A. What studies has your university done in the last three years to ensure your graduates are meeting the needs of employers?

The College of Agriculture (C-AG) has several advisory boards (we meet with each at least once per year) that provide feedback on employer needs, which in turn are used to update our programs. Additionally, (1) many of our students do internships, from which information from employers is obtained to determine their needs, and appropriate action is taken; and (2) employer needs are addressed relative to meeting accreditation standards (and recommendations from program reviews) by accrediting bodies (ABET and AVMA) and other entities that deals specifically with competence required in professional practices as well as by employers.

B. Do you have measurable goals to meet employers’ current needs? If so, please provide them. How often are these goals updated?

A major goal of C-Ag is to prepare students to be competitive in the job market. To do this, advise and recommendations are obtained from advisory board members (most are employers or potential employers of our graduates) and accrediting bodies. Their advice and recommendations are appropriately used in program improvements and development. Specifically, the goals and learning outcomes to meet employer’s needs are matched and guided by standards set forth by accreditation and other governing bodies as well as various employers of our graduates.

C. Do you have measurable goals for each graduate in the areas of writing proficiency and critical thinking? If so, please send them to me with the goals and include the results for the last ten years.

In C-AG, writing proficiency and critical thinking are required in most of our courses for each student. For example, in Food Science, writing proficiency and critical thinking have been part of the annual assessment plan. Results from the assessment plan indicate that more than 90% of all students met the criteria for writing proficiency and critical thinking. For Veterinary Technology, the current curriculum requires a report writing class in addition to the general education English composition courses. Many of the veterinary technology courses will require writing proficiency. All of the veterinary courses will require critical thinking.

E. Are professors required to integrate writing proficiency and critical thinking into all courses? If so, what oversight is provided to ensure that these skills are being taught? How are these skills integrated into courses assessment?

Even though, this is not a strict requirement for all classes, it is commonly used in most classes. However, it is required that all programs identify and teach courses specifically designed to develop critical thinking skills and writing proficiency. The assessment process provides the oversight needed to show how this is assured.
F. Do you have measurable goals for student success after graduation? If so, please send me the goals and the results for the last five to ten years.

In C-AG, the principal measures of success by our students after graduation are based on their success in finding a job, entering graduate school, or starting their own businesses within a year of graduation. Most have been employed within a year of graduation or entered graduate school, and a few started their own businesses.

M. What programs do you have to educate students regarding job opportunities? What are your measurable goals for each program? Do you use information similar to data available from the Florida education and Training Placement Information Program to prepare students prior to admission and prior to selection of major?

In C-AG, to help students become aware of job opportunities and what they should do to become successful in finding a job after graduation, we hold career fairs, field days, encourage and in some cases require internships, have guest speakers, and have two USDA employers assigned to the College (the USDA/1890 Liaison Officer and the USDA Forest Service Liaison Officer).

An example of what one program does, Food Science students are educated about job opportunities in the following ways: (a) through their internship search; (b) via the university and college career fairs; (c) from seminars from invited guests; (d) in our practical food experience classes, where job searching skills are reviewed; (e) the university career center; (f) through organized industry visits and (g) by their membership in professional organizations, especially the Institute of Food Technology (IFT) and Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS).

FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION PROGRAM(S)

1. Building school capacity for accreditation, classes and natural resource capacity

In 2010/2011 the 2+2/3+2 joint degree program in Forestry and Natural Resources Conservation (FNRC) between Florida A&M University (FAMU) and University of Florida (UF) as well as Alabama A&M University, continued to train students at freshman, sophomore, junior and senior levels. Ms. Haven Cook from the National Forests in Florida continues to co-teach the FOR 3093 course as a courtesy professor. She invites several Forest Service employees to present classroom lectures, while contributing many hours of field trips to enhance our courses. Mr. Ted Willis, USDA-Forest Service Liaison Officer, spent many hours recruiting and advising students and facilitating STEP/SCEP placements.

2. Conducting Forest Service research that reflects the priorities of underserved communities

Students often work on projects in the laboratory or field. These projects can lead to graduate work and other opportunities. For example, Dexter Strother worked in the Center for Water and Air Quality (CWAQ) assisting in the nutrient analysis of soils derived from the Apalachicola National Forests, prior to transferring to Alabama A&M University.

3. Providing meaningful student work experience
During the past year FAMU students participated in the STEP/SCEP program at various locations throughout the U.S. For many of these students it was their first time working in the forest or leaving Florida. Their work experience afforded them an opportunity to assist the Forest Service in accomplishing its mission “Caring for the Land and Serving the People”. Additionally, students were exposed to many recreational opportunities their National Forest has to offer. Hopefully, this translates into future increased minority participation in the utilization of the National Forest lands.

