

Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting | Minutes

Meeting date | time 11/2/2021 2:00 PM | Meeting location *Virtual*

Facilitators: Arly Drake, Avery Davison

Notetaker: Tammy Fender

Attendees: Pam Bennett, Aaron Coontz, Evan Delk, Lee Roberts, Janice Welsheimer

Clark State Attendees: Dr. Sharon Bommer, Avery Davison, Dr. Arly Drake, Tammy Fender, Melody Gast, Amanda Honeycutt, Gerritt Smith, Danielle Williams, Cyli Bishop, Gage Kronk, Addison Leach, Colter Moore, Kyndall Metz, Elizabeth Kensler, Brenton Robertson

AGENDA TOPICS

Introductions and Updates: Arly Drake and Avery Davison

Introductions were made and Arly welcomed everyone to the meeting. Dr. Sharon Bommer was introduced as the new Dean of the School of Business and Applied Technologies at Clark State.

Program Updates

- State of the Program
 - Enrollment has been challenging but is now up from the 2020 fall term
 - We conducted some virtual High School visits this past year
 - Exploring new partnerships
 - Springfield Museum of Art
 - SOUP, a new urban farm in the Springfield area
 - Degree and curriculum changes/updates
 - New courses were launched in the 2021 fall term
- New Degrees
 - Agriculture Associate of Applied Science degree
 - Intended for transfer students
 - Horticulture (one degree)
 - Eliminates 5 horticulture degree options but students will still be able to specialize in them:
 - Golf Course Operations
 - Landscape Design
 - Natural Resources
 - Nursery Operations
 - Turf and Landscape
 - This simplifies things on the college side and offers more flexibility in course selection for the student. They will be able to choose courses per their interests as opposed to what we had previously assigned them.
- New Courses
 - AGR 1150 – Plant Science
 - Will be a pre-requisite for the other courses
 - AGR 1175 – Cannabis
 - Plant growth, the role of cannabis in society, the legal implications
 - Has been approved as a Global Awareness (GA) course
 - Has also jokingly been called a “gateway” class
 - AGR 1201 – Pesticide Safety and Application

- We feel that getting a Pesticide Applicator's License is still very important
 - This is a 1 credit hour class, designed for those working in industry as well as students who wish to sit for the ODA Core exam and obtain an ODA Pesticide Applicator's license
 - AGR 1650 – Landscape Maintenance and Construction
 - Combined two courses to offer this current course
 - We had one large Plant Pest course that covered everything and was too much, so we broke it down into three individual courses:
 - AGR 2601 – Weed Science
 - AGR 2602 – Plant Pathology
 - AGR 2603 – Plant Insect Pests
 - AGR 2751 – Advanced Precision Agriculture
 - Originally we had two Precision Agriculture courses. One talked about software and the other about hardware
 - It didn't make sense to have two separate courses so we combined them into one. This will help the students better understand how those two systems feed into each other.
- Hybrid Classes
 - We switched about 90% of our courses over to a hybrid model. The traditional model had students in class two days each week. Now they are in class one day a week and online at their convenience for the second day, giving students more flexibility.
 - We are designing a student survey to gauge how students feel about the changes we've implemented
 - We will also assess student outcomes to take into account how they performed under the hybrid model

C2A3 Update (Community College Alliance for Agriculture Advancement)

- A few years ago we got involved with C2A3. This is a consortium of community colleges across the Midwest who have agriculture programs. We work together, sharing curriculum and seeking grants.
- Arly and Avery attended the 2021 C2A3 Conference in September of 2021. This was held in Brainerd & Staples, Minnesota
- C2A3 welcomed a new Member – South Dakota
- Clark State will be hosting the C2A3 Conference next year
 - This will be held September 18th – 20th, 2022

C2A3 Grant Updates

- SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education) grant update
 - We have test plots in the Land lab with cover crops. We planted rye, deep-rooted radishes and clover to see what kind of benefits they had to soil nutrients and weed suppression. We are studying land erosion and water runoff. This is our second year of this and so far we haven't seen anything of note yet, based on the cover crops. It will take a few more years.
 - Corn yields – We did see a bit of a decrease this year but that was brought on by issues we had with our planter. Otherwise, everything went well.
- NRCS (National Resources and Conservation Service) grant update
 - This is our newest award
 - Clark State is unique to the other community colleges because we are in a more urban setting than the other colleges who run 1,000 acre farms. The local/state NRCS had some specific ideas for us to work on.
 - A big thing is honeysuckle (very invasive and all over the place). We are looking for plants that could "outcompete" it after we took it out. We pulled out some honeysuckle and last fall put in some rhododendron and holly. We didn't have the growth we'd expected with the rhododendron because apparently deer have a taste for them and kept eating the tops off. They left the holly alone but the holly is more slow-growing.
 - This year we decided to go with an Allegheny Viburnum because they are bigger in size and we are hoping they'll grow faster. We also planted Burning Bush, hoping it will grow quickly enough to be competitive and keep the honeysuckle out.
 - We also built some high tunnels, inside and outside, with plants and conducted soil testing. Due to a bad winter and high winds, we rebuilt them a lot better this spring, with the help of our student employee. We want to see how far into the winter we can go. Originally we were asked to try this on two different soil types but due to some old foundations on the site, we were unable to do that. Both high tunnels are in the same soil but we mulched some and the others

