

Item A

Proposal to Create the Department of Community and Leadership Development

University of Kentucky • College of Agriculture

Executive Summary

The Department of Community and Leadership Development will bring together rural social scientists within the College of Agriculture with a primary focus on interdisciplinary activities in community, organizational and leadership development. By reconfiguring existing College faculty and staff resources into a new Department of Community and Leadership Development, the faculty associated with this new department will be able to address the strategic goals of the College of Agriculture, the University of Kentucky, and the Commonwealth more effectively. This restructuring will position the University to be at the forefront of research, instruction and outreach in community and leadership development.

The **vision** of the Department of Community and Leadership Development is:

- To be recognized as a premier academic location for interdisciplinary rural social science research and undergraduate and graduate education in community, organizational (which includes the institutions of media, education and the Cooperative Extension Service), and leadership development; and,
- To be the source of innovative interdisciplinary rural social science outreach programs that partner with community collaborators to address contemporary issues in community, organizational and leadership development.

The **mission** of the Department of Community and Leadership Development is:

- To develop and apply theories, concepts, methods and tools of rural sociology, communications, education and related social sciences to the analysis and understanding of community and leadership development in the context of a changing society;
- To integrate social science, education and communication theories and methods into effective research, instructional and outreach/Extension programs for community, organizational and leadership development; and
- To empower residents of the Commonwealth to act on their own behalf by enhancing their skills and knowledge of community, organizational and leadership development.

Key Points of the Proposal

- The proposed Department offers the University of Kentucky a unique approach to addressing critical community and leadership issues in the Commonwealth and the nation.
- The proposed Department is consistent with the strategic plans of the College of Agriculture and the University as well as six of the seven criteria in setting priorities for strategic University investments identified in President Todd's July 5, 2001 memorandum to the faculty announcing the formation of the Task Force on University of Kentucky Futures: Faculty for the 21st Century.
- The proposal is largely revenue neutral for the College of Agriculture inasmuch as it is essentially reorganizing existing resources to create a new academic unit.
- The development of this proposal has been faculty initiated and faculty driven.
- During the development of this proposal, the following groups directly affected by this proposal have been consulted: academic and service units within the College and the University; undergraduate and graduate students; and professional and administrative staff.
- The establishment of the Department of Community and Leadership Development respects academic freedom, both in form and substance as evidenced by the faculty-initiated process that has generated this proposal.

Proposal to Create the Department of Community and Leadership Development University of Kentucky • College of Agriculture

Overview

The Department of Community and Leadership Development will bring together rural social scientists within the College of Agriculture and provide focus for interdisciplinary activities in community, organizational and leadership development. By reconfiguring existing College faculty and staff resources into a new department of Community and Leadership Development, the faculty associated with this new department will be able to address the strategic goals of the College of Agriculture, the University of Kentucky, and the Commonwealth more effectively. This restructuring will position the University to be at the forefront of research, instruction and outreach in community and leadership development. For example, several new initiatives have been proposed in Congress and by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (ESCOP/ECOP) that are intended to strengthen national commitment to rural revitalization and community development. Furthermore, there

is a growing interest among private foundations in the study and development of leadership skills as well as community and organizational communications.

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Overview of the Process to Form The Department of Community and Leadership Development

In the spring of 2001, a group of faculty in the College of Agriculture met to begin exploring the possibility of creating a new academic department that would integrate and focus the College's existing resources committed to leadership, organizational and community development. The faculty involved in this discussion were those in the Rural Sociology program of the Sociology Department (Larry Burmeister, Patricia Dyk, Lori Garkovich, Tom Greider, Gary Hansen, Rosalind Harris, Ron Hustedde, Rick Maurer, Keiko Tanaka, Paul Warner, Julie Zimmerman) and those involved in the Agricultural Education, Communications and Leadership undergraduate degree program (Charles Byers, Lori Garkovich, Martha Nall, Roger Rennekamp, Rod Tulloch, Randy Weckman, Deborah Witham).

