

The Role of North Carolina Extension Specialists

A study conducted by the North Carolina Association of Cooperative Extension Specialists

Purpose: To develop a clear understanding of the roles and expectations of NC Extension Specialists and describe best practices that lead to professional excellence and enhance the ability of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and its supporting institutions, NC and A&T State Universities, to serve its publics.

Study Team Members

Stephen Lilley, Chair

Karen DeBord

Tom Hoban

Jan Spears

Julia Storm

Bernadette Watts

Executive Summary

In 1998, the president of the North Carolina Association of Cooperative Extension Specialists appointed a team to study the role of Extension specialists in North Carolina. The Role of Extension Specialists Team (REST) was to "develop a clear understanding of the roles and expectations of NC Extension Specialists and describe best practices that lead to professional excellence that enhance the ability of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and its supporting institutions, NC and A&T State Universities, to serve its publics." This report summarizes recommendations addressing roles and expectations, relationships and best practices.

Roles and Expectations

Expectations should be consistent with the information conveyed during recruiting, orienting and training new faculty and staff. Written documents, videotapes and interactive web sites may help ensure consistency in the message.

A mentor should be assigned to each new specialist.

New specialists should spend at least 1 week in an appropriate county.

Strategies for incentives, rewards and recognition for specialist-agent collaboration should be established and communicated.

Core competencies as described in the Blue Ribbon Commission report should be incorporated into the existing Extension specialist job description.

Specialists' appointments, primary responsibilities and contract periods (9-month vs. 12-month) should be posted on the NCCE intranet.

Relationships

Specialists support field faculty by planning and delivering in-service education, developing educational materials and helping field faculty with program design.

Administrators do not perceive that agents and specialists should be involved in evaluating the work of each other. It should be made clear that specialists are not personnel managers of faculty. Agents depend on specialists for their program materials and specialists depend on agent use of materials to help evaluate impact. Further, although this dependency exists, there is not a bidirectional process to evaluate work. Even with CEMP work, program evaluation and personnel evaluation are not connected.

During orientation, new campus and field faculty should hear consistent messages about the interrelatedness of specialist and agent roles.

At the time that specialists are recruited, department heads should clearly communicate the responsibilities and expectations of Extension faculty. A consistent message should be developed using the job description. A brochure or video on what is Extension is from a specialist's perspective may be useful.

Interaction between department extension leaders (DELs) and CEMPs is critical to enhance programmatic and interdisciplinary communication. CEMP co-chairs should regularly (at least twice a year) meet with department Extension leaders and the associate director to facilitate collaborative efforts and organizational communication. Possible venues for this meeting include the regular DEL meeting or distance communication.

Cooperative Extension administration should orient department heads and Extension leaders about job descriptions, expectations and core competencies for specialists.

Tenured faculty who review promotion packages should become familiar with expectations, job description and core competencies.

The position description and core competencies should be used to evaluate Extension personnel.

Best Practices for Excellence in Extension Specialist Work

Comprehensive program development and evaluation.

Interpretations of research that lead to program innovations.

Development of Extension materials (not limited to academic publications) that meet needs based on clientele feedback and are guided by research.

Trend interpretation that leads to excellence in program direction.

State leadership within and without Extension which supports program development that meets human needs and creates positive economic impacts.

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In 1998, Mitch Owen, then president of the North Carolina Association of Cooperative Extension Specialists, along with the organization's board of directors, charged the Role of Extension Specialists Team (REST) to "develop a clear understanding of the roles and expectations of NC Extension Specialists and describe benchmark behaviors that lead to professional excellence and that enhance the ability of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and its supporting institutions, NC and A&T State Universities, to serve its publics."

Specifically, the scope of the charge included:

Clearly defining the expectations expressed by all stakeholders of the Extension specialist's position. These included, but were not limited to: Cooperative Extension Service (CES) administration, university administration, college administration, department heads, full professors, department Extension leaders, county agents and program leaders. If additional stakeholders were discovered, they were also to be defined.

Examining the relationships of the various stakeholders to each other and to Extension specialists and clearly defining issues that need to be addressed with respect to these relationships and any conflicts that may exist due to expectations expressed by different stakeholders.

Defining best practices and benchmarks of outstanding Extension specialists' work.

Communicating findings to Extension specialists, the board of NCACES

and Extension administration.

Review of Issues

The Team first reviewed several existing documents:

The Extension Climate Study (1997)

The Extension Organizational Study (1997)

Notes from previous collaborative discussions on agent-specialist relations.

The Extension Organizational Study and the Extension Climate Study were both commissioned by Dr. Jon Ort, director of NCCE, in 1997. Relevant findings related to specialist roles include the following:

County staff is more likely to agree with the questionnaire item "NCCE strategies are well understood by field faculty" than those at the state level.

County staff is more in favor of equal program support than those at the state level.

County staff is less likely to agree that Extension administration "understands the problems in the counties" than other groups of respondents.

The report noted that it may be possible to characterize two separate cultures -- one a world of doers with hands-on problems and experiences and the other a world of administrators and faculty who experience Extension from the more abstract perspective of research, funding and administration. Other findings relevant to this report include the following:

There was a sentiment that we "can't let go of people," which leads Extension to keep programs past the time when they have a cost-effective audience.

Extension professionals at the state level are looking for management that is different from what they have experienced in the past, more inclusive, responsive.

There is a need for increased rewards and appreciation.

There is an "unevenness among program areas regarding pay and workload and a lack of openness by some county directors."

Unproductive employees add to morale problems.

There is little teamwork reported in NCCE and a lack of teamwork within the county staff and between counties.

Field agents resent the fact that they are not viewed like campus faculty in matters of salary and benefits and, to add insult to injury, point out that "campus faculty get the summer off, too."

Some respondents suggested a state-level grant writing function.

The specialists group stated that "in the university, Extension work does not have equal weight with research, or bringing in grant money."

Many faculty members have joint appointments between two of the three mission areas, although the budgets of each area are separate.

"Raleigh administrators micromanage personnel issues while those who assist with the design of program and field training are seriously understaffed." "If we are ever going to get over this attitude that those people in Raleigh are trying to run Extension from hundreds of miles away, we have to move Extension close to the people it serves," said one county official.

Those who see themselves as losers in the process will actively resist any efforts to reorganize Extension.

From the climate study, people in program areas and supervisors perceived the organizational differently.

The study team noted that there were already several uncoordinated efforts underway to look at various aspects of the roles of specialists. These included the Building Agent-Specialist Collaboration session (Feb. 2, 1998), part of the Extension Tomorrow effort being coordinated by Susan Lyday and Sheila Sutton; the North Central District model on county visitations directed by Ken Bateman; the revised specialist position description in December 1996 (Appendix A), the "Guidelines for Evaluation of Faculty Outreach and Extension Efforts" in the faculty handbook (Appendix F); and the Ed Emory/Cheryl Lloyd presentation at the February 1998 administrative meeting in Greensboro. REST members read material from these groups and incorporated some of their discussions in data gathering phases.

Summary: Neither agents nor specialists completely understand the other's roles. There may not be a clear orientation and ongoing communication on all levels pertaining to the function of each role in Extension programming.

