



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE
Thursday, June 10, 2021
10:00-11:15 a.m.
College Welcome Center, Room 1108B

STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE

Donovan Ellis, Chairperson
Arlan Kuehn
Terry Nelson
Nicole Sedlacek
Steve Anderson, ex-officio

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS

Del Ames
Dirk Petersen
Julie Robinson
Jeff Scherer
Carol Sibbel
Gene Willers

STAFF

Dr. Leah Barrett
Scott Gray
Paul Feilmeier
Amanda Nipp
Dr. Michele Gill
Dr. Karen Severson
Dr. Tracy Kruse
Jim Curry
Diane Reikofski
Corinne Morris
Tara Smydra
Michael Lechner
Brandon Keller
Chance Lambrecht
Robert Noonan
Bernie Thyen
Sarah Sellin
Robb Thomas
Mike Zierke

THE STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE CAN ONLY RECOMMEND ACTION FOR THE BOARD TO CONSIDER DURING PUBLIC MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS.

The Committee hereby reserves the right to go into executive/closed session pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §84-1410 of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

AGENDA

1. Convene meeting
2. Consider approval of Minutes of meeting of May 13, 2021 – (attached pgs. 2-6)
3. Consider the continuation of the Agriculture programs at Northeast Community College for submission to the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE) – (attached pgs. 7-11) – Corinne Morris and Tara Smydra
4. Enrollment update – Amanda Nipp
5. Other - (information only)
6. Adjourn

**NORTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE

Thursday, May 13, 2021

STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE

Donovan Ellis, Chairperson	PRESENT
Arlan Kuehn	PRESENT @ 10:16 a.m.
Terry Nelson	ABSENT
Nicole Sedlacek	PRESENT
Steve Anderson, ex-officio	ABSENT

STAFF

Dr. Leah Barrett	Josh Schlote
Scott Gray	Dr. Karen Weidner
Paul Feilmeier	Heather Claussen
Amanda Nipp	Sarah Fuerhoff
Dr. Michele Gill	Tara Smydra
Dr. Karen Severson	
Dr. Tracy Kruse	
Jim Curry	
Diane Reikofski	
Corinne Morris	
Dr. Trentee Bush	
Dr. Michael Cooper	
Dr. Kassie Wessendorf	

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS

Del Ames	PRESENT
Dirk Petersen	PRESENT
Julie Robinson	PRESENT @ 9:37 a.m.
Jeff Scherer	PRESENT
Carol Sibbel	PRESENT
Gene Willers	PRESENT @ 10:09 a.m.

MINUTES

1. Donovan Ellis, Chairperson of the Student Success Committee, convened the meeting at 8:40 a.m. in Suites F & G of the Lifelong Learning Center.
2. Recommended approval of the Minutes of the April 8, 2021 meeting as distributed.
3. Amanda Nipp, Vice President of Student Services, advised that staff do not believe that 2020 enrollment numbers provide a true comparison due to the pandemic. 2021 enrollment comparisons shared this morning are compared to 2019. Summer and fall enrollments are down slightly compared to 2019. Based on applications received, staff are very optimistic about the new student enrollment and anticipate that enrollment numbers will be very similar to Fall 2019.

A review of tuition relief programs that are being offered in an effort to boost enrollment for next year was reviewed by Mrs. Nipp:

- Free summer tuition. Tuition will be paid but students are responsible for paying fees and purchasing books.
- Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF). Fall tuition relief. If a student has an expected family contribution (EFC) of \$15,000 or less, the student will receive a grant of \$2,500.
- Debt forgiveness program. This opportunity is for degree-seeking students with past due balances from January 2020 or later.

Mission
Northeast Community College is dedicated to the success of students and the region it serves.

- College Access Scholarship. Mackenzie Scott's donation was placed in an endowed scholarship and the interest from the investment is used to provide this scholarship opportunity.
- Nebraska Career Scholarship. Funds made available by the State of Nebraska.

Concerns were voiced regarding the equity of the Debt Forgiveness Program and what it's teaching students. Inquiry was also made regarding the financial impact from offering the Program. Suggestions were provided to restructure the unpaid debt, even if it is a \$10 or \$15 monthly payment in an effort to recover the payment delinquency.

