

NDSU

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

# Department of Animal Sciences

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2028

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## Committee Facilitators

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# The Preamble

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## **North Dakota State University**

The vision of NDSU is to lead the advancement of our land-grant ideals through innovative education, research, and outreach.

The mission of NDSU is to provide transformational education, create knowledge through innovative research, and share knowledge through community engagement that meets the needs of North Dakota and the world.

## **NDSU Agricultural Affairs**

As an organization within NDSU consisting of three divisions (Agricultural Experiment Station, NDSU Extension, and NDSU College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources), the vision of Agricultural Affairs (Ag Affairs) is to be the premier source of information that our people and communities trust as they succeed in a dynamic world.

The mission of Ag Affairs is to provide life-long learning opportunities and effective solutions that improve the lives of North Dakotans and build a better world.

## **NDSU Department of Animal Sciences**

As a department within NDSU and Ag Affairs, the Department of Animal Sciences must support the vision and mission of NDSU and Ag Affairs through our efforts. This strategic plan's aim is to provide direction for our community to ensure that our vision and mission are achieved using our core values. To accomplish this, the Department of Animal Sciences formed an 18-person committee that included two NDSU Extension civic engagement specialists, seven departmental faculty, seven departmental staff, and two departmental graduate students that represented the various units, disciplines and expertise housed within the department. From July to December 2022, this committee met to form new vision, mission and core values statements as well as formulate and finalize strategic goals and action items identified. These strategic items were formed using survey feedback from our community that was conducted in August 2022. This survey generated 390 submissions which consisted of 12.05% undergraduate students, 5.13% graduate students, 11.79% departmental faculty and staff, and 71.03% of our community members that identified as administrators, alumni, commodity groups, elected officials, out-of-department or out-of-university faculty, staff, and/or Extension personnel, government agencies, non-profit organizations, private companies, and North Dakota citizens. The committee used these responses to identify strengths, opportunities and aspirations so that we could identify what results would lead to improvement over the next five years. The following sections reflect the outcomes of this survey and the committee's work to synthesize that feedback.

# About Us

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## Vision

To be a leader in Animal Science and serve our North Dakota, U.S. and global communities by advancing, communicating and enhancing knowledge and understanding of the relationship between animals and humans.

We adopt the term “animal science” based on the American Society of Animal Science (<https://www.asas.org/services/student-resources/what-is-animal-science>). The American Society of Animal Science defines animal science as applying principles in biological, physical and social sciences to the problems associated with livestock production and management as well as companion animal nutrition, care and welfare. This includes social sciences surrounding the use of animal assisted therapies.

## Core Values

By prioritizing community and integrity, we will be more creative, innovative and responsive in striving for excellence.

We define these core values as:

- **Community** - Creating fellowship among diverse individuals with common experiences, interests and/or goals through inclusive and holistic approaches to the relationship between animals and humans. Our community includes:
  - Departmental faculty and staff
  - Faculty and staff outside the department, including but not limited to, current NDSU employees, former and/or retired NDSU employees, and academics outside NDSU
  - Undergraduate, graduate and life-long learners
  - Industries that we serve in teaching, research and Extension efforts
  - Industries that contribute to our teaching, research and Extension efforts
  - Alumni and former students of our department
  - General public
- **Integrity** - Actively adhering to the highest levels of ethics to ensure we fulfill our mission.
- **Creativity** - Using inventiveness to assist with logistics, justification, implementation, execution, presentation and dissemination of our efforts.
- **Innovation** - Applying ingenuity and invention to produce new knowledge, methods and products to aid and enhance the understanding of the relationship between animals and humans.
- **Responsiveness** - Using proactive and timely actions to meet our community’s needs
- **Excellence** - Supporting our community by exceeding expectations with integrity through creativity, innovation and responsiveness.



## Mission

We commit to creating and sharing knowledge about animals used for the production of food and fiber, recreation and companionship. We will emphasize animal welfare and care, as well as their social, environmental and economic impact on our communities. We commit to promoting diversity of thought, providing unique learning opportunities, working as a team, and training the next generation workforce.

# The Strategic Plan

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## Invest In Our Community (C)

An area of need is to find opportunities and act on them so that we invest and support our community to enhance outcomes.