Methodology

Based on team discussion related to the previous work to clarify specialist roles and expectations, the team sorted through key issues for further investigation. The key identifiable issues were:

- Competing roles for specialists.

- The wide variety of demands on specialist time.

- Differing approaches to Extension work among departments (e.g., Food Science, Forestry, Family and Consumer Science, etc.).

- Diversity of faculty appointments.

- Variety of ways specialists are recruited and oriented to Extension.

A list of stakeholders was generated which included specialists, county faculty, administrators and department heads. It was decided that gathering information from the large number of diverse end-users for the broad range of Extension programs would be unmanageable given the available time and resources.

Strategies for data collection were identified. The strategies included a panel discussion with appointed listeners to capture key concepts. It was decided that participants on the panel would be representatives from the 4-H, family and consumer sciences, agricultural and secretarial associations. Other strategies were a survey of new Extension staff and an on-line survey of Extension specialists.

It was determined that key areas for exploration with each of these groups would include expectations of specialists by various stakeholders, benchmark behaviors that lead to professional excellence, a definition of an "ideal" specialist by each group of stakeholders and a ranking of positive and negative attributes, actions and practices.

A questionnaire was designed for new staff and faculty to complete during the new faculty orientation in January 1998 (Appendix B), open-ended questions were composed as the basis of a moderated panel for the February 5, 1999, NCACES meeting (Appendix C) and finally, a web-based questionnaire on Extension specialists' roles which gave all specialists an opportunity to express opinions on specialists' roles was developed (Appendix D).

Results and Discussion

New Faculty Orientation

New Extension workers attending the orientation sessions in January 1999 were asked to rate various activities that involve specialists from most important (rating of 4) to least important (rating of 1). Respondents could assign any rating (1 - 4) only 5 times among the 20 activities listed. This limitation forced respondents to report what activities were actually most important to them rather than allowing them to indicate, as some mentioned verbally, "all of them are important." Almost all of the respondents were county faculty.

Summary: Rated as *most important or important* by 75 percent or more of respondents: w Develop and deliver in-service training for agents. w Develop extension educational materials. w Provide support for staff in implementing county programs. w Assist field faculty in program design. Rated as *only somewhat important or least important* by 75 percent or more of respondents: w Publish in professional journals. w Teach 2-year, 4-year or graduate courses.

NCACES Panel Discussion

The panel discussion was held February 5, 1999, at a regular meeting of the N.C. Association of Cooperative Extension Specialists at North Carolina State University. Panelists representing their respective professional associations or administrative role included:

Ken Esbenshade (department head)

Ed Emory (4-H agent)

Ron Jarrett (district directors)

Mike Davis (Extension administration)

Cheryl Lloyd (county directors)

Janice Dotson (secretary)

Susan Hamilton (family and consumer educator)

Mitch Smith (agricultural agent)

The panel was moderated by Mike Gray, Department Head in Communications Services. Using questions prepared by REST (see Appendix C), the panelists first discussed their perceptions of the ideal agent-specialist relationship. They agreed that the relationship should be collaborative with the specialist providing subject-matter expertise and the county agent providing the knowledge of the community needs and appropriate delivery mechanisms. One person noted that the specialists bring particular expertise to the county to advance the understanding of that body of knowledge. Communication and coordination are

necessary to make the relationship work. In the Western District, specialists work in the Fletcher Center, which has created a bit of a different culture in which frequent communication and respect are paramount. Having specialists close to agents and clientele may be a model worth studying.

Incentives that encourage specialists to work collaboratively with agents was explored. The panelists said effective incentives included increased salary, promotion and advancement, intrinsic satisfaction, a collegial spirit and positive public relations. In addition to incentives, it is necessary that the specialist's department head clearly communicate expectations for collaborative work. Some field staff felt conducting training with agents is part of the specialist's job and no extra incentives should be necessary. Specialists must understand the faculty and specialist roles differ.

Disincentives were discussed as well. A district director indicated that there are some barriers for faculty that include split appointments, heavy workloads, funding disparities (haves and have-nots), organizational structure and protocols. The specialists' customers are multiple and varied and departments (in general) don't value Extension work. An administrator remarked, "Rather than barriers, there may be obstacles or challenges which an entrepreneurial spirit can address. We each have to control our calendars and we often cannot expect an immediate response from a professional. A specialist must prioritize his or her work and cannot treat every request as equal." One county director said, "There is a lack of understanding (between specialist and agents). For example, processes required for curriculum development can be a barrier. Specialists are encouraged to pursue grant dollars and this may be a barrier since some grants don't particularly meet the needs of the community."

Several suggestions were offered to improve relationships between agents and specialists. Comments fell into three categories-- *orientation of new faculty and staff, role clarity and communication channels.*

Orientation of new faculty and staff

"Specialists should continue to visit counties for their orientation, as I did when I started. However, agents should also spend a day with a specialist."

"As a part of specialist orientation, assign the specialist to a county for an extended period to build mutual respect and effective communication."

"A mentor should be assigned to new specialists and agents."

"Specialists should spend time in the county."

"A core level of competencies for agents should be developed, since agents have multiple responsibilities."

Role clarity

"The lines of specialist and agent responsibilities are not nearly as distinct as we usually define them. Some agents are developing curriculum and some specialists are delivering programs. These should be shared."

" We need a better understanding of each other's roles; a training session for both specialists and agents could address this."

"Specialists should be allowed time to be proactive in developing cutting-edge programs."

"Hand-holding" of agents needs to be eliminated."

"Relationships between specialists and agents should be nurtured."

Communication channels

We should "develop a listening team to provide specialists with information on local needs."

" CEMPs are a place for agents and specialists to interact; we need to work to get people with ideas on CEMP teams."

"Communication skills should be developed."

" Agents need to know what specialists expect of them."

"Great specialists make the program what it is; the system is working well. The strongest attributes of specialists are: responding in a timely manner (timeliness sets us apart from other information services); and personal touches like a willingness to stay beyond 5 p.m. (builds credibility in the minds of our clients)."

Related to personnel evaluation, a department head indicated that the amount of feedback to the department is large and sources numerous. Over time, the reputation of a specialist emerges from this feedback. Sometimes this does not have an impact on tenure and promotion. One participant thought letters from agents evaluating faculty are sufficient, "We don't need another form," while a district director said, "Agents should have a limited role in specialist evaluation; it should be informal." A County director said, "Care should be exercised in using agent feedback because specialists are out in front with emerging issues and agents may not be comfortable or happy being led into new territory." And a district secretary agreed

with two agents saying, "Our input and feedback on specialists goes through our district director."

Summary: The strength of Extension involves shared responsibilities to develop and deliver programs. Although communication and shared programming across job functions occurs in CEMPs, collaborations work best when they build on the strengths of the partners and are not limited by job status or rank. This may require a systematic paradigm shift.

Panelists also suggested that a primary need is to ensure a thorough orientation with field experiences, mentors and exchanges so that both agents and specialists understand one another's roles and collaborative relationships are facilitated.