Amanda Nipp and Scott Gray reported that these are the questions that were asked while the Program was being developed. Due to the pandemic, this is a one-time opportunity to remove the financial barrier so that students can obtain their education. Students must successfully complete their first semester of classes to have the first half of their debt forgiven and successfully complete their second semester of classes to have the second half of their debt forgiven. Students will be required to pay tuition for their courses, prior to previous debt being forgiven. Mrs. Nipp also advised that students receiving financial aid are required to participate in a financial literacy course.

4. Northeast Community College's 2021 commencement ceremony will be held in multiple sessions on May 21st and 22nd. Two board members will participate in each ceremony and will sit on stage. President Barrett and board members will not be shaking the hands of the graduates.

Following the commencement ceremonies, a reception will be held in Union 73. A hospitality room will be available in the Cox Activities Center for individuals who are participating in multiple ceremonies.

5. Vice President of Educational Services, Dr. Michele Gill, introduced Corinne Morris, Dean of Agriculture, Math, and Sciences and Dr. Tee Bush, Horticulture and Golf Course Management instructor. Dr. Gill reported that while the Horticulture and Golf Course Management program does not currently meet the threshold established by the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE) for Student Credit Hour (SCH) of 275 hours and number of degrees awarded in a five year time period, there are new initiatives and a new degree option that will help boost enrollment in the program.

Corinne Morris reported that when former instructor, Kurt Pytleski, retired in December 2020, Dr. Tee Bush was able to step in and assist with the program and make some exciting changes. Dr. Bush has been able to continue with the spring plant sales as well as the poinsettia sales in December, both of which remain popular.

Horticulture is built into and impacts everyone's lives, but it can be cyclical. Horticulture provides food products, aesthetic appeal, and diversified income for people in various industries. People build homes and require landscaping, people move and change landscaping, businesses require landscaping, etc. An Urban Agriculture option enhances the education for those looking for diversified income based on horticulture and value-added products. The option enhances the skills, food production, and income of those living in small, rural, or urban

settings. Northeast recently applied for a grant and found through the application process that we have strong community support. Northeast is working to have an Urban farm on campus within the next five years. This will allow for outdoor learning spaces and experiential learning that is not currently available and also allow for community and other higher education partnerships to grow.

For a while the program attracted students who were golf course minded. The program is about horticulture and turf and the curriculum has been revised so that it will attract students other than the typical 18-year-old and there are numerous careers in horticulture that are related to the changes made in the curriculum. Industry demand couldn't be supplied until the interest was identified.

Northeast's Horticulture and Golf Course Management program is one of very few remaining in the state. Northeast offers the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree with instruction in both horticulture and the turf care and has added a General Horticulture program. The one-year option provides a focus on horticulture and can be stacked toward a two-year AAS degree. An articulation agreement exists with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for a smooth transfer to a four-year institution.

Request was made for the data on the new programs that will bolster the program numbers. It was also suggested that landscaping should possibly be part of the program title.

Board members recognize the growing need for employees in all the varied and diverse areas of horticulture in Nebraska and beyond. A consensus was reached by the members of the Student Success Committee to recommend to the Board of Governors the continuation of the Horticulture and Golf Course Management program at Northeast Community College for submission to the Nebraska CCPE.

6. The Veterinary Technology program review was provided by Dr. Michael Cooper and Dr. Kassie Wessendorf.

Admittance into Northeast's Veterinary Technology program is based on a selective process to best utilize resources, meet accreditation guidelines, and ensure best practice while educating future technicians. The program has maintained high standards and incorporated state-of-the-art equipment into the curriculum and in Fall 2021, the program will be moving into the state-of-the-art facility. This will address facility deficiencies identified by program accreditation reviewers. Opportunities will exist in the new facility to expand the program which will require additional faculty in order to maintain compliance with accreditation standards. This future expansion would assist in meeting the workforce needs of a rapidly growing industry.

The program has a 93% pass rate on the Veterinary Technology National Exam. Northeast is one of two programs within the state of Nebraska. Currently there are no veterinary technology programs in the state of South Dakota. Northeast Community College's location allows it to serve a large portion of eastern South Dakota.

Dr. Cooper reported that as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) exists between Northeast and three local shelters, Puppy Love, Animal Shelter of Northeast Nebraska, and Furbaby

Rescue, to take physical control of animals to provide services. Chickens will also be added to the curriculum. Faculty hope to provide increased large animal experiences for students and continue discussions with members of their advisory committee and industry to identify ways to foster student interest in the care of large animals.

