked journal articles with collaborators from foreign institutions, other institutions or other on-campus departments.
- ☐ Participate in funded research with collaborators from foreign institutions, other institutions and other on-campus departments.
- ☐ Increase the annual research funding.
- ☐ Conduct research that contributes to the sustainable economic growth of the region.

Objectives:

*Objective 3.1: Identify and build research programs on current and emerging issues.*

Strategies:

- ❑ Strengthen each of the following research trusts: water economics research, risk management and crop marketing, agricultural trade, livestock economics, energy and health economics.
- ❑ Develop internationally focused research activities across the research trusts highlighted above.
- ❑ Establish an Agribusiness/Entrepreneurship Research Center.

*Objective 3.2: Expand research further into the marketing channels to include producers, processors, and users of food, and environmental amenities.*

Strategies:

- ❑ Identify a team core among the faculty and other to take advantage of requests for proposals addressing consumer demand and industrial organization research issues.
- ❑ Identify a team core among the faculty and other departments to respond to requests for proposals addressing environmental economics issues.

*Objective 3.3: Expand external research funding.*

Strategies:

- ❑ Use teams to identify and respond more quickly to requests for research proposals in highly specialized areas.
- ❑ Highlight the completion of research proposals in annual faculty achievement reports, especially multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary proposals.
- ❑ Identify courses of action that complement these interdisciplinary research interests and which integrate and complement these funding efforts.
- ❑ Identify industrial (firms, livestock/dairy producers, farmers' groups), or local community partners to enroll as research team participants who meet regularly enough to take advantage of research proposal requests from competitive sources.

*Objective 3.4: Promote and support multidisciplinary and inter-institutional research.*

Strategies:

- ❑ Reward and maintain a healthy component of disciplinary emphasis as "capital stock" through annual faculty evaluations.
- ❑ Expand inter-disciplinary and inter-institutional research to the extent resource expansion allows by increasing a high degree of complementarity among tasks (research, teaching, and outreach) department-wide.
- ❑ Seek requests for proposals that align core disciplinary emphases with efforts involving multi-disciplinary participation.

*Objective 3.5: Expand dissemination of research results.*

Strategies:

- ☐ Increase exposure through traditional outlets (journal articles, professional presentations, chapters, etc.).
- ☐ Increase exposure through non-traditional outlets (web sites, electronic publication, etc.).
- ☐ Increase exposure by working with other institutions and other departments on campus.
- ☐ Increase exposure by working with industrial (firms and varied producer groups) and local community partners

*Objective 3.6: Identify and develop research activities that contribute to sustainable economic growth and development in the Kingdom.*

Strategies:

- ☐ Evaluate opportunities to contribute to economic growth and development through requests for proposals as they emerge.
- ☐ Monitor and report progress toward development of the Agribusiness/ Entrepreneurship Research Center, dependent on available resources.
- ☐ Maintain research and project teams among industrial and community organizations.

**Outcome 4: Attain Resource Sufficiency and Efficiency, Ensure Accountability, and Enhance Strategic Partnerships and Alliances**

Assessment Methods:

- ☐ Establish a significant partnership with a community college or a post-secondary institution.
- ☐ Establish an accountability mechanism for faculty and staff productivity in outreach and university, public, and professional service.

Objectives:

*Objective 4.1: Strengthen partnerships and collaborations with local government agencies, non-governmental organizations, industry, and trade associations to identify and meet community needs.*



Strategy:

- ❑ Expand the types of groups with whom we interact and collaborate, including natural resource organizations, economic development groups, and international entities.

*Objective 4.2: Establish educational partnerships and coordinate curricula with community colleges and other post-secondary institutions.*

Strategies:

- ❑ Expand the number of transfer students from community colleges and other post-secondary institutions.
- ❑ Make attempts to formalize working relationships with these institutions.
- ❑ Develop formal ties with four-year colleges as a means to recruit graduate students.

*Objective 4.3: Enhance research partnerships with similar institutions.*

Strategies:

- ❑ Strengthen the partnership with local institutions
- ❑ Seek high degrees of complementarity of this partnership with the missions of the department.
- ❑ Identify alternative vehicles for collaboration on natural resource related issues.

*Objective 4.4: Identify and build collaborative research activities across the College and the university.*

Strategy:

- ❑ Establish an Agribusiness/Entrepreneurship Research Center that would facilitate research with other centers and institutes on campus, and which would contribute to agribusiness and local regional economic growth through providing technical and analytical assistance.

*Objective 4.5: Develop procedures for extending workload credit and teaching/research productivity equivalency for outreach activities.*

Strategies:

- ❑ Develop indicators of productivity for service activities.
- ❑ Evaluate these indicators for use in internal evaluation efforts.

- ☐ Identify outreach activities which would have the highest degree of complementarities with existing teaching and research missions.

**Outcome 5: Establish a National in Scope Positive Image for the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics**

Assessment Methods:

- ☐ Increase the number of award nominations for faculty, staff, and students
- ☐ Increase dissemination of information on accomplishments of faculty, staff, students, and programs.

Objectives:

*Objective 5.1: Increase endowments.*

Strategy:

- ☐ Actively work with development efforts to identify potential donors for scholarships, endowed chairs, professorships, and other types of endowments.

*Objective 5.2: Strengthen pride and prestige of the Department.*

Strategies:

- ☐ Continue efforts to promote our accomplishments within the campus community, the profession, and the citizenry at large.
- ☐ Actively seek more awards for faculty, staff, and students.
- ☐ Submit more information releases to the general public.
- ☐ Communicate achievements better within the academic community.