General Survey of Specialists

During the fall of 1999, all Cooperative Extension specialists were surveyed through the Internet. Seventy-nine of the approximately 200 Extension specialists responded; this represents a response rate of about 40 percent. This survey measured specialists' views on the following related issues:

Incentives for agent-specialist collaboration.

Disincentives for agent-specialist collaboration.

Evaluation criteria for specialists.

Importance of specialist activities.

Several questions assessed background characteristics of the respondents. The entire survey is located in Appendix D.

Of respondents, 39 percent were full professors, 24 percent were associate professors, 23 percent were non-tenure track specialists, 11 percent were assistant professors and 3 percent were other. In addition to serving as specialists, 17 percent also indicated they are administrators. Length of service at NC State University ranged from 3 months to 29 years, with a mean of 13.1 years.

Respondents were asked to estimate about what percentage of their professional time had been devoted to a variety of activities during the previous 2 years. Most respondents (69 percent) indicated that most of their time was spent in Extension functions, with 13 percent involved primarily in research functions. Respondents indicated the remaining time is devoted to undergraduate teaching and advising (5 percent), university and departmental service (5 percent), administrative work (4 percent), graduate teaching and advising (3 percent) or other functions (1 percent). Respondents were also asked to estimate the percent of Extension time spent working with various audiences. The primary audience identified by respondents was county extension agents (44 percent). Other audiences included business or industry clientele (17 percent), state agencies (13 percent), associations or organizations (10 percent) and federal agencies (5 percent). About 11 percent of the respondents noted they worked with audiences not listed on the questionnaire.

Respondents were asked to rate a list of potential incentives as being a major incentive, somewhat of an incentive, or not an incentive. The list included activities performed by specialists that could serve as incentives to work with county extension agents. Major

incentives were the ability to help people improve their well-being, a chance to work on important problems, personal satisfaction, expected as part of my job and an opportunity to learn about new issues or techniques. Table 2 details all the remaining responses.

The questionnaire also listed disincentives that discouraged specialists from working with county agents. Major disincentives included having too many responsibilities, funding not available, too much time and effort involved, inadequate recognition in salary adjustment and lack of monetary and non-monetary recognition. Table 3 lists all the disincentives.

Specialists rated a list of items by their importance for personal evaluation. The items that respondents rated as the greatest importance in evaluation were documentation that efforts focus in important needs, evidence of changes in peoples' knowledge or skills, assessment by clientele or outside groups, evidence of changes in peoples' behavior, collaborative programs with extension agents and assessments by peers in the department. The lowest rated items were extent of international activities and number of refereed publications. Table 4 lists all items and means.

Finally, specialists were asked to rate activities as to their importance in achieving excellence in Extension programming. The highest rated items included interpreting research findings to assist with problem identification, developing extension educational materials, interpreting trends and anticipating consequences in subject matter, providing program area leadership and developing and delivering in-service training for agents. The lowest ranked items included teaching undergraduate programs, attending annual Extension conference and spending time on CEMP-related programs. Table 5 lists all items related to program excellence and their means.

Summary: Incentives for specialists working with agents include the ability to help people, working on important problems and opportunities to learn about new issues.

Disincentives were too many responsibilities, lack of funding and too much time and effort involved.

Evaluation of specialists' programs should include a focus on important needs and evidence of change in knowledge and skills.

Recommendations

Perceptions we have about each other's work sometimes lead to misunderstanding. Often when people are pulled in many directions and feel stressed by demands placed upon them by clientele, they feel unsupported and misunderstood. What is clear is that respondents *are* interested in nurturing relationships necessary to achieve program excellence.

Many of the recommendations made by respondents during this investigation are consistent with the position description found in Appendix A. The wording in the position description is clear and defines the relationship of the specialist with Extension colleagues, the organization and other faculty. The job description of specialists would be more complete if it incorporated the competencies suggested by the Blue Ribbon Commission on Staff Development, which are in Appendix E.

The following discussion and recommendations is categorized by the three areas this study was charged with exploring: roles and expectations, relationships and best practices for excellence in Extension specialist work.

Roles and Expectations

Expectations for Extension work should be consistently conveyed by those recruiting, orienting and training new faculty and staff. Written documents, videotapes or even interactive Web sites may help ensure consistency in the message.

A mentor should be assigned to each new specialist.

New specialists should spend at least 1 week in an appropriate county.

Strategies for incentives, rewards and recognition for specialist-agent collaboration should be established and communicated.

Core competencies as described in the Blue Ribbon Commission report should be incorporated into the existing Extension specialist job description.

Specialists' appointments, primary responsibilities and contract periods (9-month vs. 12-month) should be posted on the NCCE intranet.

Relationships

Field and state faculty agree that the primary ways that specialists should support field faculty work is in planning and delivering in-service education, developing educational materials and helping field faculty with program design.

Administrators do not perceive that agents and specialists should be involved in evaluating the work of each other. It should be made clear that specialists are not personnel managers of faculty. Agents depend on specialists for their program materials and specialists depend on agent use of materials to help evaluate impact. Further, although this dependency exists, there is not a bidirectional process to evaluate work. Even with CEMP work, program evaluation and personnel evaluation are not connected.

During orientation, new campus and field faculty should hear consistent messages about the interrelatedness of specialist and agent roles.

At the time that specialists are recruited, department heads should clearly communicate the responsibilities and expectations of Extension faculty. A consistent message should be developed using the job description. A brochure or video on what is Extension is from a specialist's perspective may be useful.

Interaction between department extension leaders (DELs) and CEMPs is critical to enhance programmatic and interdisciplinary communication. CEMP co-chairs should regularly (at least twice a year) meet with department Extension leaders and the associate director to facilitate collaborative efforts and organizational communication. Possible venues for this meeting include the regular DEL meeting or distance communication.

Cooperative Extension administration should orient department heads and DELS about the specific job description, expectations and core competencies for specialists.

Tenured faculty who review promotion packages should become familiar with expectations, job description and core competencies.

The position description and core competencies should be used to evaluate Extension personnel.

Best Practices for Excellence in Extension Specialist Work

Comprehensive program development and evaluation.

Research interpretations that lead to program innovations.

Development of Extension materials (not limited to academic publications) that meet needs based on clientele feedback and are guided by research.

Trend interpretation that leads to excellence in program direction.

State leadership within and without Extension that leads to program support and development that meet human needs and create positive economic impacts.

Appendices

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Position Description for Extension Specialists, December 1996

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Guidelines for Evaluation of Faculty Outreach and Extension Effort,

Faculty Handbook, February 29, 1996

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Most Important Specialist Activities as Rated at New Faculty

Orientation, 1999

Figure 2. 37

Least Important Specialist Activities as Rated at New Faculty

Orientation, 1999

Table 1. 38

Specialists Role as Seen by Attendees at 1999 New Faculty Orientation

Table 2. 39

Online Survey of Specialists

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Online Survey of Specialists

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Online Survey of Specialists

Appendix A: North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service Position Description for Extension Specialist

Job Summary

The Extension specialist is a member of the faculty of North Carolina State University. He/she provides educational leadership for a statewide program in a subject-matter field, consistent with the philosophy, policy and overall educational objectives of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service. The specialist provides training and education support materials for field faculty and staff and their clientele in assigned subject matter or issue areas. The specialist works both individually and as part of teams to plan, implement and evaluate Extension programs relating to the area of specialization. Depending on the specific assignment, a specialist may or may not hold an academic, tenure track appointment.

