



ASSOCIATION OF
PUBLIC &
LAND-GRANT
UNIVERSITIES

ACADEMIC COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND POLICY MEETING MINUTES

Feb. 28, 2024
Washington, DC

12:00 – 1:00 pm Lunch

Present:

Kristen Govoni (Secretary)
Tiffany Heng-Moss
Anna Ball (Past President)
Ricardo Mata-Gonzalez
De'Etra Young
Nina Lyon Bennett
Robert Cox
Christine Wilson
Wendy Fink
Sophia Baker
Claus Tittiger (President-elect)
Scott Willard (President)
Cynda Clary
Sue Sullivan
Susan Sumner

1:00 – 2:00 pm **Introductions and Welcome** – Scott Willard, Mississippi State University

- Scott called the meeting to order and asked for introduction
- Wendy - Change in staff – introduced Sophia Baker

Approval of Minutes – Kristen Govoni, University of Connecticut

- Robert Cox moved to approve to approve the minutes from ACOP Meeting 11/12/2023, Seattle Washington. Susan Sumner second approval. Approved unanimously.

Reports and Updates (Listed below)

2:00 – 2:15 pm Break

2:15-3:30 pm Why Should Policymakers Support Higher Education Programs for Students to Study Agriculture – Scott Willard, MSU, and Bridget Krieger, LBA

- Framing of APS work and how share on capital hill. Current state of D.C. – things continue to be interesting. 4:30 last night Senator Sabino (sp?) said okay not moving on Farm Bill if protect climate and other areas. Currently Sect Vilsak meeting re Farm Bill. Expect to hear more after today. Do not expect Farm Bill this year.
- Wendy – what happens with no extension of Farm Bill? 2 timelines. Currently on extension to Sept 30, 2024. Real deadline December 31, 2024 because goes into different commodity growing seasons deadlines. Dairy cliff is first to come up. If no extension, many things can happen: title 7 programs operating without authorization (however, NIH not reauthorized for many years). Need authorization for certain policies that will expire than impact natural resources commodities. Okay if bill stops, because appropriations will keep us moving forward. Wendy questioned 2017 numbers. Not a concern of hitting grant programs. Appropriations keeps us moving forward, but if max out authorized level, can't go beyond that amount without new farm bill. SNAP while funded and authorized through Farm Bill, it is funded on annual appropriations cycle. So not in risk of losing SNAP dollars.
- Do not expect full government shutdown. May have a technical shut down for a few days.
- Discussion about bills and challenges with 'poison pills' that slow them down. Ag Bill may take a year too.
- Yearlong continuing resolution (CR) keeps us a flat funding. No major impact, but if 1% cut triggered that would have impact.
- Wendy explained visioning process. Bridget shared thoughts on BAA vision document. Job workforce development meets needs in industry. Education and 4-H resonates with people who grew up in these areas. Safe, non-partisan resonates that not enough people to fill jobs or concerns about lack of skills. A lot of unknowns with elections and outcomes. Suggest messages that will survive next 18-month period. If Dems get house, David Scott will Chair and lead Farm Bill. Some concerns about this, but he is a huge champion for minority farmers and producers and 1890 and 1994 institutions. How talk about important of building belonging into agriculture? This message will resonate with them, but more than just these institutions. Need to recruit in all areas to meet future workforce needs. Need a bigger and broader conversation about how and where we are growing. Can't do a one size fits all message for all spaces. Need to be written for each space (R vs D). Senator M will not seek another term as minority leader (no longer GOP leader). Who comes next can impact senate message re: agriculture. BAA vision messages have a place, but need to see who they resonate with. Students message aligns with ag innovation. What if we don't fund agriculture?: Bridget asked about prior risk of cutting and Wendy clarified they could have been moved to NSF, Smithsonian, etc. Programs for institutions to apply for could have disappeared. Idea was to streamline STEM programs. Early in Obama admin. Bridget speculated if someone said we need to consolidate or zero out – getting to unique aspects of these programs is critical. On hill, how do you grow them beyond flat funding? Challenge is people do not understand the value of these program. Claus asked about metrics re: dollar invested vs dollars returned. Bridget - Academic programs investment -> number of jobs. Even better if at each university what it means. Data piece is critical because state representatives will want to know money is being spent well. Workforce is critical. Suggested having this conversation again this time next year with new political environment and potential shift in priorities. Wendy question on #3 – discussion about rural communities and may not be correct words. What about under-resources communities? Bridget – if going to

Farm Bill, need rural to reach people. Urban focuses mostly on nutrition. Rural stakeholders make up committees that make these decisions. Looking beyond USDA (NSF, NIH) for training which are opportunities to see role of agriculture sciences and how fits. USDA rural definition does not fit most land grants. Through role of universities is there a way to think about flexibility in rural definition? Only 2 fit this definition (both 1890s). Scott asked for last minute question or ideas. Scott asked about idea of what resonates, or we should focus on to get stats for APS. Bridget gave example of: State who we are training and gap that exists and flat funding for 20 years, it will get worse. Wendy suggested Purdue study. WAMS is doing well and being funded. House challenge is if increase for one program, they need to cut something else. Senate does not have same rules.