4. Providing Academic Development (Undergrad, grad and faculty)

Funds have been provided for undergraduate students and graduate students to attend symposia, conferences and workshops such as MANRRS, ARD, and SAF among others. Dr. Onokpise, the lead faculty of the 2+2 program at FAMU has used travel funds to attend various professional meetings including the Society of American Foresters, where he now serves as Secretary of the International Forestry Working Group. Other faculty within C-AG has been similarly funded. Two students, Juan Narvaez and Jarohn Smith attended the SAF National Convention held in Alberqueque, New Mexico in October 2010.

5. Building Community Capacity through Technology Transfer

For three weeks from June 8 – June 27, 2010 and June 7 to June 25, 2011, FS personnel actively participated in the 2010 and 2011 FAMU Forestry and Conservation Education (FACE) summer program. They served as guest speakers or took students out on field trips to various operational sites. By performing these activities, the FS has started to transfer basic and practical knowledge in forestry and natural resources technology to high school students, our target clientele for the FAMU program.

6. Improving Public Outreach Effort

Field trips by students to the Center for Water Quality, the USDA-Forest Service Fire Center and the GIS/GPS Laboratory offer the public, especially minorities, to benefit from FS research and technical assistance. Exposure of high school students via the FACE Summer Program and our undergraduates to old and new equipments used in management of forest and other natural resources, especially fire management. The Forest Service undertook outreach task that constitute the primary mission being stewards of the land.

7. Prepare Students for Forestry careers and delivery of Federal Programs to Diverse Communities.

STEP/SCEP students receive pre-Forest Service career practical training in their prospective discipline including tutorials, professional development. Award of baccalaureate and graduate degrees further strengthen the preparation of these future Forest Service employees and enhance the Forest Service delivery programs.

NAVAL ROTC Program

1. The Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) is the subject of periodic inspections by the Navy Education Training Command (NETC). The last inspection of the FAMU NROTC Unit was conducted in January 2010. The last inspection received a grade in excess of 90%. Additionally, our students go on summer cruises (internships) on Navy ships and Marine Corps Battalions across the Fleet. The host units send evaluations of our students. These actions, in addition to
our internal inspection program, provide feedback to our program and to our students that ensure our graduates are meeting the needs of future employers.

2. The NROTC program has clearly defined and measurable goals that meet future employer’s needs. We have a matrix of program requirements that the Navy and Marine Corps (our future employers) have established for our students. Our requirements are based on the university’s curriculum, NROTC academic requirements, and Navy and Marine Corps physical requirements. These requirements can be updated in real-time if required by the Navy and Marine Corps. The Regulations for Officer Development (ROD) For the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC), our programs governing document, was last updated August 1, 2011 and clearly defines our employer’s needs.

3. The NROTC program has measurable goals for our graduates in writing proficiency and critical thinking. Every NROTC class has a writing and oral presentation requirement. To ensure the success of our students and facilitate learning, the NROTC program has a grading rubric used for grading written and oral assignments. Additionally, our students participate in tactical decision games (TDGs), organize battalion activities in student leadership positions, and the cruises our students participate in reinforce writing proficiency and critical thinking skills.

4. All NROTC classes, freshman through senior level classes, require written assignments that are graded by a grading rubric. The assignments are progressively more difficult as the student graduates to more senior level classes.

5. NROTC students are immediately employed by the Navy or the Marine Corps upon graduation from FAMU. Their success is easily measured, and the starting pay ranges from $45,000-$55,000, some earning signing bonuses. Some jobs require follow on training, other jobs the student starts leading Sailors and Marines in the Fleet within weeks from graduation and Naval Service Commissioning. These students start performing their duties, driving surface ships, supervising maintenance, and leading damage control and firefighting teams on worldwide deployments.

6. The NROTC program has multiple programs that promote job opportunities in the Navy and Marine Corps. The programs sends all students on cruises, the program also offers field trips to military bases for tours of ships. The NROTC invites speakers, both senior officers and recent college graduates, and the program has a weekly lab. The lab is in the university’s catalog and open to all students, NROTC and non-NROTC students. We have students from FAMU, FSU, and TCC who take NROTC classes and the NROTC lab.

7. The current state of the NROTC program is to grow leaders. We complete this with two leadership classes, one in the sophomore year and one in the senior year, taught by our most experienced leaders. The students intern during the cruises where they have the opportunity to hone their leadership skills. Finally, they fill leadership positions that ensure the daily operations of the battalion that directly prepares the student for their job with the Fleet.
In both of these examples, the bottom-line is that employer needs are identified and addressed. This allows for C-AG to enhance its efforts to make sure that our students are prepared as “SOCIETY READY GRADUATES”, thus they will be more able to successfully compete in the job market.

Q. Please provide me with any additional information you think may be helpful, including your thought process to make sure we are headed in the right direction.
   To further emphasize what C-AG is doing to prepare society ready graduates, two examples: