Departmental committees are working behind the scene to improve and promote the department of Crop Sciences.

This update is to let the entire department know the activities of each committee.

Please reach out to the committee chairs for further information or any questions.

Committees
Core Recruitment Team
Agronomy Day Committee
Graduate Studies Committee
Teaching Committee
Department Advisory Committee
IDEA
**Core Recruitment Team - Erika Modesta Olivares**

The Core Recruitment Team is working on increasing undergraduate student recruitment through various continued outreach efforts. Current efforts underway include alumni and high school engagement, virtual summer programs for high school students, and new and continuous marketing efforts (social media, videos, press releases, etc.).

**Agronomy Day Committee - Allen Parrish**

The Agronomy Day committee is planning for the upcoming set of field days. The majority of dates have speakers lined up. The Aug 5th date could use 2 more but ABE was interested in getting a few of their people added to the program. Our sponsorship level looks to be similar as last year. A reminder went out on 5/21/2021 about being a sponsor. We still need to work on a site plans for each location and arrange for volunteers to lead groups around. Most speakers have not many props for their presentations. Permission to purchase a good camera for recording was approved which should be our only major expense. TVs and projectors were acquired through surplus. Lots of marketing is yet to be done and waiting on guidance on loosening of COVID, and, how that will affect the program.

**Graduate Studies Committee - Nate Schroeder**

The Grad Studies Committee met via five times via Zoom during 2020-2021 with additional communication occurring via email. Several accomplishments were made during these meetings. We discussed and developed a new organizational structure for the Departmental seminar and graduate student requirement for seminar presentations. We also formalized policy on RA offer requirements for students and evaluated 14 nominations for graduate student awards, 28 applications for acceptance to the graduate program, and 19 nominations for Departmental and campus fellowships.
Teaching Committee - Nate Schroeder

The teaching committee met four times via Zoom during the 2020-2021 year with additional communication occurring via email.

We discussed and developed new teaching load policy options. We also reviewed and made suggestions on three new course proposals. New policy on process for TA appointments were developed and we approved proposed policy changes for the development of new classes.

Department Advisory Committee - Brian Diers

During the 2020-2021 academic year, the Departmental Advisory Committee (DAC) of the Department of Crop Sciences met with Adam Davis, the head of the department. The purpose of this committee is to provide advice to Adam on departmental matters.

The DAC committee included Lisa Ainsworth, Brian Diers, Shawna Graddy, Sarah Hind, Tiffany Jamann, Alex Lipka, German Mandrini, Andrew Margenot, Dean Riechers, Chance Riggins, and Maria Villamil. The committee met monthly with the first meeting of the academic year on September 18, 2020 and the last meeting on March 26, 2021.

Discussions included the departmental vision, which is outlined in the minutes from each meeting. The committee also discussed and approved changes to the nomination process and the amount awarded to individuals receiving departmental awards.

The process of peer observation for teaching was also discussed along with recommended changes to the teaching equality plan. Departmental seminars were also discussed and approved.
After we formed the committee, the first thing we did was to talk to experts on diversity. These experts were from all over the campus of the University of Illinois.

From there we reviewed the department’s demographic data to understand the past and current state of IDEA. We reviewed the department’s hiring practices to understand actions that had been taken to improve IDEA so we could identify areas for improvement. We also reviewed departmental policies for gaps and built-in biases.