The employment outlook for veterinary technicians is better than average. Currently, there are more job openings than graduates. Employers struggle to find qualified licensed veterinary technicians because the demand exceeds the supply.

A consensus was reached by the Student Success Committee that the Veterinary Technology program meets the needs in the 20-county service area and beyond and also exceeds the thresholds established by the Nebraska CCPE and will recommend to the Board of Governors to approve the continuation of the Veterinary Technology program at Northeast Community College.

7. The Health Information Management System (HIMS) program review was provided by Dr. Karen Weidner, Interim Dean of Health and Wellness; Heather Claussen, Director of Allied Health; and Sarah Fuerhoff, HIMS instructor. The HIMS program has hired an experienced full-time HIMS director who will begin employment in July 2021.

Initial CCPE approval of the HIMS program was received in Fall 2014 and full accreditation status by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM) was received on May 24, 2018. The accreditation provides Northeast's students the ability to sit for the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) and the Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) exams and receive this industry credential.

HIMS professionals gather, analyze, and code patient data for reimbursement from insurance companies. Data supports the growth and needs for HIMS professionals locally, regionally, and nationally and Northeast can help to support health care needs of the service area by offering the HIMS program. HIMS professionals are required to maintain accuracy and completeness of patient data for research and analysis as well as for databases and registries. Medical and treatment history of patients must also be accurately maintained by the HIMS professional.

The HIMS program has a growing community relationship with area healthcare facilities including Faith Regional Health Services, Midtown Health Center, Antelope Memorial Hospital, Clarkson College, Davis & Kassmeier Chiropractor, Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health, Norfolk Veteran's Home, Norfolk Medical Group, Columbus Community Hospital, Providence Medical Center, and Franciscan Healthcare.

With healthcare facilities having Electronic Medical Records and Healthcare Informatics still being a huge area of focus, there is a large need for the Northeast's HIMS program graduates. The Bureau of Labor Statistics documents that jobs are expected to grow by 15% from 2014-2024 which is faster than average. This will create many opportunities in Northeast Nebraska.

Heather Claussen and Sarah Fuerhoff advised that discussion continues regarding curriculum revisions to provide opportunities for stackable credentials.

Dr. Michele Gill advised that the HIMS program falls below the CCPE thresholds, it is due, in part, that the program has not had a full-time director for the past two years which has impacted the ability to recruit students.

While the HIMS programs fall short of the established CCPE thresholds, committee members acknowledged that it is meeting a need in the 20-county service area as well as regionally and a plan is in place to increase enrollment and retain students. A consensus was reached by the Student Success Committee to recommend to the Board of Governors to approve the continuation of the HIMS program at Northeast Community College.

8. With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

Agriculture Programs

2021 Internal/External Program Review

Executive summary

During the spring of 2021, agriculture faculty completed an internal program review survey. Although agriculture programs of study are “stand alone” programs, courses and instructors are shared in appropriate balance to build the individual programs of study. Therefore, this program review includes both collective and specific program data. Agribusiness, Agronomy, Animal Science, Diversified Agriculture, and Precision Agriculture offer Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees and each of the programs has met the CCPE requirements for continuation. The AAS degree in Agriculture has only had one concentration for the past several years. However, a new program of study has now been added as an option for the Agriculture AAS degree. Urban Agriculture will begin in the fall of 2021. Agriculture College Transfer AS/AS degrees are counted as general agriculture degrees. The Natural Resources program of study began in the fall of 2019 as an Associate of Science Degree program. Data for the Natural Resource program was not available at the time of review.

Results from the internal program review survey listed strengths of the agriculture programs as: highly qualified faculty with a diverse range of experience, real-life application, hands-on learning, vision, and leadership. Multi-generational perspectives, travel opportunities, seamless transitions to the workforce or college transfer were also identified as strengths. Instructors use the College farm to enhance student learning outcomes. Several comments focused on the value of the College farm in building curriculum and hands-on learning experiences for students.