- Scott asked for reflection and comments. Need to be careful not to stray too far from rural if included in farm bill and programs. Do we need a stance or position on what rural means? Wendy said we would need to talk to more people and learn why definition is the way it is. Institutions could help if we could access these funds – talk with USDA? Claus – heard need to focus on our states with workforce development needs. Susan - need to focus on why we are unique. Wendy shared NARRU one pager re: workforce development. Scott suggested bring USDA Rural Development come to July meeting.

3:45-5:00 pm

Continued Discussion of “Why Ag” as Needed
Reports and Updates

Reports and Updates:

- **Director’s Report**, Wendy Fink, APLU

- Update on policy for institutions if not return in fall enrollment data - \$1,000 penalty. Almost all on time submissions this fall. December 1/3 submitted. Wendy needed to contact members which takes more time.
- USDA Teaching Award sub-committee meeting and identified several issues to resolve to improve the awards. Anticipate report in July 2024. Early career award has a bias for Ag Ed.
 - o Permanently moved deadline to April 15th by USDA.
 - o Cynda - Language on early career website and press release – says recognize those with maximum of 7 years of continuous teaching. Is it continuous or 7 years of college teaching experience.
 - o Anna – some discussions among committee and faculty positions have changed.
 - o Wendy – please send her examples of how institutions do teaching awards.
 - o Discussion about continuous teaching
- ACOP needs to appointment a diversity catalyst member to serve on sub-committee. Volunteers needed. Meet once a month virtually for about 1 hour. Nina on the committee and could be APS rep. Wendy will confirm. Ricardo M. expressed interest.
- Higher Ed Challenge grant for AG-NGINE update – several goals from this grant. 1. Assess the program. Need a funding model beyond current model of using the sections. Allow us to determine which institutions value this. 2-tiered or free funding model anticipated. 2. Fund for 3 years to look at data and ask questions. 3. Expand it: 33 – all 76 institutions currently. If all join 81 institutions. Currently have 35 have formally

signed the member agreement. 4. National graduate education summit (2026). Due this Friday with 4-6 months for award decisions.

- Sent around current list of members and those in progress.
- Letter of support for grant application – asking for more.
- Mini sabbaticals – a lot of interest this year. Questions for ACOP: 1. Do we consider someone who provides student support (advising and internship coordination) through a department to be eligible? Discussion: see how ties into college and not a single unit impact. 2. College of natural resources expressed interest. Wendy shared that funded by colleges of ag and could be considered if visiting a college of ag. Concern about going outside ag. Discussed having Associate Dean of college to submit applications so it comes from college of ag to provide endorsement.
- Travel funds – ACOP list provided for hotel for 2 nights. Goal is to cover Joint COPS (Leadership BA Meeting) hotel too.
 - Joint COPS – plan to end by noon on 17th. May have tours at local university.
 - USDA Teaching Awards provides travel funds for National awards. If funds not used how get people to apply for travel funds. Or provide travel stipend in additional to cash award. A set amount for travel stipend was recommended.
- WAMS – status from Tiffany’s report during lunch. Other programs also stuck due to Farm Bill not moving and may be stuck until 2026. Could revert to 2017 numbers (see clarification in Bridget Krieger report).
- Interest from Mexico in partnering with us. Want to send more students to US for study. Currently 15K sent to US which leaves them at #5.
- Visioning document sent by email to ACOP. From leadership meeting in the Fall (Tiffany and Cynda attended). Goal was to come up with top ideas for BAA to organize itself in the next 5 years. 1. National security 2. Rural communities 3. Agriculture as health
 - Asked us to think about how do we align academic programs in those 3? Not sure how to fit in rural communities to undergraduate education. What metrics can we collect and utilize for advocacy campaign. Discussion about how different institutions use these metrics. Suggested adding under-served communities, not just rural. Wendy asked for comments on the document to be sent to her.
 - Consulting group engaged to collect data. Can we have them collect something for academic programs side?