Major Functions and Tasks

Function 1

Provides direction for a statewide program in a specific subject-matter field or issue field.

Tasks:

Seeks out and interprets trend and outlook information in subject-matter field.

Informs and interprets to the administrative and supervisory staff the scope and potential value of programs in the subject-matter field.

Cooperates with state, regional and county faculty/colleagues in developing plans of work and reports for assigned project area.

Works with field faculty and staff to coordinate program-planning efforts in the assigned subject-matter area with those of other organization, groups and agencies having common interests.

Function 2

Provides support to field faculty and staff in implementing county Extension programs.

Tasks:

Provides in-service training for field faculty and staff in his/her area of expertise.

Provides field faculty and staff with appropriate support materials for their educational program efforts.

Trains field faculty and staff to teach subject matter to volunteer leaders and other resource persons.

Provides educational support to field faculty and staff as needed.

Assists field faculty and staff in program design and impact determination within his/her subject matter area.

Plans and conducts applied research projects where necessary to develop knowledge required for successful program support.

Encourages adoption of innovative educational methods and delivery systems.

Function 3

Performs program responsibilities external to planned county Extension programs

Tasks:

Provides information to the general public through the mass media (popular-magazine articles, radio, television, etc.).

Works with relevant commodity groups, organizations and industrial firms.

Helps develop and conduct training programs for personnel in industry and other agencies.

Functions as an interpreter of research findings and assists in the identification of problems to be researched.

Write articles for professional journals, newsletters and other publications.

Anticipates long-range program issues and helps the organization plan for them.

Assists with marketing of the organization and its accomplishments.

Function 4

Develops and maintains an understanding of the role of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service as an educational agency.

Tasks:

Understands and supports the mission of the organization.

Understands objectives of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and their implications for programming.

Keeps abreast of internal and external policies affecting the organization and operative of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service.

Maintains an understanding of the organizational resources of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service.

Understands the specialist's role as an Extension educator and the relationship of this role to other faculty in the County, Department, College and University.

Is knowledgeable about and maintains contact with related educational groups in area of specialization.

Function 5

Continuously strives to maintain a high level of professional competence.

Tasks:

Acquires an understanding of the professional requirements of a specialist.

Continuously assesses personal level of competence in relation to the changing requirements of the job.

Develops and pursues a continuous program of professional improvement in both subject matter and education methodology.

Obtains the counsel and approval of supervisor(s) in developing and implementing professional improvement programs.

Belongs to and actively participates in professional societies.

Function 6

Assists with University program activities.

Tasks:

Meets the university service expectation that all faculty become involved in the operation of the department, college and university by serving in various capacities (for example, on committees, boards, panels, task forces, etc.).

Relationships

The Specialist is responsible to the department Extension leader and/or department head for planning, implementing, marketing and evaluating a program of work in his/her area of specialization. He/she is responsible also through the department head/department Extension leader to the office of the director.

The specialist is an authority in some field of agriculture, natural resources, family and consumer sciences, youth development, or community development. The specialist maintains a collegial relationship with members of the field faculty and staff.

The specialist coordinates work with many others, both in and out of the Cooperative Extension Service. Within the Cooperative Extension Service, the specialist coordinates extensively with other specialists, both within the home department and in other departments. He/she coordinates the program with district directors and with field faculty and staff. Extensive coordinating relationships also exist with the research faculty of his/her department, with other departments on campus and with colleagues at other universities. Outside the university, the specialist coordinates professional work with other federal, state and local agencies with educational and action programs.

Finally, the specialist works closely with private groups and organizations to plan, implement and evaluate educational programs.

Qualifications:

A. Education

The Extension specialist must have a minimum of a terminal degree in his/her subject matter field.

B. Personal attributes

Successful performance of the duties encompassed in the specialist's job requires that the individual possess a positive work ethic, a sense of responsibility and a genuine appreciation for the worth of the individual. The incumbent must be adept in both verbal and written communication.

C. Affirmative action

The Extension specialist ensures that all education programs he/she is involved in are offered equally to all individuals without regard to race, creed, national origin, sex, age, or disability. The specialist also takes positive action to ensure that all eligible individuals are informed of program availability.

D. Demonstrated job skills:

Problem-solving ability

Systems-thinking capacity

Commitment to teaching

Commitment to diversity

Computer literacy

Verbal and written communication skills

Team player

Approved by Administrative Council

December 17, 1996

Appendix B: Questionnaire Used at New Faculty Orientation

Roles of Extension Specialists, New Faculty Orientation Conference,

January 26, 1999

Rate and rank the following activities with "4" being most important, "3" important, "2" somewhat important and "1" least important. Rate all activities but do not assign any value (1-4) more than 5 times.

1. ___ Develop and deliver in-service training for agents
2. ___ Publish in professional journals
3. ___ Spend 60 percent of their time on programs related to CEMPs
4. ___ Participate in professional meetings
5. ___ Develop Extension educational materials
6. ___ Package information for customer use
7. ___ Provide program area leadership
8. ___ Secure grant support for program development and initiation
9. ___ Teach two-year, four-year, or graduate courses
10. ___ Provide support for staff in implementing county programs
11. ___ Plan and direct applied subject matter research
12. ___ Collaborate with field faculty on applied research
13. ___ Participate in personal and professional improvement programs
14. ___ Interpret trends and anticipate consequences in subject-matter field
15. ___ Assist field faculty and staff in program design
16. ___ Assist field faculty and staff in program impact assessment
17. ___ Provide information to the general public through mass media
18. ___ Help develop and conduct training programs for personnel in industry and other agencies
19. ___ Interpret research findings and assist in the identification of problems
20. ___ Assist in marketing NCCES and our accomplishments
21. ___ Other (specify) _____
22. ___ Other (specify) _____
23. ___ Other (specify) _____

Please indicate your primary area of responsibility:

Agriculture ____ 4-H ____ FCS ____ CRD ____ Other _____

(Please specify)

Number of months employed by NCCES _____

Total Extension employment in years _____

Comments:

Appendix C: Questions Discussed at February 5, 1999, NCACES Meeting

How would you describe the roles and responsibilities of Extension specialists?

What are the key incentives or motivations that Extension specialists have that encourage them to work with county agents?

What are the key disincentives or barriers that Extension specialists face that discourage them from working with county agents?

What should be done to improve the working relationship and communication among Extension specialists, county agents and other stakeholders?

What is your perception of an ideal agent-specialist relationship?

How should specialists be evaluated and by whom? What role(s) could county agents play?

Describe what you believe to be a typical week or day in the work life of an Extension specialist.

What are some of the other audiences or stakeholders that specialists serve in addition to county Extension agents?

What are some of the success stories that you could tell about the working relationships between agents and specialists?

