

From: [Cfaes-all](#) on behalf of [CFAES Office of the Vice President and Dean via Cfaes-all](#)
To: [Vest, Lora F. via Cfaes-all](#)
Subject: [cfaes-all] Dean's Update
Date: Friday, June 26, 2020 12:53:52 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[ATT00001.txt](#)

CFAES community:

Several updates are listed below including:

- Return to Campuses and Offices Planning
- Celebration of PRIDE Month
- Leadership Title Changes Allow More Effective Teams
- Budget Cut Updates
- VSIPs Will Not Be Offered
- Lean on Your Land-Grant Children's Incentive
- A Final Note – If You are Wrestling with a T-Rex

Return to Campuses and Offices Planning

There are numerous processes underway getting faculty and staff back to our campuses and offices. Some of the guidance emerging from different sources may seem contradictory. Here's a quick review of our processes. When the pandemic hit, our first process was defining critical faculty and staff. Next, the Governor's orders allowed exemptions for limited research and related Extension activities. We developed a process for approving projects aligning with the orders. Currently, the broader research restart being led by the campus Office of Research is working with TIU heads coordinating with guidance from college leadership. Because of the Governor's exemptions, we were the first college able to restart our research process. County Extension offices also started a limited re-open early this summer based on community needs. The complexity of our college has required us to do these various repopulation processes and continue to be viewed as models for others across the university.

So, what's next? There is a lot of information swirling around. Our college has several transition teams (including Work/Life/HR, Academics and Student Experience, Operations and Research/Extension Missions) actively engaged and currently synthesizing guidance from OAA, OHR, and FOD to provide localized guidance to departments and units. This will include direction for repopulating campuses and offices over the summer and through the autumn semester. More guidance will be ready in the coming weeks.

Celebration of PRIDE Month

As June winds down, I want to acknowledge Pride Month – when the world's LGBTQ+ communities join together and celebrate the freedom to be themselves. In a landmark decision on June 15, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that existing federal law forbids job

discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, a major victory for the LGBTQ+ community and for all advocates of human rights. During this time of historic unrest, when the fight for equality has never been more visible, CFAES reaffirms our commitment to eliminate discrimination, promote equality and stand alongside our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) community. The Supreme Court ruling is a positive step, but there is still more work to be done.

Leadership Title Changes Allow More Effective Teams

As we worked with university administration in the past month, I received comments that during the pandemic, our college was ahead of the curve in regard to leading with values, having well thought out plans of action, and communicating clearly. I firmly believe our ability to meet the beginning of the pandemic head-on so well was not by accident. Two reasons for that include: one, our effective use of teams and two, our intentional focus on an organizational structure that embraces the needs, unique strengths, and complexities of our college.

I mentioned in a previous communication I would be sharing more changes to our organizational structure. This second phase of changes is about our college leadership team and strengthening our ability to work as teams. When I stepped into my position, I had over 30 direct reports. I do not think that I (nor anyone in this position) could give proper attention while also attending to the other responsibilities as Vice President and Dean.

While onboarding Dr. Tracy Kitchel as Associate Dean for Faculty and Staff Affairs, we redefined his role to better support the faculty and staff of our college. To assist in providing support and attention to our TIU heads, I am restoring the “senior” title to Dr. Kitchel’s position to now be “Senior Associate Dean and Director of Faculty and Staff Affairs.” This change was effective June 1. He will work with me in supervising the TIU heads and will lead the processes for annual department reviews, and TIU head annual performance reviews and reappointments. Because of this major change and because the work in our TIUs is central to what we do, I will continue to work closely with Senior Associate Dean Kitchel on these responsibilities.

Academic Units

In the past, we had one category for all our academic programs, even though we have several unique differences within that grouping. This category has spanned OSU Extension, all our TIU departments, the School of Environment and Natural Resources (SENR), and the Agricultural Technical Institute (ATI). Essentially, we have put all those programs together and attempted to treat them all the same, as departments. Within our overall framework of “one college” I believe it is essential to identify and clarify the uniqueness so we can best support and sustain high quality programs. To that end, our organizational chart will intentionally reflect the distinct status of both ATI and SENR. As a result of the unique characteristics of their units,

both leaders of ATI and SENR, carry the purposeful designation of “Director.”

