2015-2020 Strategic Plan
Nutritional Sciences

Statement of End Goal #1:
Create and Grow an Undergraduate Public Health Nutrition option to increase numbers of students ready to enter the MPH program, obtain a Certificate in Public Health, and/or enter the workforce in public health nutrition areas.

Rationale for End Goal:
- Public Health is of growing national and international concern.
- Our accrediting agency, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, named “Enhance the relevance of public health nutrition and its visibility in the broader public health community” as its second strategic goal in 2014.
- The Oklahoma “…State Regents approved the Oklahoma State University’s…requests to offer the Master of Public Health... and a Certificate in Public Health…”
- A public health nutrition option in NSCI will prepare students for careers in public health, such as the Cooperative Extension Service and tribal organizations entering the MPH program, or completing an MS in NSCI with a Certificate in Public Health.

Timeline and Outcome Measures:
- **By 2016**
  - Official notification of program approval received from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
- **By 2019**
  - Minimum of 30 NSCI majors in public health nutrition option
    - Data from Associate Dean APS, OSU Academic Ledger, Repository SIS-OSU
  - Offer 2 NSCI majors in the public health nutrition option summer internships with county offices within the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
    - Assistance from Associate Dean Ext. & Engagement
- **By 2020**
  - Minimum of 6 students graduating from NSCI public health nutrition option
    - Data from Associate Dean APS
  - Minimum of 3 students entering MPH program or NSCI grad program & Certificate program in Public Health
    - Data from Associate Deans of APS and R&GS, NSCI Graduate Coordinator and MPH program directors
    - Data regarding students who do not remain at OSU from Alumni Survey – Associate Dean APS
  - Minimum of 3 students entering public health nutrition jobs
Data (including Alumni Survey) from Associate Dean APS, NSCI graduating senior survey

Strategies to Reach the End Goal #1

1. Develop option
   a. NSCI Department Head – attend Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics forum on the vision/future of public health nutrition (Oct 20, 2014)
      i. Subsequent discussions with leaders in public health nutrition area
   b. NSCI Department Head – attend Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health Summit on Undergraduate programs in public health (Nov 15, 2014)
   c. NSCI Department Head – attend American Public Health Association (Nov 15-19, 2014)
      i. Attend public health nutrition workshops, presentations, etc.
      ii. Network with public health nutrition experts
   d. Form Ad Hoc Curriculum Committee including interested faculty from other departments/School to develop proposed curriculum for a public health nutrition option
   e. Work with MPH program leaders to develop a means for seamless transition from undergraduate option to MPH
   f. Begin to work with community to develop undergraduate internships that would meet the requirements in a public health nutrition degree program

2. Upon approval of option
   a. Develop advising and marketing materials to create interest among students in other NSCI major options in public health nutrition
   b. Continue to work with faculty in other departments/School to determine synergies and areas for collaboration
   c. Work with Associate Dean Ext. & Engagement to establish funding and develop criteria for summer internships with the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
   d. Work with Foundation to increase funding for student scholarships
   e. Hire at least two new tenure-leading faculty with expertise that will support the public health nutrition option
   f. As initial students near graduation
      i. create materials and methods to increase student interest in the MPH or the NSCI MS coupled with a Certificate in Public Health
      ii. finalize student tracking methods
Statement of End Goal #2:

Establish and Build a PhD in NSCI to meet national needs for well-prepared doctoral-level nutrition professionals.

Rationale for End Goal:

PhD level nutrition researchers are needed:

- to advance the study of human nutrition;
- prepare future nutrition professionals;
- improve the quality of life for the public as it relates to nutrition including development and evaluation of nutrition education messages, tools and methods; and,
- meet the substantial state, regional and national needs for faculty in departments of nutrition and employees in related organizations.

There is a projected 24% increase in the need for NSCI-PhDs and projected shortfall of 400 NSCI-PhD level educators/researchers through 2020*. Additionally, there is a great need for professionals with the PhD/RD, in part, because of the move toward requiring a minimum of MS to become an RD. With our Dietetic Internship, well-recognized for excellence, we will be in the position to meet the need for credentialed PhD graduates.

The PhD in Nutritional Sciences will allow us to compete for and recruit top students both nationally and internationally into our program and the quality of these students will have significant positive impacts on our unit. Instruction at the undergraduate level will be enhanced by high quality NSCI PhD students who hold teaching assistantships. These students will also improve the research productivity of the faculty and add significantly to our already strong undergraduate research program by providing mentoring opportunities for PhD students. In addition, PhD students will enhance the nutrition and foods programming provided to Oklahomans through the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service as they assist with development of evidence-based print, electronic and video materials.

A PhD in Nutritional Sciences will further increase the level of recognition and reputation of our department. We have one of the largest undergraduate programs in the U.S. However, our graduate program is not currently recognized as training doctoral students in nutritional sciences, which in turn impacts the image of our program and our ability to be ranked nationally with our peers across the country. Students, especially International students, experience difficulties obtaining post-doctoral fellowships and employment when their PhD does not state that the degree is in “Nutritional Science.” The field of “Human Sciences” is not internationally recognized as being directly related to Human Nutrition (or Nutritional Sciences) and limits the extent to which
graduates with a PhD in Human Sciences will be competitive for international employment opportunities.


Timeline and Outcome Measures:

- **By 2016:**
  - Official notification of program approval received from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.
  - Strategies developed for increased funding for PhD students (assistantships, fellowships, other funding mechanisms)
    - Associate Dean for R&GS will monitor and assist in locating sources of funding
  - Renovation plans for additional laboratory space and office space for PhDs established
  - Strategies developed for office space for PhD student with assistantships
- **2016 and ongoing:**
  - Increase availability of external funding for research
    - Associate Dean for R&G will monitor and assist in locating sources of funding
  - Hire at least 2 tenure-leading faculty with clear potential for funding success in our existing signature research areas to support our expanding PhD program
- **By 2019**
  - Enrollment of at least 10 PhD students
  - Begin renovations of research and office space to support the PhD
- **By 2020:**
  - Establish a graduation rate of 2-3 per year (on average over 5 years)
    - Associate Dean for R&G will monitor
  - Track positions (post-doctoral fellowships, faculty, other) obtained by graduate
    - Data (including Alumni Survey) from Associate Dean APS

**Strategies to Reach the End Goal #2:**

Create Ad Hoc committees of Graduate Faculty to:

- Work with Manager of Marketing and Communications, Associate Dean-R&GS and Associate Dean Ext. & Engagement to develop and implement a plan to recruit students
- Develop and implement a plan to recruit new faculty
- Work with Foundation and department advisory committee to develop donors and other funding sources for renovations
- Determine funding sources for fellowships/scholarships and submit proposals

November 21, 2014