were not. The inside mulched tunnels still have actively growing tomatoes as of today. As for other vegetables, the beans didn't do well anywhere but we did get a little bit of sweet corn. We are looking for cold weather crops to try over the winter.

Precision Technology in Horticulture

- A change we've made is that we now require the vast majority of our students to take the Precision Agriculture class, including my horticulture students. The reason for this is a lot of this technology is likely much more economically viable in a greenhouse situation or on a golf course. This change was made to help keep our students ahead of the curve.

Ag Club

- This is a student club. Its purpose is to raise funds for student engagement opportunities outside of the classroom, covering expenses such as travel.
- One way of raising those funds is through our annual plant sale that usually takes place in April.
- We are also planning our first golf outing that will hopefully take place in fall of 2022. We've had a lot of support from our administrators for this idea.

New Building for Ag

- We are currently located in Shull Hall and share that space with manufacturing and engineering programs. These programs have received large grants and buying all sorts of equipment. This has caused a space problem.
- Our administration has been responsive and supportive. They are exploring building us a pole barn in which to store our equipment.
- This building may also contain some offices.
- It will put us closer to our land lab, making things more convenient for us.
- To date, \$25,000 has been raised. They are looking to double that amount in order to get the building. Hopefully within the next year or two we will have a new Ag building.

Questions/Concerns/Suggestions

Pam Bennett – Will you have any horticulture students who will be interested in internships this summer? We will have at least one position opening at Snyder Park Gardens and Arboretum for horticulture.

- Arly – Yes, I certainly hope so. If you could send me an email with a job description, I could point some students your way.

Janice – On the Ohio AG Business site there is a Job Postings System.

- Website address: <https://www.oaba.net/aws/OABA/pt/sp/jobs>
- Pam could post the internship opening there.
- Arly and Avery could encourage students to look there for job and internship opportunities.

Janice – There is an Industry Conference coming up in January. We will be sending out invitations through Arly to encourage students to participate. The number one thing is labor. We are so excited to hear that your numbers are up. Do you have an idea how many of your students plan to go back to a farm or horticulture operation? Or are they open as to what they want to do?

- Arly – Most of them are open. I met with a prospective student from a family farm and that is pretty rare. I'm glad you brought up the conference because that is something we will encourage. That is why we are striving to do fundraising through the Ag Club. The conferences and travel are important opportunities. They were meaningful experiences for me during college and I know our students will benefit from them also.

Janice – Do you have visitation days to campus?

- Arly – Most reach out to us on their own and we set those up. We plan to reach out to local high schools that have Ag programs. The cost savings is a draw as they can get two years at Clark State really cheap.

Evan – From a precision Ag standpoint, are you doing any software training or anything with drones?

- Avery – Yes, we train students on SMS. Not crazy in-depth but they do understand how to draw data in and export different prescriptions out. Certain tracks work in GIS, as well. We do not teach the GIS classes ourselves but it is an option for students to take those classes and earn a certificate.
- Gerritt – We have a GIS drone class coming up on November 13-14, 2021 that will be held on campus.
 - It is a Saturday/Sunday class from 9 am – 4 pm.

- It is a basic class and is the first step in taking the exam. It is very hands-on and we had a lot of positive reviews.
- This will be our second class. We had five students in the first one.
- I will send out a flyer to anyone interested. You can register straight from the information on the flyer.
- The class maxes out at 11.
- It is held on a weekend because it is better for the trainer, Todd Simpson, to conduct the class when there are no other students on campus. We would consider holding it through the week if turnout would be better.
- We do plan to offer future classes. We've had recent conversations with the CEO of a Chicago company called Women and Drones. She is well-versed in teaching drone technology.

Arly – Our spring advisory meeting will be different. We began by working through changes to our program and now we are able to begin looking at some higher-level things that will involve industry and our students making those connections a little bit better. I want to thank you for your patience and continued support over the past couple of years as we've settled in. Going forward we expect the meetings to be more engaging and productive.