At Ohio State, Schools are unique from Departments in the size and often breadth of specialized study, as well as, the identification of degree programs. SENR, the only school within CFAES, carries that purposeful “school” designation to honor the size, specializations, and autonomy of that unit and our organizational chart will reflect that.

In ATI, we have a unique two-year school, which is both the only one at Ohio State, and in the country. ATI is one of a kind in many ways. It sits on a regional campus entirely within one college, with a breadth of academic programs which go beyond our college. It’s part of a regional campus unlike any other regional campuses. Additionally, unlike our other academic units, ATI’s breadth of responsibilities extends beyond providing academic programs and includes a wide range of student affairs support including housing. To further delineate the unique nature, size and scope of ATI and the role its director plays, I am adding the title of “Assistant Dean” to that unit’s leader. Dr. Kris Boone will carry the title of “Assistant Dean and Director, Agricultural Technical Institute” effective July 1. No changes to the position description will accompany the addition of the title.



For OSU Extension, we have an Associate Dean and Director position and a Chair of the Extension TIU. In the past, both these positions reported directly to the dean. To facilitate coordination within OSU Extension leadership, we have reassigned the Chair to report to the Associate Dean and Director role and recognize that OSU Extension is a mission area, wholly unique within the scope of our academic programming.

I am confident these changes will increase our ability to support the unique components of our college, and better support our faculty, staff, and students. More information will be forthcoming on a third phase of this process.

Budget Cut Updates

The total annual CFAES revenue is approximately \$240M. Of this amount \$132M comes from our base funding lines (General Funds/Research and Extension State and Federal Line items). The remainder comes from county funds, grants, earnings, and gifts.

The Governor has not yet announced budget decisions for fiscal year 2021, but the University has given us preliminary indications of the level of funding we should plan for in the coming year. We can expect a general fund reduction of \$6.4M based on estimated impacts from both the state share of instruction (SSI) and tuition as well as a reduction of \$10.4M for our two state line items for research and extension. We do not expect a reduction in our federal capacity lines that support research and extension, therefore the blended reduction on base funds is approximately \$17M (13%).

We are actively working with the leadership team to implement necessary spending reductions which will rely on attrition, savings from travel, equipment and other operational spend. Our college finances were very healthy coming into the pandemic and we are confident that we will be able to navigate through this difficult time.

VSIPs Will Not Be Offered

I have had some questions coming in regarding voluntary separation incentive payments (VSIPs). To clarify, the university is not planning a university wide VSIP, nor are we in CFAES. VSIPs have their place but current circumstances do not support such a program.

Lean on Your Land-Grant Children's Incentive

We have had over 500 children of CFAES faculty, staff, and graduate students registered to be recognized for their support and good behavior during COVID-19. Dean Kress would like to send them a small reward. If you have not already registered, please use the following Qualtrics survey to opt in: https://osu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6KhsnVuAUYgj97D.

A Final Note – If You are Wrestling with a T-Rex

The Chronicle of Higher Education shared that sometimes a tweet can express a sentiment exactly in 280 characters or less. Today is one of those days.

“Alexandra Finley, an assistant professor of history at the College of William & Mary, [wrote](#), "Admin in 2020: please be prepared to teach online, in person, both simultaneously, on a moving train, while juggling, in a burning building, under the sea, during a wrestling match with a T-Rex, as a hologram, and riding a unicorn. Also be safe and we value you."

“To everyone in a wrestling match with a T-Rex, we feel you.”

Dean Cathann Kress

Dean Cathann A. Kress, Ph.D.

Vice President for Agricultural Administration & Dean

College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

140 Ag Administration | 2120 Fyffe Road | Columbus, OH 43210

614-292-6164 Office

kress.98@osu.edu

Twitter: @cathankress



— *We Sustain Life* —