What are some of the horror stories that you could tell about the working relationships between agents and specialists?

What impacts do split appointments (with research and/or teaching) have on the roles and expectations of Extension specialists who are, in fact, university faculty?

Appendix D: Online Survey of Specialists, Summer 1999

Incentives or Disincentives for Agent/Specialist Collaboration

How much of an incentive is each of the following in encouraging you to work with County Extension agents? **3 = Major Incentive; 2 = Somewhat of an Incentive; and 1 = Not an Incentive?**

- A. Personal satisfaction
- B. Peer recognition
- C. Chance to work on important problems
- D. Ability to help people improve their well-being
- E. Encouragement from department head
- F. Grants and contracts available
- G. Direct financial benefits (e.g., salary increases)
- H. Enhanced opportunities for promotion and/or tenure
- I. Prestige or status
- J. Chance to work in multi-disciplinary activities
- K. Opportunity to learn about new issues or techniques

Expected as part of my job

Other (specify)

How much of a disincentive is each of the following in discouraging you from working with County Extension agents? **3 = Major Disincentive; 2 = Somewhat of a Disincentive; and 1 = Not a Disincentive?**

Too much time and effort involved

Lack of training or preparation

Inadequate recognition in salary adjustment

Lack of support from
department head

Diminished opportunities
for promotion and/or tenure

Departmental colleagues
do not support

Difficult to value
multidisciplinary activities

Funding not available

Lack of monetary and
nonmonetary recognition

Too many other
responsibilities

Main audiences or clientele
at state or national level

Other (specify)

Evaluation Criteria for Specialists

Please rate each item as to how important it
should be in evaluating an Extension Specialist **3**
= Very Important; 2 = Somewhat Important;
and 1 = Not Important

Number of people reached
by programs

Evidence of changes in
peoples' knowledge or
skills

Evidence of changes in
peoples' behavior

Evidence of improvements
in people's income or well-
being

Documentation that efforts

focus on important needs

Number of refereed
publications

Number of popular, trade,
or mass media publications

Assessments by peers
within the department

Assessments by peers
from other universities

Assessments by county
agents

Assessment by clientele or
other outside groups

Number of invited
presentations (other than
peer associations)

Extent of interdisciplinary
involvement

Cooperative efforts with
outside groups

Success in marketing
programs to new audiences

Development and/or use of
innovative Extension
techniques

Ability to get grants or other
funding to support
programs

Extent of international
activities

Collaborative programs
with county Extension
Agents

Specialist Activities

Please rate each of the following activities as to its importance for achieving excellence in Extension programs in your area. **3 = Very Important, 2 = Somewhat Important and 1 Not Important.**

Develop and deliver in-service training for agents

Publish in professional journals

Spend 60 percent of time on programs related to CEMPs

Participate in professional meetings

Develop extension educational materials

Package information for customer use

Provide program area leadership

Secure grant support for program development and initiation

Teach two-year, four-year, or graduate courses

Provide support for staff in implementing county programs

Plan and direct applied subject matter research

Collaborate with Extension agents on applied research

Work with commodity groups and organizations

Participate in personal and professional improvement programs

Interpret trends and anticipate consequences in subject-matter field

Assist Extension agents in program design

Assist Extension agents in program impact assessment

Provide information to the general public through mass media

Attend annual Extension conference

Helps develop and conduct training programs for personnel in industry and other agencies

Interpret research findings and assist in the identification of problems

Assist in marketing NCCES and our accomplishments

Background Characteristics

We are interested in this information for statistical analysis. Remember all information will be treated confidentially.

5. What is your academic rank?

A. Assistant professor

B. Associate professor

C. Full professor

D. Non-tenure track Extension specialist

E. Other _____

6. How many years have you been on the faculty at NCSU? _____

7. Are you currently serving as an administrator?

A. No

B. Yes

8. During the past 2 years, about what percentage of your professional time would you estimate has been devoted to each of the following activities:

(TOTAL SHOULD EQUAL 100 PERCENT)

Extension _____percent

Research _____percent

Undergraduate teaching and advising _____percent

Graduate teaching and advising _____percent

University or departmental service _____percent

Administration _____percent

Other (SPECIFY) _____percent

9. Percent Extension time spent working with:

(TOTAL SHOULD EQUAL 100 PERCENT)

County Extension agents _____percent

State agencies _____percent

Federal agencies _____percent

Business or industry _____percent

Associations or other organizations _____percent

Other (Specify) _____percent

Appendix E: Executive Summary Personal and Organizational Development System

Jon F. Ort, Associate Dean and Director, North Carolina State University

Dalton H. McAfee, Associate Dean and Associate Administrator

North Carolina A&T, State University.

Developed by: The Blue Ribbon Commission on Staff Development and Training (BRC)

North Carolina Cooperative Extension (NCCE)

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs)

Mission: The mission of the Personal and Organizational Development System (PODS) is to ensure excellence in North Carolina Cooperative Extension through individual and organizational growth.

Philosophy: PODS is designed to build the capacity of NCCE to better serve its customers. Employees and volunteers are our most valuable assets; training and development add value to those assets. A strong commitment to lifelong learning must be reflected in every aspect of our organization.

Methodology: PODS was developed by the BRC, consisting of 21 members representing all job groups in NCCE. Thirty-five adjunct members have contributed directly to the work of the commission and all employees of NCCE provided relevant input data or feedback. Members of the State Advisory Council have represented the thousands of volunteers, customers and other NCCE stakeholders. The commission functioned as a learning community with members helping each other become experts in state-of-the-art staff development and training. Members used a variety of quantitative and qualitative research methods to collect and analyze data. Peer institutions selected for study and collaboration were Iowa State University, Texas A&M University and Ohio State University. Experts from the latter two universities have served as consultants to BRC. Training and development systems from the corporate sector were examined, including: The Westinghouse Savannah River Company (WSRC); AT&T, Howmedica, Inc.; First Heritage of Canada; TransAmerica Life Companies; Toyota Motor Sales; Xerox Limited; Amoco Corporation; Schering-Plough Corporation; and Partners Healthcare System, Inc. The BRC was challenged to:

1. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the current NCCE staff development program and identify opportunities and threats that might impact the program in the future.
2. Determine the basic staff development needs of all Extension employees and volunteers.
3. Determine state-of-the-art staff development and training in the public and corporate sectors.

4. Emphasize the use of current and emerging information technology systems, multiple delivery modes and easy access.

Develop a plan for a new system, including individual and organizational responsibilities, that will address training and development needs of all extension workers, both paid staff and volunteers, into the new millennium.

Guiding Principles

1. The Personnel and Organizational Development System contributes directly to the mission, vision and goals of NCCE.

2. PODS is competency-based and competencies include technical, conceptual and interpersonal knowledge skills and observable behaviors.

3. Individuals are responsible for their own growth and development in a learner-focused system.

4. The organization provides an environment that supports learning opportunities and growth for all employees and volunteers.

5. Learning is a continuous and interactive process; individuals enter NCCE with varying levels of competencies and progress developmentally as long as they are associated with the organization.

