I. **Strengths**

1. A healthy total enrollment in PLSS courses and a clear plan to recruit more students for the program. (Although they have very few majors, their service work for other agriculture programs appears to fill their classes. This could have been emphasized stronger in their self-study if the number of students in the other degree programs using their courses had been mentioned as well as the SCH numbers.)

2. Faculty provide students with unique experiential learning opportunities that lead to “hands-on” training that is important in the careers that the PLSS majors pursue.

3. Faculty have implemented structured student learning outcomes and have sought to increase learning by offering WebCT courses and TTVN.

II. **Weaknesses**

1. Very limited on-campus full time faculty.

2. The lack of a well defined review and planning process for the department, and some funding issues. The self-study is confusing in that the list of faculty and the courses they taught includes every instructor who was active at any time from 2000 to 2005. A statement at the beginning of the faculty section clearly stating this would have been very helpful. It appears at first reading that six faculty are presently available. Another table could be included showing that there are presently only two full time faculty active in this department. This would strengthen their case for additional faculty.

3. Their departmental planning is limited to the annual Institutional Effectiveness Report. It notes that faculty are “invited” to give input. Admittedly the full time faculty are only two at this time and a formal meeting may seem superfluous, however the program appears to lack a formal stated internal process for review of their program. It is important to note that the assessment of students is excellent and that clearly data is annually acquired regarding the program. Assessment measures currently utilized are clearly outlined, and problematic areas are being addressed. For example, PLSS students generally perform poorly in ENGL 2314; therefore, the PLSS program will be bolstering writing requirements in hopes of strengthening writing skills.
III. Recommendations

1. Modifications of the self-study be made to address the issues raised above and a formal process of faculty meetings to review the data collected during the assessment of the program be written.

2. The committee recommends unconditional continuation of the Plant and Soil Science program.

One-Year Follow-Up

Unconditional continuation