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**GOAL 1: Promote an environment that advocates for student growth through quality experiences that increases retention by 3% per year over the next five years.**

### **Action Items:**

1. Modify the “Student Recruitment” committee within the first three months to include student retention responsibilities (see also V. Goal 1 Action Item 1) to ensure this goal’s action items are accomplished.
2. Within the first year, identify primary and secondary causes for lack of student retention and potential solutions. Implement at least two solutions per year starting in 2024.
3. Within the first year, identify methods of garnering student feedback and implementing solutions about curriculum, advising and departmental involvement in students’ program goals. Implement at least one method by the end of 2024 and all methods by the end of 2025.
4. Within the first year, identify opportunities to increase and/or expand experiential opportunities for students (see also A. Goal 1 and 2). Implement at least two new and/or expanded opportunities per year over four years starting in 2024.
5. Summarize efforts of this goal’s activities and adjust strategy as needed on an annual basis.



## Invest In Our Community (C)

An area of need is to find opportunities and act on them so that we invest and support our community to enhance outcomes.

**GOAL 2: Develop a culture within the department through intentional communication and involvement that promotes transparency, improves understanding of each other, and fosters relationships.**

### Action Items:

1. Identify current and new committees that can have rotating membership and/or leadership as well as written protocols (bylaws) of each committee to ensure easy transitions. Implement this system to encourage faculty, staff and students to be involved in and learn about various facets of departmental needs and activities. Committees should meet monthly or more frequently based on departmental needs. This task should be completed in the first six months.
2. Restructure the “Awards” committee to “Awards and Recognition” committee that focuses on avenues to recognize employee efforts. This can include formal and informal avenues as well as monthly departmental climate surveys (“The Pulse”). Implement within the first six months.
3. Implement a temporary recognition system, similar to the SPAM (Spirit, Pep and Motivation) award, that is employee driven and based on different characteristics (could have one or more opportunities). Have at least one implemented within the first six months.
4. Implement at least two joint faculty, staff and graduate student meetings and at least two department-wide team building events per year.
5. Create comprehensive employee profiles on job expertise, skill sets and training, and social interests that are available through the university directory within the first year.
6. Create monthly department-wide listening sessions with the head advisory committee (See C. Goal 3) to identify newer recurring issues that need to be resolved on a timely basis. Implement solutions as soon as possible given the issue identified. Implement the first listening session within the first six months.
7. Conduct annual evaluation of this goal's activities and action items to ensure efficient and timely progress occurs over five years.



## Invest In Our Community (C)

An area of need is to find opportunities and act on them so that we invest and support our community to enhance outcomes.

**GOAL 3: Promote an environment that advocates for employee growth, success and retention as well as develops departmental capabilities through strategic hires that align with our vision, mission and core values.**

### Action Items:

1. Reinvent the “Future Directions” committee (now called the “head advisory committee”) within the first three months to be a standing committee with a chair and members voted into the committee by cohorts covering all facets of the department (also, see C. Goal 2 Action Item 1). The committee is tasked with identifying hiring and employee retention needs and tasks of the department.
2. Utilize a climate survey (“The Pulse”) and listening sessions (see C. Goal 2 Action Item 6) to identify current areas of successes and weaknesses of our department related to expertise and employee satisfaction within the first year. Implement at least one improvement per year for each area (expertise and employee satisfaction) starting by 2025.
3. Prioritize disciplines, skill sets and/or expertise needs based on vision, mission and core values for strategic hiring within the first six months. Make at least one strategic hire per year starting by 2024.
4. Create a fund that departmental employees can apply to for professional growth opportunities that may be more expensive than typical funds can afford. Monies could be generated internally or through new or enhanced partnerships by the department (e.g., see A. Goal 2). Employees chosen for the sponsorship must present outcomes of the event and how they grew professionally within one month of the event to the department. Implement by 2024.
5. Ensure that new employees have an onboarding and mentoring committee established within the first month of their hire. Ensure that current employees on track for promotion establish a mentoring committee, if requested, based on needs and timeframe of expected promotion application. Implement by 2024.
6. Summarize efforts of this goal’s activities and adjust strategy as needed on an annual basis.



## Invest In Our Community (C)

An area of need is to find opportunities and act on them so that we invest and support our community to enhance outcomes.

