

Information Regarding the IANR Life Sciences External Review
March 25-27, 2009

- I. Complete Schedule - not available at this time.
- II. Questions and Charge to the IANR External Review Committee.
- III. Letter of Invitation sent to the Members of the External Review Committee from Chancellor Perlman.
- IV. IANR Life Sciences External Review Committee Members.
- V. Letter to the External Review Committee Members forwarding the background materials from Chancellor Perlman.

Questions and Charge to IANR External Review Committee

The purpose of the review of the Academic Programs of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources is to identify its strengths and its potential to serve agriculture and advance the University priorities into the future. An external perspective of our programs is always helpful in establishing a framework for internal conversations in planning for the future. To assist UNL in conducting this internal conversation, we are asking the external panel to address the following questions:

Undergraduate Education

1. Evaluate the curriculum in life sciences in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. Do the requirements and array of majors prepare students for current and future careers in agriculture and life sciences, and other contemporary areas such as the biomedical fields? Are there programs that no longer serve current or future needs? Are there missing programs that would better prepare them for current or future careers?
2. Is the enrollment in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources consistent with what one would expect in a University our size located in a state the size of Nebraska? Where could enrollment be enhanced? What programmatic changes would enhance enrollment?
3. Are the academic standards and expectations for life science majors in CASNR comparable with those at leading colleges of agriculture?
4. Are courses taught by faculty with active research programs so that students learn cutting-edge science and state-of-the-art approaches?

Research

1. How do faculty in the Institute compare with peer institutions in research productivity as measured by: (1) funding of faculty by peer-reviewed federal grants; (2) publication of peer-reviewed manuscripts in top-tier journals; (3) recognition of faculty by national and international research awards; (4) placement and career success of graduate students and post doctoral research associates; and (5) involvement of undergraduate students in faculty research.
2. Is the current balance of resources, both financial and human, between long-term and short-term research appropriate for a major land-grant, research university?
3. Are the programs of research aligned with the needs and comparative advantages of the state of Nebraska?
4. Are the research programs well positioned to work at the leading edge of research in various fields in basic and applied agricultural sciences?

Overall

1. What is your assessment of the general reputation of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources among its land-grant peers? What steps might you suggest to improve that reputation?
2. Does the Institute appear to have a strong vision for its future and a culture that seeks to achieve excellence in carrying out its missions? Does it focus on areas where it can achieve translational science of true excellence in areas important to Nebraska? How would you perceive the vision of the Institute?
3. What recommendations would you make to the leadership of the Institute in order to increase the quality of its programs, the stature of the Institute, and the Institute's ability to serve the long-term interests of Nebraska agriculture?
4. What recommendations would you make to the chancellor of UNL concerning the relationships between IANR and the rest of the university?

September 29, 2008

Dear Dr.

I am writing on behalf of John Owens, Vice Chancellor of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and myself to invite you to serve on an external committee to review the teaching and research programs of the Institute. Your name was suggested to me by Dr. Eugene Sander, Provost of the University of Arizona and Dean of the College of Agriculture. Gene has graciously agreed to serve as chair of this review committee.

As you may know, the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln has a long and distinguished history. IANR is deeply involved both in basic research at the molecular level, and in the application of that research to develop advanced agricultural products and to educate and assist Nebraska's farmers and ranchers.

An external review of the academic programs of IANR will help us identify strengths and weaknesses so that we can build an even stronger and more nationally competitive program. This review will have 2 foci. First, it will focus on the curriculum in the life sciences and address the question of whether the curriculum is as effective as it can be in preparing the students in the College of Agriculture and National Resources for their careers. Second, I will ask the committee to examine the research priorities and productivity, including competitive funding levels, of the faculty in IANR to determine where it stands in comparison with peer institutions. I am also interested in knowing whether the balance of short-term and long-term research projects in IANR is struck in the most efficient and productive way. My interest is in the molecular sciences primarily. The review will not address the Nebraska Cooperative Extension.