The first meeting was to brainstorm what each faculty member felt might be

the advantages/benefits of creating a new academic department and to identify faculty concerns related to the formation of a new academic department (see *Attachment A* - minutes of the May 25, 2001 meeting). This meeting also explored what each faculty member saw as essential requirements for launching a new department and supporting it in achieving its goals. At the end of this meeting, the consensus was that the advantages/benefits were significant; the concerns could be addressed; and the start-up requirements could be assembled. Everyone was asked to respond to the following questions: What do you see as shared interests that would underlie a new department? What are your individual areas of research, instruction and extension/service expertise? What (if any) administrative assignments do you have? What is your DOE? A text summary and table were developed from this information and shared among the participating faculty (see *Attachments B and C*). This information underscored the intersecting interests and opportunities for interdisciplinary research, instruction and outreach activities that could emerge from the formation of a new department.

This information was then used by a committee of the faculty to draft a white paper for the proposed department that would state the vision and mission of the Department of Community and Leadership Development; three- and five-year goals; the instruction, research and Extension foci; and the strengths of the Department of Community and Leadership Development. A discussion of the draft was the focus of a second group meeting at the end of June. Following this meeting, successive drafts of the white paper (total of eight drafts) were circulated to all faculty so everyone could review and comment on each others' suggestions. The white paper was submitted to Dean M. Scott Smith and a meeting was scheduled with him for a discussion about the proposed department and to determine his support for the faculty to continue pursuing this idea. Dean Smith urged the faculty to move forward with the development of the proposal. A third meeting was scheduled for August 21 in order to take a formal vote of faculty support for establishing the new department. The vote was 16 in favor with one abstention (A faculty member who had been on sabbatical but has been on the E-mail list and participated in the revisions of the white paper felt uncomfortable voting since he had not been present during the meetings.)

During this time, the chair and the Policy Committee of the Sociology Department were informed of the discussions about the new department and the intent/desire to develop procedures for maintaining a jointly administered graduate program in Sociology. Current graduate students in rural sociology have been informed about these discussions and asked for comments, concerns and suggestions. Moreover, the proposed department was the subject of many informal discussions among faculty and students and peers in other institutions whose advice and counsel were sought during these three months.

Programmatic Considerations

The Department of Community and Leadership Development is consistent with the strategic plans of the College of Agriculture and the University of Kentucky. In a

memorandum to the faculty on July 5, 2001, President Todd announced the formation of a Task Force on University of Kentucky Futures: Faculty for the 21st Century. President Todd urged the Task Force to apply seven criteria in setting priorities for strategic investments.

The proposed department reflects six of the seven criteria.

- Major trends and opportunities in extramural research funding

At a national level, several new federal and private foundation initiatives have opened opportunities for research by faculty in this department. For example, the field of leadership studies is a rapidly expanding area of funding for both research and program development. There is a growing recognition that leadership is an important subject for conceptual analysis, research and development. Similarly, there is a renewed commitment to rural revitalization at the national level with proposed new funding for research on community processes (e.g., civic engagement/social capital formation) as well as a strong interest in enhancing our understanding of more effective approaches to adult education and organizational communications. Furthermore, charitable foundations such as Pew and Poynter have funding initiatives in the area of community and organizational communications and others support initiatives in organizational development for nonprofit organizations.

- Special needs of the Commonwealth and the region to include economic development, technological advances, cultural enrichment, physical well-being and social prosperity

The Department of Community and Leadership Development rests on the understanding of the interdependence of individual, organizational and community development and a recognition that sustainable economic development requires a healthy skilled labor force with access to capital in a community with a strong and diverse leadership base that has acted to build the physical and social infrastructure to support economic growth. A critical mass of faculty whose expertise will enhance the research and service programs in support of different facets of community/economic development will reside within the Department of Community and Leadership Development. This will occur by providing an academic structure that supports multi-disciplinary research and outreach activities that enhance the capacities of local communities to build sustainable economies. Moreover, the instructional program will help develop knowledgeable and skilled leaders for tomorrow.

- Encouragement of new collaborations in research, learning and service

There are untapped opportunities for collaborative research, learning and service in the area of community and leadership development. For example, a goal of the Department of Community and Leadership Development is to initiate an applied emphasis or specialty under the existing Masters of Science in Agriculture that will engage faculty with particular expertise at the regional universities and universities outside of Kentucky in offering courses and directing experiential learning projects. Similarly, the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service is moving to enhance the training it offers to its professional staff and community leaders, and the faculty in the new department bring interdisciplinary expertise and a broad knowledge base to the

design of new educational programs. Thus, by providing a common academic base for the community and leadership development efforts of the College of Agriculture, the proposed department will enhance synergy among faculty and their research, instructional and outreach efforts.

- Linkages to the University's existing and emerging research strengths

The amalgam of communication, education, Extension and rural sociology will broaden the impact of the research in these areas by focusing on multi-disciplinary perspectives that apply to critical community and leadership issues. The restructuring will provide more focus to pre-existing strengths. For example, the Rural Sociology program at the University of Kentucky has a long and distinguished history of substantive contributions to the sociology of agriculture and natural resources, community development, and family studies. The proposed department will broaden the impact of the rural social science research by incorporating a multi-disciplinary perspective on critical organizational, leadership, and community issues.

- Compatibility with the University's land-grant mission

The Department of Community and Leadership Development will provide innovative, interdisciplinary rural social science research, instruction, and outreach programs within the College of Agriculture. A core focus of the Department of Community and Leadership Development is individual, organizational and community development to enhance the quality of life of Kentucky residents through the application of the concepts, insights, and methods of the social sciences. This also reflects community revitalization initiatives at the national level through the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

- Potential for contributing to high-quality undergraduate, graduate, and professional education

The Department of Community and Leadership Development will be the academic home of the rapidly growing interdisciplinary undergraduate major in Agricultural Education, Communications, and Leadership (See *Attachment D* for an overview of this undergraduate degree program). The faculty of the proposed department recognize that there is a need for an interdisciplinary social sciences Master's degree within Kentucky and the region to respond to the growing desire of professionals in state and local government, nonprofit organizations, as well as county extension agents for advanced training. The new department provides a springboard to respond to this unmet need through the development of appropriate degree programs and continuing professional education opportunities.

Departmental Strengths and Contributions

Several faculty discussions produced a diverse list of reasons for creating a new academic department. Key among these were the many strengths of the proposed department.

1. The synergy that comes from developing and applying interdisciplinary perspectives to the analysis of complex, inter-related issues of individual,

organizational and community development.

2. A focus of research and outreach expertise on a significant challenge confronting the Commonwealth: the need to strengthen community and economic development efforts.
3. Opportunities for enhanced interdisciplinary research and outreach among faculty with expertise in sociology, family studies, social organization, education, communications and community processes.
4. A commitment among faculty to interdisciplinary collaboration.
5. A dedication to engaging students and community partners in collaborative learning processes.
6. A focus on empowering residents to act on their own behalf by enhancing their skills and knowledge of individual, organizational and community development.
7. Interdisciplinary expertise in the social sciences that will enhance the research and extension programs of other departments and units within the College of Agriculture.
8. An interdisciplinary faculty well-positioned to compete for extramural funding for research, instruction and outreach programs.

The proposed department is not unprecedented and offers the University of Kentucky a unique approach to addressing critical community and leadership issues in the Commonwealth and the nation. Several other land grant universities (e.g., Ohio State University, University of California at Davis, University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana) have departments that are similar – but not identical – to the one proposed here. The strength of this proposal is that it is faculty initiated in response to opportunities to enhance and broaden their impact on Kentucky.

The program review of the Agricultural Education, Communications, and Leadership undergraduate degree completed in the spring of 2000 made several recommendations, including that the program become an academic department or affiliate with one; that a third Agricultural Education faculty member be hired immediately; and, that the Agricultural Communications faculty be given a clear mandate to pursue instructional activities vis-à-vis their production work. The program review concluded that these action recommendations were critical to the continuation of the undergraduate degree program. The establishment of the Department of Community and Leadership Development will address each of these recommendations.

The proposed department will have an impact on the Department of Sociology which is administratively located in both the College of Agriculture and

the College of Arts and Sciences. Currently, the Department of Sociology includes faculty with primary appointments in both Colleges. In addition, sociologists in the Department of Behavioral Science in the College of Medicine have graduate faculty appointments in Sociology. The department administers a Bachelor's, Master's and Ph.D. with graduate specializations in crime, law and deviance; medical sociology; rural sociology; social inequalities; and work, organizations and social change. Currently, a portion of the DOE of six faculty in Rural Sociology in the College of Agriculture is paid by the College of Arts and Sciences to teach undergraduate and graduate courses in the Sociology instructional program and almost all Rural Sociology faculty serve on Sociology graduate student committees and departmental committees.

