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Building and Sustaining Quality in Natural Resource Academic Departments

Terry L. Sharik¹ and J. Douglas Wellman²

In his recently published book, *Departments that Work: Building and Sustaining Cultures of Excellence in Academic Programs* (2003. Anchor Publishing Co., Bolton, MA), Jon F. Wergin outlines characteristics of a quality academic department. These include: “(1) diverse and supportive academic community; (2) culture of collective responsibility; (3) commitment to excellence in teaching, student learning, and scholarship; (4) culture of critical reflection; (5) visionary leadership from faculty and chair; and (6) adequate resources for students and faculty.” Using breakout groups, we will examine each of these characteristics, determine their applicability to natural resource programs, and brainstorm over strategies for attaining and sustaining these attributes.

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