I would be sincerely grateful if you would accept this invitation to serve on the IANR Review Committee. It will involve reviewing documents about curriculum and research and participating in at least one visit to Lincoln for a few days of on-site interviews with faculty and staff, tours, etc. All travel and expenses would of course be paid, as well as an honorarium of \$1000.

Thank you for considering participating in this review, which will be very critical to the future of IANR at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. I will be out of the country until mid-October so if you have any questions about this request please contact my Chief of Staff, Susan Poser, at 402-472-2116, sposer1@unl.edu, or feel free to contact Gene. I do hope you will consider performing this important service.

Sincerely,

Harvey Perlman
Chancellor and Harvey & Susan Perlman
Alumni Professor of Law

IANR Life Sciences External Review Committee

Eugene Sander, Vice President for Outreach, Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, University of Arizona, Chair

Kirby Barrick, Dean, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, University of Florida

Fuller Bazer, Department of Animal Science, Texas A&M University

Deborah Delmer, Department of Plant Biology, University of California, Davis

Stephen H. Howell, Director, Plant Sciences Institute, Iowa State University

Michael Mullen, Associate Dean for Academic Programs, College of Agriculture, University of Kentucky

R. Michael Roberts, Division of Animal Sciences, University of Missouri

Patrick Schnable, Associate Director, Plant Sciences Institute, Iowa State University

Steven A. Slack, Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, Ohio State University

January 20, 2009

Dear

Enclosed please find a binder with information concerning the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (IANR). I hope that you will find this information useful as a member of the External Review Committee for IANR. These documents should provide a variety of information about IANR, including information about research areas and productivity, graduate and undergraduate curriculum and enrollment, and faculty expertise and productivity.

In the back of the binder you will find a memo from the Chair of the UNL School of Biological Sciences and one from the Chair of the UNL Department of Chemistry. I have included these memos in order to inform you of other areas of the university where faculty are involved in agriculture-related research and teaching. My purpose is to give you a broader context in which to consider the curriculum and research in IANR. The Committee is not charged with reviewing these departments so I ask that you not use these memos for that purpose.

Information about IANR is also available on the web. The following sites might be useful:

<http://www.unl.edu/unlpub/undergrad/downloads/ugb0809.pdf> (undergraduate bulletin, with courses, requirements, etc. in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. These begin on p. 37 of the pdf.)

http://www.unl.edu/unlpub/bulletin_grad/downloads/gradbulletin0809.pdf (graduate studies bulletin)

<http://ianrhome.unl.edu/home> (IANR homepage)

<http://casnr.unl.edu/Home> (College of Agriculture and Natural Sciences homepage)

<http://ard.unl.edu/index.shtml> (IANR Agricultural Research Division)

As I stated in my letter inviting you to participate in this review, the purpose of this review is to identify strengths and weaknesses at IANR. Specifically, I am interested in whether you consider the curriculum to be effective in preparing students for their careers and whether you believe that the research priorities and productivity, including rate of competitive funding, is competitive with our peer institutions. My primary interest is in the molecular sciences. This review will not address the Nebraska Cooperative Extension.

I understand that you will be coming to Lincoln as a committee in late March and I hope the information I am providing will permit you to prepare sufficiently for that visit. I leave these preparations in the able hands of the Chair of the Committee, Gene Sander, but my office is here to assist you with any logistics.

Again, let me express my sincere gratitude to you for your willingness to participate in this review. Your review of IANR will help us to improve not only the University, but also how the University serves the State of Nebraska.

If you have any questions about the information in the binder or anything else involving the substance of this review, please contact my Chief of Staff, Susan Poser, sposer1@unl.edu or 402-472-2116. If you have questions about your travel to Lincoln or other logistics, please contact my assistant, Kim Rauscher, krauscher2@unl.edu or 402-472-7163.

Sincerely,

Harvey Perlman
Chancellor and Harvey & Susan Perlman
Alumni Professor of Law