

## **PSS Faculty Meeting**

January 12, 2024

Attendees: Rebecca McCulley, Tim Phillips, Mike Barrett, Dave McNear, Erin Haramoto, Tomo Kawashima, Chris Shepard, Olga Tsyusko, Brad Lee, Ernie Osburn, Luke Moe, Lauren Brzozowski, Samuel Revolinski, Art Hunt, David Van Sanford, Chris Matocha, Ole Wendroth, Hongyan Zhu, JD Green, David Hildebrand, Hanna Poffenbarger, Carrie Knott, Jason Unrine, Dennis Egli, Andy Bailey, Bob Pearce, Randy Dinkins, Chad Lee, Toshi Mizuto, and Suzette Walling (staff).

Guest Speakers: UK INNOVATE/Office of Technology and Commercialization – discussed initiative to promote partnerships in research and innovation and economic development. Highlighted services offered by their office to assist faculty moving innovative research from the laboratory to the commercial sector. Please see their website for upcoming workshops.

UK INNOVATE website: [research.uky.edu/ukinnovate](https://research.uky.edu/ukinnovate)

### I. Congratulations

- a. Lauren Brzozowski, outstanding paper from Crop Science, Crop Breeding, and Genetics
- b. Ole Wendroth – 2023 Don and Betty Soil Physics Award from SSSA

### II. Updates – Departmental

#### a. Staff

- i. Recent hires: Ellen Weisenhorn (Budget Officer), Zoe Womack (Admin Asst), Leighia Eggett (Extension Associate Sr, B Lee), Joseph Bush (RA, C Lee), Zoe Schroeder (RA, S Revolinski)
- ii. Departures: Bill Cox, Tara Valentine, Vivienne Main, Ji Min Shin

#### b. Faculty

##### i. Hires/Position Updates

- a. Soil Micro – Welcome Ernie Osburn!
- b. Extension Soil Science – applicant pool being reviewed for zoom interviews scheduled for early February with in-person interviews potentially occurring late Feb/early March
- c. Soybean Extension Position – not approved by the Dean
- d. Plant Reproductive Biology – in negotiation with preferred candidate

##### ii. Retirements: Elisa D'Angelo announced she will retire October 2024

##### iii. Hiring proposals should be submitted for consideration at faculty retreat

##### iv. Chair re-appointment is still waiting Dean's offer letter

### III. Updates – New building activities

- a. Activities for new building installation will begin soon with utility relocation
- b. Barnhart construction is scheduled for end of Spring semester. Pedway will be removed at that time.
- c. UKREC: rebuilding is moving forward with installation of 11 buildings (completed); 2 in progress; and 10 in planning stage.

### IV. Updates – Undergrad (Dave McNear)

- a. Graduated 3 students in December. Five students are scheduled for graduation SP2024. Graduates are successful at landing jobs post-graduation with most being employed by their internship sponsor.
- b. Capstone/PLS 490 – still seeking project ideas

### V. Updates – Graduate (Erin Haramoto and Ole Wendroth)

- a. New PPA specialization approved

- b. Course changes – request to increase IPS 610 content and credit hours (2) has been approved by grad school. PLS 772 will be dropped as a requirement.
  - c. Handbook is in the process of being updated
  - d. Program Review will request review committee to focus on key issues/concerns: 1) low enrollment classes; 2) specialization areas; 3) how well the program is integrated/how to improve integration of curriculum to meet the needs of various disciplines ; 4) structure of the program for non-traditional students; 5) administrative structure to manage program growth/faculty diversity
  - e. Four new students joined the program SP2024: (Sharmin Akhter- Poffenbarger), William Barlow (K. Wise), Elizabeth Johnson (R Smith), Benoit Vasseur (Poffenbarger/Cortasa). There are a number of applicants for consideration.
  - f. IPSS and Mott Award nominations will be open soon with Mott Awards due for internal review by 2/15/24
  - g. Reminders: 1) several graduates fellowships are available with deadlines late Feb – late March; 2) confirm students are appropriately enrolled; 3) GSAS forms are due 1/15/2024; 4) tuition scholarships are applied mid-semester; 5) advisors should receive exam card one week prior to the exit exam. If not received, contact Ole; 6) deadline for grad student APR is 2/29; 7) orientation for new grad students/faculty is 2/2 from 12:30 – 2:30 in PSB 460; 8) PLS 767 is for students who have passed quals or plan to take them during that semester; 9) complete TA observation and evaluation forms.
  - h. Action – remove GRE requirement from website
- VI. Other
- a. News
    - i. Departmental periodic review set for Apr 21-25. Review team has been selected and will be chaired by Tammy Stephenson
    - ii. Funds for internal proposals may be available
    - iii. New CDL requirements/guidelines are coming which may require training for on farm usage
    - iv. Undergrad research funds are available with proposals due Feb 2 at 11:59 PM. The College has about \$20K and suggests seeking funds for undergrad salaries.
    - v. Dean is releasing NTR funds to units: ~\$450K available to the College
    - vi. A poll for the retreat dates/locations will be circulated next week
    - vii. PSB 360 has had upgrades. Please contact Shawn to learn updates on system function.
  - b. Reminders
    - i. Deadline for spending Dept Allowances/Incentive funds is end of April
    - ii. PE self-assessments for staff are due today with March deadline to complete the process
    - iii. APR materials are due 1/15 at 8 AM
    - iv. Seminar season starts next Friday (1/19) with Dave McNear. The schedule has been circulated.
    - v. Submit nominations for departmental awards
    - vi. Housekeeping: 1) notify HR at least one month prior to departure; 2) faculty is responsible to assist students with travel; 3) notify Shawn and Cheyenne of computer purchases and receipt of purchases.