6. PODS is a dynamic and flexible system that adjusts and renews itself in response to internal and external forces.

Core Competencies

The following seven core competencies were identified by the BRC as critical to the successful performance of all NCCE employees and volunteers:

Knowledge of the Organization - an understanding of the history, philosophy and current nature of NCCE.

Technical Subject Matter Expertise - the mastery of a scientific discipline, a research body of knowledge, or a technical proficiency that enhances individual and organizational effectiveness.

Programming - the ability to plan, design, implement, evaluate and account for significant Extension education programs that improve the quality of life for NCCE customers.

Professionalism - the demonstration of behaviors that reflect high levels of performance, a strong work ethic and a commitment to continuing education and to the mission, vision and goals of NCCE.

Communications - the ability to effectively transfer and receive information.

Human Relations - the ability to successfully interact with diverse individuals and groups creating partnerships, networks and dynamic human systems.

Leadership - the ability to positively influence a wide range of diverse individuals and groups.

For each of the core competencies, job group subcompetencies were developed for agents, specialists, administrators, support staff (secretaries, bookkeepers, etc.), volunteers, program assistants/associates and technicians. Three levels of performance or proficiency were developed for each competency or sub-competency.

Strengths of the Model

PODS is an eclectic model using tested principles of learning and organizational development drawn from multiple corporate and university perspectives.

The model is competency-based and aligns performance standards with strategic directions of the NCCE.

PODS is state-of-the-art, using digital technology in all components of information transfer and in its computerized management and tracking system.

Systems thinking is used to integrate personal effectiveness, organizational effectiveness and program development.

Principles of sound business planning will emphasize measurement of results, cost effectiveness, accountability and a customer focus.

Structure and Functions

PODS functions as a dynamic network consisting of three functional teams:

The Personal Effectiveness Team consists of faculty and staff with expertise as trainers, career counselors and curriculum designers. This team designs and manages individual and group learning options, a mentoring program, career development options and validation and revision of core competencies and the curriculum.

The Organizational Effectiveness Team consists of faculty and staff competent in developing compacts and business plans, systems thinking, visionary planning, team building, enhancement of the workplace environment, organizational assessment and interventions and cultivation of organizational change.

The Program Effectiveness Team is made up of faculty and staff with demonstrated leadership as Extension educators; technical subject matter experts; and experts in program planning, design implementation, evaluation, accountability and reporting. Functions of this team relate to needs assessment, customer focus, program design, delivery options and volunteer development.

Staffing

Leadership for PODS is provided by a director who reports to an upper level administrator in NCCE. The core faculty and staff are drawn from several departments within the College of

Agriculture and Life Sciences and from other administrative units within NCCE. Membership in the faculty and staff of PODS is fluid with some individuals serving as full-time members, others as part-time and some serving for a limited time on a contractual basis for a specific contribution or a special assignment. An advisory committee representing all job groups, volunteers, customers and other stakeholders work with the faculty and staff.

Prepared by: Richard T. Liles, Bernadette G. Watts, David M. Jenkins and Judy M. Groff

Blue Ribbon Commission on Staff Development and Training

Box 7607

North Carolina Cooperative Extension - College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

NC State University, Raleigh, NC 27695

Richard_Liles@ncsu.edu

Bernadette_Watts@ncsu.edu

David_Jenkins@ncsu.edu

Judy_Groff@ncsu.edu

APPENDIX F: Faculty Handbook

Guidelines for Evaluation of Faculty Outreach and Extension Efforts

February 29, 1996

Definition of Terms

To set the stage for evaluation of faculty efforts in outreach and extension, it is important to define what such activities involve. The term "extension" generally applies to the formal programs of the University (such as the Cooperative Extension Service, Textiles Extension, Industrial Extension Service, or Humanities Extension). On the other hand, "outreach" is a more general and inclusive term that takes into account the whole range of activities that faculty are involved in, including the formal extension activities. A working definition of outreach and extension is as follows:

Outreach and extension are scholarly activities that cut across teaching, research and service. Such activities occur in a variety of forms and places. They focus on generating, transmitting, applying and preserving knowledge for the direct benefit of external audiences. Outreach and extension efforts represent an ongoing exchange between the University and the larger society. Such efforts are an integral part of the broader University mission.

The key characteristics of outreach and extension efforts are that they are planned and implemented for the benefit of external audiences or clientele. It is also important to recognize the outreach is much broader than what is usually considered "service". Service on committees within the department and University are generally not considered outreach. Service on a

committee of a community group or business organization would be considered outreach if the faculty member is acting as a representative of NCSU and/or is making contributions based on scholarly expertise.

Rationale for Evaluation

As scholarship, outreach and extension need to be planned and evaluated in a systematic and objective manner. Faculty are advised to consult with their department heads about the expectations and criteria related to outreach and extension efforts, as outlined in this document. On a regular basis, faculty should carefully consider and plan outreach and extension activities and outline steps for evaluation. One of the keys to effective evaluation is to plan for and incorporate evaluation mechanisms as part of an overall outreach and extension program. Evaluation should use systematic and standardized methods that incorporate peer evaluation and clientele assessment.

It is important to recognize the difference between faculty who have extension responsibilities as part of their formal job description and those who become involved in outreach activities on their own initiative. The former are generally expected to have a more active and ongoing program of outreach and extension efforts. Those faculty not on a formal extension appointment also deserve to be recognized and rewarded for their efforts. The guidelines in this document apply to both groups.

Annual Reporting of Outreach and Extension Efforts

Outreach and extension include a variety of activities and efforts, such as the following: technical assistance, applied research and a variety of formal and non-formal educational efforts. It is necessary that each faculty member document and report such activities in a comprehensive and standard format. The following categories outline the format and general kinds of documentation related to outreach and extension that should be included in each faculty member's annual activity report. Such documentation serves as the basis for evaluation. The categories are ranked in decreasing order of importance.

Program and Activity Relevance: Documentation that outreach and extension efforts focused on important needs of audience served. Evidence that the outreach and extension efforts led to improvement in knowledge, practice or other measurable outcomes (such as cost avoidance, improved quality and increased income). Evidence of leadership as demonstrated by others' accomplishments that were impacted by faculty member. Success in marketing programs to new and traditional audiences.

Program Delivery: Documented use of state-of-the-art techniques and innovative approaches that maximize benefits from outreach and extension efforts. Includes non-refereed publications, reports, brochures, popular press articles, slide sets, videotapes and other pertinent channels. Evidence of improvements in instructional materials, demonstrations, technical assistance and other methods.

Collaborative Activities: Demonstrated leadership for interdisciplinary teams in carrying out outreach and extension efforts; such teams may include other faculty members, agency personnel, other professionals, clients, volunteers and others.

Recognized Professional Achievement: Includes refereed publications, honors,

awards, exhibitions, prizes, invited papers and presentations, grants and contracts activities.