When asked to identify areas of opportunity, faculty provided many examples. Facilities and continuing to work toward completion of the NEXUS vision was discussed. Also, faculty would like to diversify production on the College farm. Applying for future grants and sharing responsibility for implementation while managing heavy workloads was identified. Increasing and strengthening partnerships with industry as well as educational institutions were seen as areas of opportunity. Faculty expressed a need to increase engagement on the College farm for both teachers and students. The untapped potential of students from non-ag sectors was identified as an opportunity to reach new populations and prepare them for satisfying careers in agriculture.

Significant concerns regarding facilities were clearly identified in the case for the NEXUS campaign, a capital fundraising project designed to address all facility needs for the Northeast agriculture programs. Phase I of the project is currently under construction. The Vet Tech building and the College Farm Operations building are set to be completed in the fall of 2021. Results of this internal program review reinforced the previously identified shortcomings of current facilities. Faculty acknowledged some concerns will be alleviated in Phase I of the NEXUS project with the opening of the farm operations building. Still, except for large animal handling, and on-farm experiences, teaching spaces for agricultural programs will not be addressed until the remaining phases of the NEXUS plan are implemented. It was difficult to rate all facilities with an overall ranking because of significant variation among the classrooms, laboratories and buildings used to teach agriculture classes. While certain teaching areas are excellent, others are just adequate, some areas need improvement, and some are inadequate. The top concerns expressed in the internal program review pertained to the precision & mechanized ag building,

the greenhouse, and particular classrooms inhibited by size or arrangement. It should be noted, all needs were previously identified in the case for the NEXUS campaign and factored into the master facilities plan. The agriculture department anticipates full implementation of that plan to solve for facility shortcomings.

The majority of faculty rated equipment as adequate for the department. It was noted that equipment resources have been updated and improved over the past ten years. The department has been fortunate to have industry partners assist in providing equipment resources at a discount or in some cases a donation. Considering how rapidly technology changes, it is a challenge to keep up with latest advancements. Faculty recognized the importance of staying current with new technology on the College farm, as well as in the classrooms and labs.

Ratings for the number of full-time faculty showed mixed viewpoints divided among the categories of *needing improvement*, *adequate*, and *excellent*. Comments focused on a need for additional faculty in the animal science area. Agronomy and cropped-based areas of instruction are well represented. The department was satisfied with the number of adjunct faculty; however, a potential need for an adjunct with an agriculture finance background was identified.

The Agriculture department actively engages with Educational and Industry partners. Applied research on the College farm relies heavily on the contributions and interaction with industry partners. Additionally, involvement in the Community College Alliance for the Advancement of Agriculture (C2A3) initiatives has resulted in meaningful project work. Northeast is also part of the Northeast Nebraska Compact for Agriculture and works closely with UNL and WSC and other members. Educational partners named included all area High Schools and FFA chapters, as well as multiple articulation agreements with colleges and universities. Agriculture students most commonly transfer to: UNL, NWMS, SDSU, and WSC. As more colleges have added or revised agriculture programs, additional transfer agreements have been drafted to offer more opportunities for Northeast graduates. Within the *Internal Program Review* more than 75 industry partners or connections were named. The College farm, Pohlman Agriculture Complex, and Agriculture classes routinely provide opportunities to collaborate with various industry partners to strengthen educational outcomes.

Faculty provided several examples for how they engage in professional development relative to their disciplines. Faculty commented on the need for continual updating on technology and best practice to stay current with the industry. Conferences, industry trainings, and graduate coursework were all listed as sources of professional development. Interacting with industry professionals on a regular basis is highly valued by the faculty members of the Agriculture department.

Graduation numbers are high and continue to fill workforce needs in Nebraska and beyond. The Northeast Graduate reports for the past five years show an average 99% placement rate for graduates either working or continuing education. A 5-year average placement rate of 92% was reported for those employed in their related field of study. Northeast Community College is a leader in providing education in Agriculture.

Overall, the internal program review of 2021 provided a comprehensive look at the strengths and opportunities for the Agricultural programs of study. Five-year averages for all programs met and exceeded the thresholds as established by the CCPE, thereby justifying continuation of all programs of study in agriculture.

Evidence of Need

Northeast Community College Agriculture Programs

The Northeast Community College annual graduate report provides strong evidence to support the need for agriculture education. Considering the report has achieved a response rate of 97% or above for the past five years, as they seek to contact every single graduate, results are highly valid. Overall, the 5-year averages for all agricultural programs reported a 99% placement rate for graduates either working or continuing their education. For graduates working in their related field of study, an average 92% placement rate was reported. Nearly 200 employers were identified for graduates of the agricultural programs. The following table represents findings from each of the Agriculture programs and 5-year placement averages.

