



STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2027



Who Are We?

The Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture is deeply engaged in all areas of the contemporary land grant university: inclusive excellence, research, teaching and Extension.

The department remains committed to building disciplinary expertise in the following four areas

- 1) Sustainable horticulture
 - a. Sustainable production of horticultural specialty crops
 - b. Economic and marketing principles
 - c. Value-added products
- 2) Plant-environment interactions
 - a. Nutrient use efficiency
 - b. Horticultural crops adapted to a changing climate
 - c. Productivity through rooting system manipulation
- 3) Landscape systems and design
 - a. Individuals and communities
 - b. Resilient and sustainable systems
 - c. Ecosystem services
 - d. Plant materials and Landscape Architecture
- 4) Controlled Environment Agriculture
 - a. Resource optimization and crop productivity
 - b. Technology innovations and systems efficiency
 - c. Locally grown food and human health
 - d. Marketing and economic feasibility.

Mission

The Purdue University Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture addresses research, education, and engagement needs of horticulture, landscape architecture, and related fields while maintaining a vision for inclusive excellence.

Vision

Horticulture and Landscape Architecture strives to be a world leader in developing innovative technologies, systems, and future leaders through science, practice, and service in horticulture, sustainable food and farming systems, turf management, and landscape architecture. We are connected by our passion for sustainability, inclusion, collaboration, impactful teaching, community-building, and innovation. We are THE PLACE in the Midwest to be if you are interested in horticultural crops, sustainable farming, and creating living landscapes.

Diversity Statement

In Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, we acknowledge injustice exists and we are committed to creating a community that welcomes, includes, and empowers all our faculty, staff, graduate students, undergraduate students, and guests. We value everyone – individuals of all races, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, religious beliefs, nationalities and ancestry, genetic makeup, marital or parental status, abilities, and veteran status. We honor, respect, and learn from our differences. We speak out against words and actions that cause harm and consider it our duty to promote the voices of underrepresented individuals within our department, the university, and our community. We design our policies to limit structural inequities. We learn from our mistakes with humility and a renewed commitment to constant improvement. We champion these ideas in all that we do, both on and off campus, to support our Horticulture and Landscape Architecture mission.

Strategic Planning Process

At a faculty and staff online retreat in January 2021, small group breakouts brainstormed departmental vision statements and goals. Subsequently in Spring of 2022, John Orick facilitated online input sessions with graduate students, postdocs, staff, and faculty to develop “wow” “how” and “now” statements for the department. A strategic planning committee comprised by Khalil Jahed, Rachel McCoy, John Orick, Linda Prokopy, Ariana Torres, Kranthi Varala reviewed the notes from the 2021 retreat and the “wow” “how” “now” statements to develop draft objective statements and strategic initiatives. This committee also determined the structure and length of this plan (i.e. short and sweet). The diversity statement was developed by the HLA Diversity Committee and approved in a department meeting in Spring 2022.

Linda Prokopy compiled a draft plan which was discussed and edited at a Fall 2022 faculty and staff retreat. Subsequently, Linda met with John Orick and Ariana Torres to discuss next steps. The group decided on the current format of this document and further decided that the next action steps should be undertaken by existing departmental committees. Specifically, committees are tasked with setting priorities for strategic initiatives that fall within their purview by a specific date each year. Committees will then annually report on these priorities at a department meeting. Departmental metrics will also be reported annually to assess progress towards meeting the goals and objectives included in this plan.

Goals and Broad Objectives

1. **Inclusive Excellence/departmental culture**

Goal: Support a dynamic departmental environment where all members feel they belong.

- Diversify faculty, staff and students
- Sustain and improve welcoming environment

2. **Teaching and Learning: undergrad and grad students**

Goal: Prepare students for tomorrow's world with breadth and depth of learning programs, academic excellence, innovative teaching, comprehensive curricular content, and experiential learning.

- Increase numbers and diversity of students without sacrificing quality
- Ensure quality and functional facilities and equipment
- Support student success in multiple ways, including financial, mentoring, recognizing successes, and career support.
- Undertake a deep dive into undergraduate curriculum
- Maintain support for teaching – resources, staff, respect, graduate TAs

3. **Research:**

Goal: Achieve pre-eminence in discovery and innovation across disciplines through internationally recognized research programs that are locally relevant, valuable and important.

- Ensure faculty/Staff/Grad student/postdoc integration and collaboration across departmental areas and outside department/college
- Sustain and improve facilities
- Expand research footprint and impact
- Develop and enhance reputation, including our international reputation. Be known as the place in the Midwest for horticultural and landscape architecture research.
- Connect research to industry needs and Extension

4. **Extension/Engagement:**

Goal: Improve society through disseminating timely research-based information.

- Work collaboratively with educators to provide info to stakeholders
- Sustain commodity group support
- Increase K-12 engagement
- Increase funding for innovative, multidisciplinary Extension programming

Strategic Initiatives

The ideas below were generated through the participatory exercises discussed above. Ideas have been assigned to what seem to be the most relevant committees. Committees are asked to prioritize these activities annually but are not limited to only these activities. Committees are also encouraged to collaborate with other committees on these activities, as relevant. Committees should reflect upon how well these initiatives will help to achieve the goals and broad objectives outlined in this plan.

Aesthetics Committee

- Improvements to Grad Commons
- Finalize green wall
- Update conference rooms
- Update first floor hallway (East)

Communications Committee

- Enhance social media presence strategically
- Better communication so everyone is included - Communication across groups and within groups
- Rework website to highlight uniqueness of our group and the great work we do
- Explore doing a Reddit Ask Me Anything (AMA) thread

Diversity Committee

- More multicultural activities
- Increase participation in DEI curriculum and training
- Create safe way to report issues/concerns
- Continue Lunch and Learn series
- Maintain emphasis on diversity trainings and ensure plenty of opportunities to participate

Extension Committee

- More internal support for extension event planning and marketing, staff and marketing
- Standardize evaluation
- Improved method for needs assessment and market analysis – maybe unified across stakeholder groups and recorded
- Explore certificate programs in collaboration with other departments/units
- Advocate for LA Extension staff
- Maximize communication to stakeholders about extension efforts: policy makers, industry
- Explore funding for graduate assistantship in Extension
- Create advisory council for department to help identify needs and facilitate 2-way communication

- Increase with tours and activities (K-12 curriculum??)
- Continue newsletters/better ways to sign up for newsletters
- Critically review Extension materials through a DEI lens

Graduate Committee

- Introduction via zoom for international students before they arrive
- Mentoring program for graduate students?
- Graduate student for new incoming grad student applicants to contact?
- Virtual tour for graduate students
- Explore industry mentors for graduate students
- Generate funding for attracting quality diverse graduate students
- More graduate classes
- Consider collaborating with peer institution on graduate classes that have low enrollment
- Teaching and grant-writing training for graduate students
- Expand and help establish networking and relationship connections for grad students or visitors
- Include grad students and postdocs as speakers in seminar (require them to present and move HORT 602 to last semester?)
- Targeted recruitment efforts for graduate students
- Explore online grad programs aimed at professionals
- Consider seed grants and graduate fellowships within department
- Consider grants for international student
- Professional development and career support for postdocs

Internal Advisory Committee

- Continue aesthetics committee
- Good onboarding method for staff, grad students, and postdocs
- Document procedures and other information
- Continue mentoring program for faculty and staff
- Enhance recognition – kudos board?
- Upgrade teaching lab
- Investigate leadership training for junior and mid-career faculty

Research Committee

- Support shared research equipment – reduce barriers to existing shared equipment
- Advocate to retain polyhouse
- Support Student Farm and Daniel Turf Center
- Advocate for improvements at Meigs, PPAC, SWPAC
- Invest strategically to maintain Plant Growth Facility to avoid large capital expenses in future

- Increase capacity to do research and education in vertical farming
- Develop plan to renovate aging facilities
- Investigate field site for future Landscape Architecture research
- Increase collaboration with industry
- Advocate for research faculty focused on commodities – landscape, nursery, organic ag
- Collaborate with farmers
- Bring county educators to campus/bring campus to county educators
- Increase grower collaboration, on-farm research, and grants/endowments
- Eliminate gaps between basic and applied research