Evidence of Excellence in Outreach and Extension

The four categories just described are appropriate for organizing the faculty member's activities into an annual accomplishment report. For purposes of promotion and tenure decisions, it is important to focus on and discuss those outreach and extension efforts that are considered to be excellent, innovative and representative of the faculty member's scholarly accomplishments. The quality and impact of the outreach and extension efforts are more important than the quantity of activity. Generally, evaluations for promotion and tenure should demonstrate and document continued development of expertise, scholarly contributions, interdisciplinary approaches and recognition of excellence. Evidence of excellence in outreach and extension includes the following:

Development and implementation of a coherent and focused outreach and extension agenda in at least one area of recognized need. There should be a continuity among program ideas, rather than an unrelated array of activities. Efforts should be focused on societal issues recognized as important by clientele and other external audiences

Continuous improvement in the field of concentration as demonstrated through increasing and updating skills, keeping abreast of clientele needs and developing and applying relevant new knowledge. Outreach and extension activities that include original research and truly extend the knowledge base of a discipline should merit particular attention in the evaluation process.

Effective contributions to the local area, state and/or larger society by producing innovative materials and new approaches to solving problems. The emphasis should be on specific impacts and demonstrable measures of excellence (both quantitative and qualitative). It is also important to recognize innovative efforts that may have not been that successful, but which meet other criteria of excellence.

Regular dissemination of applied knowledge relevant to outreach and extension activities. An appropriate combination of mass media and scholarly outlets should be included. Electronic and print media, as well as interpersonal interaction, are all important. Efforts should focus on the mechanism that best addresses the identified needs.

Effective leadership as demonstrated by substantial recognition by peers and clientele at the local, regional and national levels. Leadership refers to the ability to inspire, influence and guide others. Evidence of leadership may include: supporting letters (described below); awards and honors; and invitations to participate in regional and national forums or advisory committees.

Evidence that the faculty member is making significant contributions to the application of new knowledge and practice within the discipline and society.

This includes outreach and extension activities that are cited in professional publications or the mass media; shown to have impact on public policy; and/or demonstrate innovative approaches

to linking theory with practice.

Mechanisms for Evaluation

It is helpful to systematically collect information from clientele or audiences who have been impacted by the faculty member's outreach and extension activities. The NCSU Industrial Extension Service has developed and implemented formal mechanisms to evaluate the impacts of their programs. They are able to measure the economic impacts of their outreach and extension programs in a systematic manner. The Cooperative Extension Service also has systematic planning and evaluation procedures. The types of quantitative evaluation used in these programs may, however, be too involved and overly complex for other outreach efforts (especially those where the impacts are less direct and quantifiable).

Qualitative evaluations are also helpful and may be more appropriate for certain types of outreach efforts. Letters should be solicited from academic peers, as well as from clientele who have benefited from the faculty member's outreach and extension efforts. Senior faculty from comparable institutions can comment on the extent to which outreach and extension activities make a significant contribution to scholarship and practice. Unsolicited testimonials from clientele also provide a reasonably valid evaluation of a faculty member's outreach and extension efforts.

For promotion and tenure decisions, letters should be sought from both peers and clientele. Such letters are similar to those used to evaluate research and teaching. References should be asked to address the following points:

The faculty member's professional competency.

The excellence and significance of outreach and extension efforts.

Impacts and outcomes of the outreach and extension effort (as noted above).

Ability to work with people, especially as part of an interdisciplinary team.

Reputation and relative standing in the discipline and/or with clientele.

General desirability as a faculty member or colleague (for peer review).

Satisfaction with assistance and information provided (for clientele review).

Figure 1. Most Important Specialist Activities as Rated at New Faculty Orientation, 1999

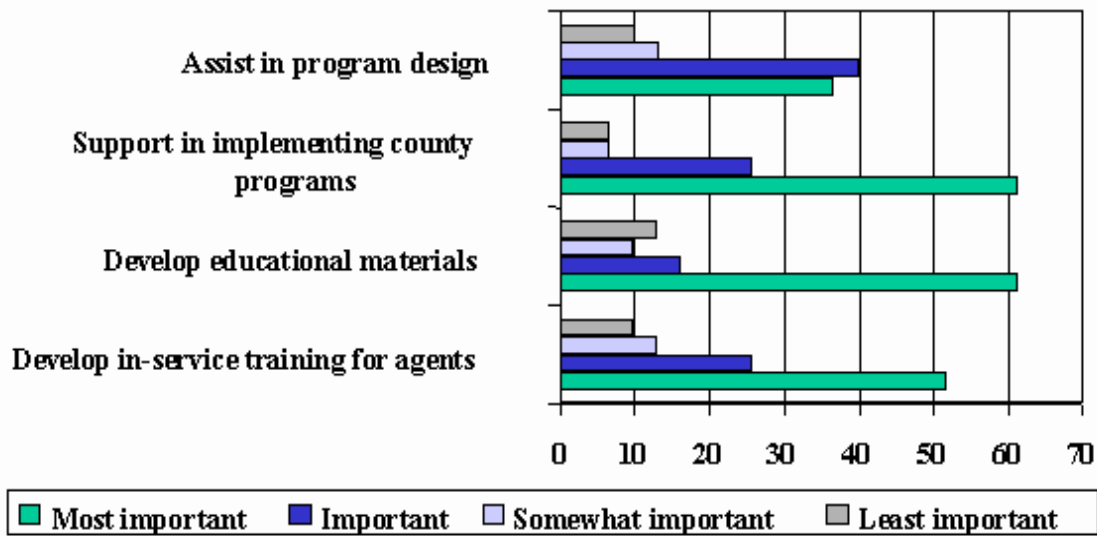


Figure 2. Least Important Specialists Activities as Rated at the New Faculty Orientation, 1999.

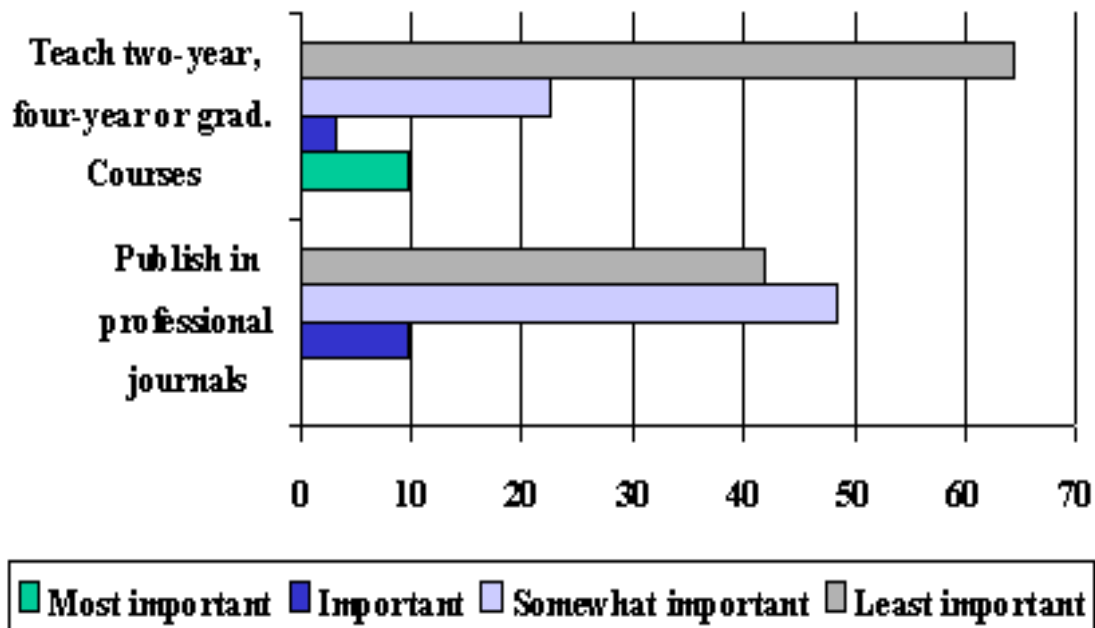


Table 1.