When the proposed department is established, the College of Agriculture sociologists will become members of the Department of Community and Leadership Development and will no longer be members of the Department of Sociology. It is the intent of Rural Sociology faculty and College of Agriculture administrators to maintain the current level of instruction of rural faculty in the graduate and undergraduate programs. However, a firm consensus on undergraduate instruction has not yet been achieved in the current Department of Sociology. We believe that the formation of the new department will enhance the Sociology instructional program by increasing research and outreach opportunities for Sociology students.

Finally, this proposal is largely revenue neutral for the College of Agriculture inasmuch as it essentially reorganizes existing resources to create a new entity. Furthermore, the new Department will support new grant initiatives that will, within the next few years, increase extramural funding. However, there are some costs which include:

1. The costs (direct and indirect) of buying out a significant component of the production DOE of the two faculty currently in the Agricultural Communications service unit and the cost of finding replacements within that unit.
2. An increase in administrative cost to the College of Agriculture for a department chair (the administrative cost of a Chair of Sociology is currently shared with the College of Arts and Sciences), a Director of Undergraduate Studies, and a Director of Graduate Studies.
3. Start-up costs associated with the establishment of a new department, co-location, and the addition of new faculty if this occurs.

Individual Considerations

Faculty

Currently, all faculty, including the two untenured rural sociology faculty, have participated fully in all discussions. All faculty members support the proposal for

Department of Community and Leadership Development. Neither of the untenured faculty members is concerned that the formation of Department of Community and Leadership Development might negatively affect their tenure process. However, it is unclear how the timing of the initiation of the Department of Community and Leadership Development might affect the promotion process for one faculty member who is within six months of the beginning of the tenure decision-making process.

As evidenced by the faculty-initiated process that has generated this proposal, the establishment of Department of Community and Leadership Development respects academic freedom, both in form and substance.

All the faculty who will become members of Department of Community and Leadership Development have attained doctorates in their specialty areas. As additional faculty positions are approved, the department will seek qualified candidates with doctorates and who will contribute directly to the mission of the Department of Community and Leadership Development.

In evaluating the implications of this proposal for the availability of resources and opportunities for research, teaching and service activities, we have concluded the following:

1. There will be increased opportunities for extramural funding for instructional development as well as research and outreach programs.
2. There will be an increase in resources required to support current and prospective instructional commitments.
3. The Agricultural Communications faculty who currently have substantial DOE commitments to service unit activities will make a significant shift to research, instruction, and extension activities administered in the new department. The Rural Sociology faculty with 100% extension appointments will also likely diversify their DOEs to include research and/or instruction. Thus, there will be an adjustment in the total FTE committed to research, instruction, and extension in the Department of Community and Leadership Development and, as a consequence, in the College of Agriculture.

Students

What will be the implications of the Department of Community and Leadership Development for students? As proposed, there will be no changes for those pursuing graduate degrees in Sociology other than the likelihood of increased learning opportunities. It is hoped that there will be new graduate education opportunities through a proposed applied emphasis or specialty under the existing Masters of Science in Agriculture. The Department of Community and Leadership Development will provide an academic home with an identifiable Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies for the students in the Agricultural Education,

Communications, and Leadership program. In October, current graduate and undergraduate students who would be affected by the formation of the department were informed of this proposal and their comments solicited. Letters of support were submitted by some of these students as well as by graduates of the AECL program are included in the supporting documentation.

Staff

The core organizing group has completed an evaluation of staffing needs for the new department. It appears that with adjustments in assignments and responsibilities, most (all but .5 FTE) of the staffing needs for the new department can be met through existing staff support currently allocated to the various faculty involved in this reorganization. In October, affected staff were informed of this proposal and its consequences for their work responsibilities and their comments solicited. No staff member provided a negative reaction to the proposal.

Approval:

The proposal has been reviewed and approved by the faculty of the College, the Academic Organization and Structure Committee (Lori Gonzalez, Chair) and is forwarded to the Senate with a positive recommendation from the Senate Council. If approved, the proposal will be sent to the Provost for consideration by the Board of Trustees.

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