- **BAA Policy Board of Directors**, Susan Sumner, Virginia Tech

- Last meeting November
- Board looking at membership and move towards how many members to make changes by vote
- Committee does not want to duplicate other groups

- **BAA Budget and Advocacy Cmt**, Tiffany Heng-Moss, University of Nebraska, Lincoln

- Discussed during lunch

- **Committee on Legislation and Policy**, Cynda Clary, Oklahoma State University

- Discussed in earlier conversations

- Committee on Legislation and policy does not meet often, but other groups meeting. Focused on vision document discussed earlier
- LEAD21 – Rochelle stepped down from Director. Interviews were occurring when board was not present. U of GA position (60% LEAD21; 40% Other extension projects). Concerning because need Director to have credibility for breadth of people that attend. Not just a planning person. Rochelle was a facilitator and engaged in the program. Nina provided board meeting info – after thought that board be included in hiring of new Director. Nina shared about scholarships. GA manages grant for LEAD21. Contract in place one more year and then decide if stay at GA.
- **Cmt on Communications and Marketing**, Dan Moser, Kansas State University
 - Wendy provided update – Jan/Feb meeting of all Ag Communicators to work on National Impacts Database. Gathered about 100 stories (primarily extension and research). Andrea Putnam (VP) asked to put together a report of cool things Land Grant system is doing (focused around climate). Wendy will share some for us to provide feedback.
- **1890s**, De'Etra Young, Tennessee State University
 - Year for ARD symposium in Nashville, April 6-9th. 1,100 abstracts.
 - 1890 Foundation – Mort retired and June Brono new President CEO. June not able to do federal work so Mort staying on to help with those contracts/discussions.
 - Wrapping up mentor project between 1890s and 1862s. Convening in Nashville and submit mentor 2.0.
 - 1890 scholarship program still ongoing.
 - Center of Excellence for Student Success (NCAT).
 - Working on mechanism for academics to meet. Research and Extension have mechanisms to meet and share.
- **North Central Region**, Christine Wilson, Purdue University
 - Met in November and discussed encouraging each institution to hold something focused on AI.
 - 2025 – 2030 USDA employment report (Michelle Slusky Santos) – on panel Friday. She used this report in prior jobs and all students get this 2-page report. Advisory expert panel of institutions, industry, etc. Report every 5 years (this is the 10th edition).
- **Western Region**, Ricardo Mata-Gonzalez, Oregon State University
 - Started in this position in November and meet every month.
 - Last Chair wanted to increase participation and success with more schools represented.
 - Own teaching award system and following same guidelines as national award. Want more institutions to participate. Western APS due tomorrow. Recognize winners during Western joint meeting each summer.
 - A couple meetings related to AI. Invited Microsoft from Washington State. Encouraged to use it more and promote correct use.
- **Northeast Region**, Susan Sullivan, University of Maine
 - Last met in November

- Moving along to offer webinar to faculty and instructors about Student Experience Project.
- **Southern Region**, De'Etra Young, Tennessee State University
 - Meet here to establish goals.
- **NARRU**, Robert Cox, Texas Tech University
 - Meeting in October; about 50 participants. Grantsmanship workshop and poster session re NGLCA.
 - Met yesterday for congressional visits. Met with Director of NIFA – interested in global research initiative.
- **Extension Liaison**, Al Wysocki, University of Florida
 - See documents sent by Wendy.
 - Al used funding to visit UNH to meet with Extension and discuss micro credentials.
- **Lise Youngblade**, Board on Health and Human Sciences Liaison, Colorado State University
 - No report
 - Group struggling with membership
- **CARET**, Eric Hinson, CARET Rep for Florida A&M University
 - No report
 - Need a rep that is present and can share APS info with CARET
- **ESCOP**, Bret Hess, Western AES
 - No report
 - Rebranding and excited about AG-NGINE

Why Ag Discussion

- Send Wendy comments on two documents. Focus on Why Ag Workforce Development. For your institution how would you address this issue?
- Sue – thoughts on customize our approach. Modular set of vision statements. Current one focuses on US, but we talk to students about global issues. Wendy, slide global impacts in under national security. Modular piece good for each institution.
- Anna – need more inclusive areas included (climate, environment, etc).

Action Items (Scott summarized)

- Wendy asked for teaching award rules.
- Wendy sent template letter of support needed by tomorrow.
- Align AP with 3 visioning areas of document – feedback to Wendy.
- Think about data we need/metrics for Bridget or to put forward for Why Ag or Visioning Document.
- Consider speaker for rural definition and funding going forward.
- Data metrics to create a one-pager for APS.

Scott thanks other for helping in his absence.

Adjourn at 4:35 pm

- Susan motion
- Wendy second

Dates for Your Calendar

The next ACOP Meeting is at the BAA Leadership Meeting (formerly Jt. COPS) on July 16-17 in Providence, RI. (The 15th will be a travel day).

APLU Annual Meeting is Nov. 10-12, Orlando, FL