### **GOAL 4: Take pre-emptive and consistent action to replace or repair facilities and equipment before they reach the end of their useful life.**

#### **Action Items:**

1. Modify existing facilities and equipment committees within three months to have a single committee focused on departmental infrastructure that has equal representation from faculty, staff and students (graduate and undergraduate students) with co-chairs of one faculty and one staff member. This committee must meet at least monthly, or more frequently based on departmental needs, and has clear objectives and prioritizes needs that should be met monthly and annually.
2. Create a comprehensive list of departmental facilities and equipment needs with category based on repair or purchase. Make sure the list is accessible to and can be modified by departmental personnel relative to their roles and responsibilities of those specific facilities and equipment. This effort, led by the new infrastructure committee, identifies immediate (within three years) and upcoming (within five years) needs. Complete within the first six months.
3. Identify and implement protocols that will ensure continual and consistent action is taken to replace or repair facilities and equipment within the first 18 months.
4. Identify partnerships to support improving and maintaining relevant facilities and equipment within the department by 2024 (e.g., see A. Goal 2). The department should work with relevant groups to build and/or enhance these partnerships so that at least one improvement to facilities and/or equipment opportunities are implemented per year by 2025.
5. Summarize efforts of this goal's activities and adjust strategy as needed on an annual basis.



## Enhance Our Visibility (V)

An area of need is to enhance our department's ability to be seen as well as attract attention relative to our efforts.

**GOAL 1: Use innovative programming and advertisement to expand recruitment of student populations both nationally and internationally by 7% per year on average over the next five years.**

### Action Items:

1. Hire a full-time employee dedicated to recruitment, marketing, fundraising and alumni relations by the end of 2023. Until hired, ensure that the "Student Recruitment" committee is functioning and able to lead efforts and advise the new employee through related action items.
2. Identify current recruitment efforts, deficiencies and their impacts, both within and outside our department, as a baseline of undergraduate and graduate student recruitment efforts within the first six months. Identify novel, relevant methods of student recruitment and implement at least one within the first year.
3. Create effective recruitment guidelines, marketing template documents and a method to track efforts that identify positive, quality interactions for recruitment of undergraduate and graduate students by May 2024. Ensure all personnel are effectively trained before undertaking recruitment efforts.
4. Create consistency in prospective student visits through a standard protocol involving the full-time recruitment staff member or designated recruitment committee chair. Support these efforts through an experience-based credit of undergraduate(s) serving as Animal Science Ambassadors. Implement by 2024.
5. Within the first year, identify conferences and events ideal for recruiting undergraduate and/or graduate students. Within the first year, create a list per event of faculty and staff that regularly attend a given event and assign those individuals as recruitment leads. Options with no faculty or staff regularly attending are considered new events.
6. Within the first six months, create a strategy for recruiting prospective students that recognizes members of our community for their efforts in outreach, research and/or teaching. Ensure monthly updates that highlight the diversity of our program and employment possibilities available to our graduates.
7. Identify two to three current or new courses that are suitable for general education requirements within the first six months. Have at least one implemented by 2026.
8. Implement at least two new recruitment events and/or strategies per year over five years.
9. Summarize efforts of this goal's activities and adjust strategy as needed on an annual basis.



## Enhance Our Visibility (V)

An area of need is to enhance our department's ability to be seen as well as attract attention relative to our efforts.

**GOAL 2: Increase presence of the department and quality of interaction at animal-related youth activities by 30% in three years and 50% in five years.**

### Action Items:

1. Ensure that the "Public Events" committee is functioning (or modified) so that it leads efforts for this goal's action items within the first three months. Ensure the committee meets monthly or more frequently.
2. Identify what our department's current levels (presence, activities) are for animal-related youth activities in North Dakota, surrounding states and nationally within the first six months.
3. Within the first year, create effective guidelines and an assessment rubric to identify quality interactions and track efforts between departmental representatives and youth at animal-related events that lead to enhanced understanding of our department and the field of animal science. Ensure all personnel are effectively trained before undertaking these efforts.
4. Identify new opportunities for interacting with youth locally, regionally and state-wide within the first six months.
5. Identify avenues to ensure that all facets of the department (faculty, staff, graduate students and undergraduate students) are involved in youth-related activities within the first six months. Create a mechanism of accountability and/or incentive to encourage participation within the first year. Implement by 2024.
6. Prioritize areas (counties, regions) that are underserved and increase presence and quality of interaction by 10% each year.
7. On an annual basis, ensure that marketing and information platforms for the department are kept current and relevant for youth-related interactions.
8. Implement at least two new opportunities and/or strategies per year over five years.
9. Summarize efforts of this goal's activities and adjust strategy as needed on an annual basis.