Seminar Committee

- Have variety and diversity of topics and speakers for department seminar

Social Committee

- More ~~research~~ and social activities (including alumni)
- Continue funding for grad student activities
- Funding for postdoc activities
- Include everyone in activities, including graduate students and postdocs
- More lunchtime conversations with graduate students? (sometimes without faculty)

Undergraduate Committee

- Focus on recruitment efforts to increase numbers and improve diversity
- Career night for first year students across campus?
- Grade school/high school tours/events
 - Connect with FFA vo-AG teachers
 - Expand beyond FFA/4-H
 - Expand beyond usual geography
 - Have swag
 - Teaching/learning toolkits
- Build on “Seed Your Future” campaign
- Leverage county extension towards career discovery
- Materials for HLA folks to hand out when talking to youth
- Create videos in multiple languages
- More visits to student farm, e.g. contact FFA teachers in the state
- Financial support for students
- Explore mentoring of senior undergrads by grad students
- Have students interact with industries related to their major
- Career board
- Expand experiential education
- Collaborative field trips

- Provide tools for instructors to minimize stress/increase mental health without lowering expectations
- Awards and graduation celebration
- Welcome dinner for undergrads and snacks in resource room
- Connect students to startup culture
- More classes? Better utilization of supporting departments (art, botany, libraries, etc.)
- Course offerings that integrate across undergrad programs
- Focus on reducing heavy teaching loads for faculty with research appointments
- More intensive production-related classes?
- More tech-based course?
- Develop more minors? Online minors?
- New concentrations in HORT major – Controlled Environment Ag? Urban Hort?
- Explore undergraduate research thesis option?
- Have succession plan for courses
- Involve industry in classes
- Critically review teaching materials through a DEI lens

Metrics

Overarching

- 1) Awards for faculty, staff, postdoc, grad student, undergrad students (#,%)
- 2) Strengthen and support disciplinary expertise in four signature areas (sustainable horticulture, plant-environment interactions, landscape systems and design, controlled environment agriculture) (descriptive)

Goal 1: Inclusive Excellence/departmental culture

- 1) Diversity of faculty, staff, postdocs, graduate students, undergraduate students (#, % by URM, women, international)
- 2) Measure of retention (years of experience, average time in position, turnover)
- 3) Classes in department focusing on DEI topics (#)
- 4) Departmental programs focusing on DEI topics (#)
- 5) Departmental average IDI score (score)
- 6) Rate of professional development training in DEI for faculty/staff (# of trainings, % participation)
- 7) Number of visiting scholars by country contributing to the department (#, % of FTE)

Goal 2: Teaching and Learning: undergrad and grad students

- 1) Undergraduate/transfer/graduate enrollments (#, demography)
- 2) One- and two- year undergraduate retention rates (%)
- 3) Students engaged in experiential learning experiences (%)
- 4) Students engaged in internships (#/graduating student)
- 5) Three-, Four-, five- and six-year graduation rates for undergraduates (%)
- 6) Undergraduate career and advanced study placement (% at graduation, % 2 years later)
- 7) Graduate student time to degree
- 8) State-of-the-Art teaching and learning facilities (descriptive)
- 9) Scholarship/fellowship support for undergraduate and graduate students (% , \$ value)
- 10) Development of courses to better reflect current societal problems (# new/revised courses)
- 11) Classes with an experiential/hands-on component (# offered, # required, %)On-campus?
Off-campus?
- 12) Classes with service-learning component (#)
- 13) Cross-departmental teaching collaborations (#)
- 14) Prospective student visits (#)
- 15) PK-12 outreach (# events, # students)

Goal 3: Research

- 1) State-of-the-Art research facilities (descriptive)
- 2) Total research awards/expenditures (#, \$)

- 3) Peer-reviewed publications (#/faculty)
- 4) Citations and H-Index changes
- 5) Commercialization (# patents, # start-ups)
- 6) Invited talks (#/faculty)
- 7) Interdisciplinary/interdepartmental research projects (#)

Goal 4: Extension/Engagement

- 1) Total Extension awards/expenditures (#, \$)
- 2) Delivery of programs (# programs, # participants)
- 3) Peer-reviewed publications (#/FTE)
- 4) Graduate student exposure to Extension (#,%)