



## Agriculture Advisory Meeting Notes

**Date:** December 6, 2021  
**Meeting Place:** O-102 with Zoom Option

**Called to order:** 6:00 -7:30 p.m.      **Chair(s):** Erin Krier      **Note Taker:** Erin Krier

**Council Members Present:**

Dr. Sean Abel, Dr. Rita Abi-Ghanem, Dylan Bognuda, Rosemary Cummings, Marc DeBernardi, Cathy Fisher, Les Graulich, Dr. Christopher Greer, Miguel Guerra, Ron Labastida, Larry Lahr, Jerry Mahoney, Yeni Martinez, Dr. Anjali Misra, Holly Nolan-Chavez, Christine Ready, Claire Wineman, Montse Zarate

**Council Members Absent:**

Mitch Ardantz, Teri Bontrager, Emma Chow, Tom Durant, Kevin Dwyer, Brenda Estrada, Jim Glines, Tom Gulliver, Eryn Gray, Guillermo Guerra, Dr. Jodi Jacques, Lacy Litten, Andrew Rice, David Rice, Danilu Ramirez

**Guests Present:**

Dean Margaret Lau, Nelly Guerra

### Agenda No. 1      Course Modality

- Discussion:**
- Erin reported that all agriculture classes have returned to in-person instruction, with many offering a zoom option for students who might be ill or have other challenges that prevent them from attending on campus.
  - Erin explained that with her hybrid classes she shares recordings of every class meeting, which has been helpful for students to keep up if they had to miss class.

**Action:** None

**Deadline:** n/a      **Responsibility:** n/a

### Agenda No. 2      Student Update

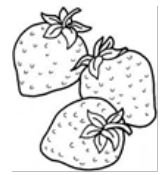
- Discussion:**
- Student representatives Montse Zarate and Yeni Martinez gave updates on their fall and spring semester experiences.
  - They both acknowledged that returning to most classes in-person has been very helpful for learning.

**Action:** None

**Deadline:** n/a      **Responsibility:** n/a

### Agenda No. 3      Field to Table Week of Welcome

- Discussion:**
- The Field to Table Week of Welcome event, which is designed to welcome incoming students in agriculture, viticulture, enology, food science, nutrition, or culinary arts, shifted back to an in-person modality this August.
  - Erin shared that the event was condensed from prior years to an evening session plus one full day. The welcome session on August 9 was held in-person with a Zoom option and was a chance for students and family members to hear a little bit about each academic program and to learn about the many student services available at AHC. The session on August 10 was a full day and included campus tours of student services and each program space: the culinary lab, food science and nutrition lab, winery, and student farm/vineyard. A student panel of successful program



graduates was held in the vineyard followed by a field to table luncheon. The day culminated with local “field to table” industry tours of Blosser Urban Garden courtesy of Jerry Mahoney and Moxi Café, complete with gelatos on the patio!

**Action:** None

**Deadline:** n/a **Responsibility:** n/a

**Agenda No. 4 National Science Foundation**

**Discussion:**

- Erin informed the committee that the AHC agriculture program is to be featured in the annual NSF ATE Impacts report, highlighted for the increased enrollment the program enjoyed even when overall college enrollment was down due to the covid pandemic.
- Thanks to the NSF funding that supported curriculum development, student enrollment and completion of degrees and certificates in the program continues to increase.

**Action:** None

**Deadline:** n/a **Responsibility:** n/a

**Agenda No. 5 Santa Barbara County Farm Day**

**Discussion:**

- Erin shared with the committee that several AHC agriculture students volunteered to lead public tours of the student farm for Santa Barbara County Farm Day.
- Students split up to lead visitors on tours of the vineyard, vegetable garden, fruit orchard, and greenhouse as they participated in a scavenger hunt to locate areas unique to the student farm, such as the permaculture demonstration garden and the pollinator/beneficial insect/Monarch habitat plot.
- AHC students also ran a “garden in the glove” planting workshop to engage young visitors and those young at heart.

**Action:** None

**Deadline:** n/a **Responsibility:** n/a

**Agenda No. 6 Community Collaborations**

**Discussion:**

- Erin shared with the committee the emerging collaborations with a broad group of industry and community partners wishing to engage with AHC agriculture students on various projects and events.
- These groups include Santa Barbara County Food Action Network, White Buffalo Land Trust, People’s Foundation, and the Blue Sky Center in Cuyama.

**Action:** None

**Deadline:** n/a **Responsibility:** n/a

**Agenda No. 7 Recent Donations**



**Discussion:** • Recent donations enjoyed by the AHC agriculture program include a John Deere tractor from Betteravia Farms and Dylan Bognuda, \$1000 from Farm Credit West to support the Young Farmers & Ranchers annual industry tour, experimental perennial grain seeds from Barkley Seed and Zac Bognuda, and a trailer of compost from Engel and Gray.

