



Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering

Department Head Update – January 2014

Paul Heinemann, Head of the Department

Greetings from the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering! After a couple of bitingly cold days here in central PA, the age of our building is definitely showing, leaving many of us bundled up a bit more than we would like as we work in our offices and labs. This makes it all the more exciting to be talking about the building plans!

Building Renovations

The project manager has been selected and we are working on our space needs. With a total budget of \$41M, we feel we can accomplish a great deal to recreate our building to fulfill the departmental needs for the 21st century! In December, Jeff Catchmark (facilities task force chair), John Bechtel (Project manager from the Office of Physical Plant), Jeff Spackman (Office of Physical Plant) and I visited the Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Department at Iowa State University. They are in the late construction stages of a new ABE building, so we had the opportunity to tour their facility and discuss all the pros and cons of their construction project. The ISU ABE department is very similar to ours in the scope of their mission, so we were able to get a great deal of valuable information that will help us with our planning. Keep your eye out for these updates to learn the latest on the building project!

New Programs

Our new graduate program in BioRenewable Systems was approved by the Board of Trustees and officially began in January 2014. We have five graduate students enrolled in the BRS program, and our target is to build to 25 grad students (this is in addition to the approximately 40 ABE graduate students). For more information about the BRS graduate program, please go to: abe.psu.edu/graduateprograms/brs

BioRenewable Systems Advisory Committee meeting

We held our inaugural BRS Advisory Committee meeting November 7 and 8. It was a very successful first meeting. The new group is very enthusiastic about our BRS undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as what our department offers in research and extension related to the BRS areas. For a picture of the group that attended and the full list of committee members, please go to: abe.psu.edu/industry/biorenewable-systems-advisory-committee

IPAC

Our Industrial and Professional Advisory Council, sponsored through the College of Engineering, will meet on campus in March. A couple of years ago, we started a December IPAC phone conference, which has been very valuable for keeping the communications going between the council members and the department. Our thanks go out to Jordana Swank (Hershey Foods), Michael Lorenz (Kling Architects, Engineers, and Interior Designers), and David Bidelspach (Stantec), who will be rotating off this year. We very much appreciate their service to the department! For more information about our IPAC, please go to: abe.psu.edu/industry/ipa

Dean Search Update

Dr. Amr Elnashai began his duties as the College of Engineering Dean on January 13. The search for the Dean of the College of Ag Sciences is continuing.

New face

Elizabeth Lockett has joined us as the new financial assistant in the department. Liz has worked in the College of Ag Sciences in the past (Crop and Soil Sciences) as well as various other places around the university. We are very pleased to have her join the department in this very important position.

Reminder about Alumni Affiliate Program Groups

Just a reminder about our APGs: Natural Resources Engineering, Food and Biological Process Engineering, Agricultural Engineering, and Agricultural Systems Management (ASM, ASMT, Ag Mech).

If you would like to be part of one of the engineering APGs, please send the following to Al Jarrett (arj@psu.edu): Name, Graduation Year(s), Address, Email, Phone Number, and to which APG you wish to belong. If you would like to be part of the ASM APG, please send the same information to Jay Rush (mjayrush@juno.com).

For the latest news, please visit our [website](#) and/or join our [Facebook](#) page!



Department Contact Information

Department of Agricultural & Biological Engineering
249 Agricultural Engineering Building
University Park, PA 16802
814-865-7792