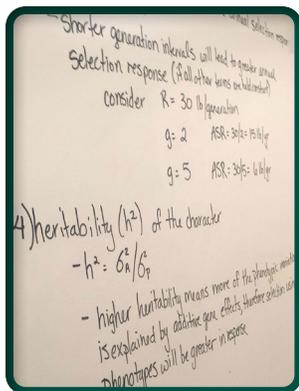
## Enhance Our Visibility (V)

An area of need is to enhance our department's ability to be seen as well as attract attention relative to our efforts.

**GOAL 3: Increase awareness of departmental contributions to our community through innovative programming, new platforms and providing quality information about efforts by 30% in three years and 50% in five years.**

### Action Items:

1. Use the "Public Events" committee (see V. Goal 2) to ensure this goal's action items are accomplished.
2. Identify our department's current programming and platforms for sharing departmental news, outcomes and events within the first six months.
3. Create and implement a survey to assess community awareness of departmental contributions within the first year. Ensure that the survey assesses the community annually or more frequently as needed.
4. Develop a marketing campaign that includes a strategic social media plan, print and digital media, conferences and tradeshow, and promotional items within first year. Implement this campaign by 2024.
5. Ensure that summary media highlighting outreach, research and teaching efforts are shared at least monthly or as often as needed to social media and other platforms.
6. Identify methods to ensure that all facets of the department (faculty, staff, graduate students and undergraduate students) can be involved in activities within the first six months. Create a mechanism of accountability and/or incentive to encourage participation within the first year. Implement by 2024.
7. Implement at least two new opportunities and/or strategies per year over five years.
8. Summarize efforts of this goal's activities and adjust strategy as needed on an annual basis.



## Expand Our Abilities (A)

An area of need is to enhance our department's ability to be inclusive of more resources, provide opportunities for our direct community to diversify their skill sets, and enhance transparency of how we are diverse while being accountable.

### **GOAL 1: Foster and incentivize professional development, training and continued education opportunities by 2025.**

#### **Action Items:**

1. Create or modify an existing committee that focuses primarily on employee training and professional development within the first three months. Ensure balance of faculty, staff and student representation with co-chairs of one faculty and one staff member. This committee will be charged with supporting this goal's action items and additional needs related to professional development, training and continued education for departmental employees and students (e.g., see A. Goal 2).
2. Increase departmental sustainability by creating a comprehensive database of operating procedures relative to departmental efforts in outreach, research, teaching and their intersections within the first year. Ensure that all departmental supervisors have access to the database and can share necessary protocols with employees easily once created. Ensure operating procedures are reviewed and updated annually.
3. Ensure that all operating procedures written include a list and/or description of necessary training needs as well as the time frame each training needs to be renewed. Complete within the first year.
4. Create guidelines that summarize departmental expectations and requirements following professional development, training and continued education activities. Identify a method of employee accountability to ensure necessary training compliance is evaluated and met on a monthly basis. Implement within the first six months.
5. Create transparency in professional development, training and continued education activities by departmental employees and students through seminars following activities, providing reports on outcomes and/or summarizing opportunities that may benefit the department's community. Implement within the first year.
6. Create a database of professional development, training and continued education opportunities that apply to departmental employees and students. Utilize departmental marketing or newsletters to highlight upcoming opportunities. Implement within the first year. Update database at least annually.
7. Identify avenues that provide equal opportunity and/or incentivizes professional development, training, and continued education activities for all departmental employees. Implement at least one option per year starting in 2024.
8. Summarize efforts of this goal's activities and adjust strategy on an annual basis.



## Expand Our Abilities (A)

An area of need is to enhance our department's ability to be inclusive of more resources, provide opportunities for our direct community to diversify their skill sets, and enhance transparency of how we are diverse while being accountable.

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**GOAL 2: Diversify partnerships to expand and strengthen organizational and industry collaborations by developing five new and/or expanded partnerships per year starting in 2024.**

### Action Items:

1. Create or modify an existing committee that focuses on departmental partnerships within the first three months. This committee will be charged with supporting this goal's action items and future partnership endeavors.
2. Identify our department's existing partnerships for outreach, research and teaching efforts within the first six months.
3. Identify avenues to improve communication, relationships and visibility of existing partnerships within the first year.
4. Identify at least 10 potential new and/or expanded partnerships within the first year. Identify at least three potential new and/or expanded partnerships each year afterwards.
5. Cultivate new and/or expanded partnership ideas each year, resulting in at least five new and/or expanded partnerships being implemented each year starting in 2024.
6. Summarize efforts of this goal's activities and adjust strategy on an annual basis.