**Action:** None

**Deadline:** n/a

**Responsibility:**

n/a

## Agenda No. 8 Program and Course Updates

- Discussion:**
- Erin shared details about several new projects either under development or consideration within the AHC agriculture program:
    - With the official Pest Control Adviser Preparation program now established, including 28 courses approved by the Department of Pesticide Regulation and two AHC Certificates of Achievement, Erin requested that the advisory committee members help promote this new pathway among their colleagues and employees. Erin also suggested that a formal internship program be developed to give students the opportunity to earn the industry work hours required for this alternate route PCA exam program. Committee members agreed that this program should be shared with the CAPCA board to further promote enrollment.
    - This is the final year of the 3-year National Science Foundation Advanced Technological Education grant, which funded the significant expansion of the AHC agriculture program. However, Erin received a no-cost grant extension for an additional year to complete the project objectives.
    - Erin informed the committee that she received approval of her proposal for supplemental funding from the NSF during the no-cost grant extension year in order to implement some projects that will improve the full utilization of the student farm for learning opportunities. This includes the development of 3 seasonal Agriculture Production Enterprise courses, which would give students the chance to earn credit while maintaining the fruit and vegetable crops in the on-campus student farm. This will also include installation of a wash station to improve produce safety sanitation practices.
    - Erin is also working in collaboration with AHC's Industrial Technology program to develop a Mechanized Agriculture program with various pathways. She continues to work on the completion of the Precision Agriculture pathway as well. Erin informed the committee that AHC alumna and graduate of Cornell and UC Davis, Nelly Guerra, was recently hired to develop the new precision agriculture curriculum. Erin sought input from the committee regarding the best way to address the variety of mechanized/automated/technological needs of the industry. She shared some options for the proposed curriculum, which would start with an introductory-level certificate with courses that would introduce students to foundational knowledge and then students would choose from among more specialized pathways based on their interests – which could be from diesel/ag mechanics to computer/automated technology to precision agriculture. Erin explained that a subcommittee of advisory members and industry partners should be established to further hone the curriculum to meet industry needs. Dr. Greer has working experience with this sector of the industry and will provide relevant guidance.
    - The NSF grant proposal for developing an Agriculture Biotechnology program was approved and funded. Dr. Anjali Misra shared the vision and proposed curriculum outline.
    - Erin provided an update on the USDA produce safety grant that has been a collaboration with Cal Poly faculty. While the Produce Safety Alliance grower trainings provided through the grant funding have ended, there is still a need for the grant team to visit local, small farm operations to provide guidance and a mock audit on their produce safety plans. Erin requested feedback from



the committee on how best to incorporate food safety trainings and content into the AHC agriculture program curriculum.

**Action:** Follow up will occur with specific committee members based on their area of expertise as curriculum details need to be addressed.

**Deadline:** Ongoing **Responsibility:** Erin Krier

**Agenda No. 5 Student Clubs**

**Discussion:**

- The AHC Rodeo Team had a successful fundraiser in August, earning funds to pay for Karla Sanchez (USDA brand inspector and professional barrel racer) to serve as coach for the team. Program alumna Xochitl Guzman, the original team member, is proudly competing with the Fresno State University rodeo team now that she has transferred. year as collegiate rodeos were able to resume in the spring. We partnered with Elks Unocal Event.

- The Young Farmers & Ranchers club has enjoyed industry tours with generous partners such as Plantel Nurseries. In-person meetings continue to engage the growing group of students and the club is in the planning stages for a spring break industry tour in the San Joaquin Valley.

**Action:** None

**Deadline:** n/a **Responsibility:** n/a

**Agenda No. 6 High School Partnerships**

**Discussion:**

- Robust partnerships with area high schools continue to assist in engaging high school students with the AHC agriculture program:
- AHC is hosting the first FFA Field Day on February 19, 2022. The following contests will be offered for high school agriculture students from around the state: Soil and Land Evaluation, Vegetable Crop Judging, and Veterinary Science. This fulfills the long-standing request of the advisory committee for connecting high school agriculture students with the AHC ag program via participation in contests on the AHC campus.

- Erin suggested that the AHC agriculture and viticulture/enology programs should resume hosting high school tours and consider developing roundtable events to engage with local students.

- Additional concurrent enrollment agreements continue to help fuel AHC ag program enrollment.

**Action:** None

**Deadline:** n/a **Responsibility:** n/a

**Agenda No. 7 Additional Input, Feedback, Suggestions from Committee**

**Discussion:**

- All members of the committee support and encourage the current direction of the program. Suggestions were made to share flyers with new program content and/or food safety workshops with committee members who will aid in distribution.

- Students should be aware of the Seed Quest website for job searches in agriculture.

**Action:**

**Deadline:** ongoing **Responsibility:** Erin Krier

**Reports: Important Dates and Follow-up**

- Next advisory committee meeting for spring semester will be Monday, April 4, 2022 at 6:00 pm