Northeast Community College Graduate Report-2016-2020 : Agriculture Department			
Program of Study	5-Yr Average Number of Graduates	5-year Average Employed or Continuing Education	5-year Average Employed In Related field
Agribusiness	18	100%	90%
Agronomy	20	100%	93%
Animal Science	13	97%	90%
Diversified Ag	18	100%	98%
Mechanized Ag	7	100%	93%
Precision AG	9	100%	94%
AG Transfer	14	98%	88%

The Job Board provided on the College website by the Career Services office at Northeast routinely posts opportunities for employment in Agriculture. Employers use to service to reach out to northeast students in seeking to fill positions within their companies. There is always a significant number of postings for jobs in Agriculture. For example, on June 1, 2021 there were 29 postings in the agriculture category. Considering many graduates and students have already found employment by June, the number of openings reflects a need where demand exceeds supply.

US Bureau of Labor Statistics states "Employment of agricultural and food science technicians is projected to grow 4 percent from 2019 to 2029, about as fast as the average for all occupations." (<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/agricultural-and-food-science-technicians.htm>)

A significant number of agriculture students come from family farm and ranch operations in Nebraska and are seeking to return to their operations upon graduation. Many students go to work for employers in the industry while also contributing to their family operations. Annually, production agriculture contributes more than \$25 billion to Nebraska's economy, thanks to the hard work of Nebraska farmers and ranchers working on 49,100 farms and ranches spread across more than 45 million acres. In fact, farms and ranches use 92 percent of Nebraska's total land area. (Farm Flavor <https://farmflavor.com/nebraska-agriculture/>)

Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education Review of Existing Instructional Programs

Institution : Northeast Community College **Program:** Agriculture-all programs of study

I certify the following:

- the information provided regarding this program is accurate
- the above named institution has in place a procedure for reviewing instructional programs
- such review took place and was presented to the institution's governing board on _____
- the governing board's action was: _____

Signed: _____ (Date)
(Chief Academic Officer or designated representative)

Evidence of Demand and Efficiency

		15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	5 yr avg
Student Credit Hours (SCH)		7305	6727	7078	6397	5677	6637
Faculty Full-time Equivalency (FTE)		18.92	15.98	15.05	13.82	11.85	15.12
SCH/Faculty FTE		567.6	479.29	451.39	414.7	355.45	453.69
Number of Degrees and Awards <i>(list degrees/awards separately)</i>	AAS Agribusiness	23	12	15	21	20	18
	AAS Agronomy	23	25	20	12	18	20
	AAS Animal Science	14	6	15	17	14	13
	AAS Diversified Agriculture	25	19	13	18	15	18
	Precision Agriculture	NA	2	17	11	9	9.75 (4yr)
	Agriculture						
	AAS Mechanized Agriculture	11	8	7	8	3	21.6
	AA Agriculture Transfer	3	3	1	2	-	
AS Agriculture Transfer	7	13	16	16	10		
	Diploma Dairy Certification	0	0	0	0	0	0

Evidence of Need (provide a detailed explanation below or attach documentation) See Attached

Justification if the program is below either of the CCPE thresholds—complete page 2

Justification if the program is below CCPE thresholds—check one or more boxes and provide a detailed explanation or attach a document

- Program is critical to the role and mission of the institution (detailed explanation).

- Program contains courses supporting general education or other programs (detailed explanation). **The Dairy Technician diploma is comprised of classes that are required in the Animal Science program with the exception of one class, Dairy Production Management, a class which can be used as an elective for agriculture programs of study.**

- Interdisciplinary program (providing the program meets the requirements set in the existing policy for interdisciplinary programs) (explain).

- Student or employer demand, or demand for intellectual property is high and external funding would be jeopardized by discontinuing the program (explain).

- Program provides unique access to an underserved population or geographical area (explain).

- Program meets a unique need in the region, state, or nation (explain).

- Program is newly approved within the last five years (no additional justification needed). **Precision Agriculture Program new in 2016- 2017 academic year.**
- Other (detailed explanation).