Responses of Attendees at 1999 New Faculty Orientation

4 = Most Important; 3 = Important; 2 = Somewhat Important; 1 = Least Important

Questions	N	Mean	Percentage of Responses					
			#1	#2	#3	#4		
1.	Develop and deliver in-service training for agents	31	3.2	9.7	12.9	25.8	51.6	
2.	Publish in professional journals	31	1.7	41.9	48.4	9.7	0	
3.	Spend 60 percent of their time on programs related to CEMPs	31	2.4	22.6	25.8	41.9	9.7	
4.	Participate in professional meetings	30	2.4	23.3	26.7	33.3	16.7	
5.	Develop extension educational materials	31	3.3	12.9	9.7	16.1	61.3	
6.	Package information for customer use	30	2.5	33.3	16.7	13.3	36.7	
7.	Provide program area leadership	30	2.9	10.0	26.7	26.7	36.7	
8.	Secure grant support for program development and initiation	30	2.7	10.0	33.3	33.3	23.3	
9.	Teach two-year, four-year, or graduate courses	31	1.6	64.5	22.6	3.2	9.7	
10.	Provide support for staff in implementing county programs	31	3.4	6.5	6.5	25.8	61.3	
11.	Plan and direct applied subject matter research	31	2.6	9.7	41.9	29.0	19.4	
12.	Collaborate with field faculty on applied research	31	2.9	6.5	32.3	29.0	32.3	
13.	Participate in personal & professional improvement programs	31	2.2	29.0	29.0	32.3	9.7	
14.	Interpret trends & anticipate consequences in subject-matter field	31	2.6	16.1	32.3	25.8	25.8	
15.	Assist field faculty and staff in program design	30	3.0	10.0	13.3	40.0	36.7	
16.	Assist field faculty and staff in program impact	30	2.6	10.0	40.0	26.7	23.3	

	assessment						
17.	Provide information to the general public through mass media	31	2.0	45.2	12.9	35.5	6.5
18.	Help develop and conduct training programs for personnel in industry and other agencies	31	2.6	16.1	32.3	22.6	29.0
19.	Interpret research findings and assist in the identification of problems	31	2.9	16.1	9.7	38.7	35.5
20.	Assist in marketing NCCES and our accomplishments	31	2.3	25.8	32.3	25.8	16.1

Table 2. Online Survey of Specialists

How much of an incentive is each of the following in encouraging you to work with county Extension agents? 3 = Major Incentive; 2 = Somewhat of an Incentive; and 1 = Not an Incentive.

	Mean (1-3)	Percent "Major"
Ability to help people improve their well-being	2.58	69
Chance to work on important problems	2.56	66
Personal satisfaction	2.56	65
Expected as part of my job	2.42	60
Opportunity to learn about new issues or techniques	2.22	40
Chance to work in multi-disciplinary activities	2.06	31
Peer recognition	1.87	20
Encouragement from department head	1.86	20
Enhanced opportunities for promotion and/or tenure	1.74	23
Grants and contracts available	1.74	20

Direct financial benefits (e.g., salary increases)	1.72	23
Prestige or status	1.62	19

Table 3. Online Survey of Specialists

How much of a disincentive is each of the following in discouraging you to work with county Extension agents? 3 = Major disincentive; 2 = Somewhat of a disincentive; and 1 = Not an Incentive.

	Mean (1-3)	Percent "Major"
Too many other responsibilities	2.30	46
Funding not available	2.03	35
Too much time and effort involved	1.90	26
Diminished opportunities for promotion and/or tenure	1.88	33
Inadequate recognition in salary adjustment	1.85	26
Lack of monetary and non-monetary recognition	1.82	26
Difficult to value multi-disciplinary activities	1.76	20
Lack of training or preparation	1.68	20
Departmental colleagues do not support	1.65	15
Main audiences or clientele at state or national level	1.64	16
Lack of support from department head	1.63	14

Table 4. Online Survey of Specialists

Please rate each item as to how important it should be in evaluating an Extension Specialist. 3 = Very Important; 2 = Somewhat Important; and 1 = Not Important.

	Mean (1-3)	Percent "Very"
Documentation that efforts focus on important needs	2.52	61
Evidence of changes in peoples' knowledge or skills	2.41	51
Assessment by clientele or other outside groups	2.34	46
Evidence of changes in peoples' behavior	2.29	44
Collaborative programs with county Extension Agents	2.27	38
Assessments by county agents	2.24	34
Assessments by peers within the department	2.20	36
Evidence of improvements in people's income or well-being	2.16	35
Number of popular, trade, or mass media publications.	2.15	24
Development and/or use of innovative Extension techniques	2.07	26
Cooperative efforts with outside groups	2.05	20
Ability to get grants or other funding to support programs	2.04	20
Extent of interdisciplinary involvement	2.00	15
Assessments by peers from other universities	1.96	23
Success in marketing programs to new audiences	1.96	19
Number of invited presentations (other than peer associations)	1.93	16
Number of people reached by programs	1.93	11
Number of refereed publications	1.75	10
Extent of international activities	1.55	14

Table 5. Online Survey of Specialists

Please rate each of the following activities as to its importance for achieving excellence in Extension programs in your area. 3 = Very Important; 2 = Somewhat Important; and 1 = Not Important.

	Mean (1-3)	Percent "Very"
Interpret research findings and assist in the identification of problems	2.66	73
Develop extension educational materials	2.66	73
Interpret trends and anticipate consequences in subject-matter field	2.60	67
Provide program area leadership	2.55	62
Develop and deliver in-service training for agents	2.51	61
Plan and direct applied subject matter research	2.44	53
Provide support for staff in implementing county programs	2.42	49
Assist Extension agents in program design	2.41	55
Participate in professional meetings	2.39	43
Package information for customer use	2.38	54
Participate in personal and professional improvement programs	2.38	47
Secure grant support for program development and initiation	2.33	40
Collaborate with Extension agents on applied research	2.32	43
Assist in marketing NCCES and our accomplishments	2.21	41
Work with commodity groups and organizations	2.19	38
Assist Extension agents in program impact assessment	2.18	44
Helps develop and conduct training programs for personnel in industry and other agencies	2.14	35
Provide information to the general public through mass media	2.03	22
Publish in professional journals	2.01	26

Attend annual Extension conference	1.85	24
Spend 60percent of time on programs related to CEMPs	1.85	22
Teach two-year, four-year, or graduate courses	1.58	19