

DAC Minutes
Monday, December 11, 2017
University Square, Room 205

DAC members in attendance: Judy Barth, Lori Bates, Yvonne Bridgeman, Susan Baker, Jan Carroll, Robert Franklin, Jean Glowacki, Kurt Jones, Dennis Kaan, Joanne Littlefield, Jana Smilanich-Rose, CJ Mucklow, Bill Nobles, Jacki Paone, JoAnn Powell, Lou Swanson, Ashley Stokes, Ruth Willson

On the phone: Eric Hammond, Travis Hoesli, Eric McPhail

The meeting began at 12:30.

Updates on action items from September meeting:

Action Item: Lou asked the taskforce to give a recommendation on whether to continue with the current salary adjustment method. Regional Directors should send their input to the taskforce.

Eric M reported that the salary taskforce had a Zoom meeting two weeks ago to look over survey responses. There was a good turn-out, with 106 responses. The majority (78%) are in favor of keeping the current salary increase structure. The committee will draft an email to address comments so people who responded know they have been heard, and provide education to promote transparency in the system. There were frequent comments about compression concerns, and there are also some misconceptions about compression. For one, starting salaries did not go up during the salary freeze. The data was broken out by years of service, and it showed that responses were not completely split by length of service. Another refrain throughout was a desire for bonuses, but university policy prohibits bonuses. We need to communicate to people that salary increases are performance based.

It's important to also think about compensation that's not salary based. Extension is unique in that most employees cannot use the university's health benefits or discounts. It would be good to try to get representation on the University benefits committee, possibly through APC or CPC.

Recommendation to DAC is delayed to the March meeting. The salary taskforce will meet face to face in January and will continue to discuss the issues and timing. The committee will also begin looking into non-salary based benefits, and more members may be added. Most agree that it would be appropriate to keep the current salary structure, and revisit in two or three years, but the compression data needs to be examined more thoroughly. There is no easy way to analyze the data, and it will take time to make individual calculations. Lou thanked the taskforce for dealing with these difficult issues in a professional way. Eric thinks education on the process is beneficial.

Agenda items:

Diversity Catalyst Team Update – Robert Franklin

- The President's Commission on Diversity & Inclusion has asked that each unit come up with a diversity strategic plan by March. DCT will work on identifying the top three diversity goals prior to the March deadline, with a plan of working to make a more robust diversity plan over the next year. Methods for gathering input on what the initial goals should be will be discussed at the next DCT meeting. It's clear that one of the top priorities is updating hiring and recruiting practices. There is interest in learning about cluster hires and what the possible impact would be, and

Diana Prieto will lead a discussion on this at the next meeting. She is aware that this will pertain to field staff which is different from campus cluster hires. A second goal could be revising the last Extension diversity plan which expired in 2012, and there was a suggestion of addressing diversity in programming as a third goal. The diversity strategic plan ties into the overall strategic plan since there are several connections, but it is a distinct document.

- The DCT meeting schedule will be adjusted in 2018 to try to accommodate more people. The team hopes to have representation at the upcoming regional meetings and annual forum.
- Requests for translation into Spanish (and other languages) were discussed. Joanne noted that the Nutrition, Food Safety & Health PRU wants to print materials in Spanish but doesn't have consistent funding. She has asked them to send a prioritized list to PLT. Bill reported that there is a conversation at the national level about putting out 4H project books in Spanish and in other languages. Susan added a note of caution about offering programming in other languages. She has had difficult experiences where volunteer translators may not be reliable in attending class, and noted that classes with a translator take a lot of time. Her suggestion is checking into simultaneous translation through technology or other alternatives.
- CSU Online will soon offer credit and non-credit Spanish at 100 level to 300 level. There are a variety of courses - family & youth oriented, agriculture, business, etc. Extension employees can use their employee study privilege towards the for credit courses. A brochure is being developed. A concern was expressed about whether local community colleges might perceive this as competition, and Lou asked that if there is push back to let him know, however he doesn't foresee a problem.

Agents' Update

Western Region – Eric McPhail and Travis

Eric M

- There was a request for explanation on why the state volunteer specialist search failed. JoAnn said that the committee was not able to hire the preferred candidate, and they will reopen the search.

Peaks & Plains Region – Dennis and Kurt

Dennis

- Tracy Trumper would like to participate in the Forum planning committee next year. She has a suggestion regarding additional physical activity for Forum participants.

Front Range Region – Jacki and Eric Hammond

Jacki

- Flora of Colorado by Jennifer Ackerfield is now being used now in the Native Plant Master program. Extension is now partnering with the Colorado Natural Heritage Program, and the Colorado plant database is being moved from the Jefferson County server to a CSU server. Joanne asked Jacki to send information for a Source article.
- Jefferson County Extension is struggling with translation issues that were brought up in the Diversity Catalyst Team discussion.
- Recently there have been issues related to conducting background checks on volunteers. The company that CSU contracts with for conducting background checks requires access to credit information for prior addresses, although they do not actually run credit checks. Since the national data breach occurred earlier this year, many people have been advised to freeze their

credit in order to protect their information. CSU HR and Hire Right have been asking people who need a required background check to unfreeze their credit for 24 hours so the check can be completed. This creates a burden, especially on unpaid volunteers due to fees and the period of exposure, which in some cases has discouraged people from becoming a volunteer. Since the decision to contract with Hire Right was made at the university level, and the university pays the background check fees (an unusual practice), Extension does not have many options in this situation. The university does accept a federal background check for Americorps volunteers in place of a Hire Right check because those are more in-depth. Jean has had discussions with Human Resources regarding this, and she will continue to ask to be allowed to conduct county specific checks for volunteers which could alleviate credit information concerns. Communication about the purpose and methods of background checking may help. Agents and those who interact directly with potential volunteers will be reminded that the check is for criminal and driving history only, which is important for ensuring the safety of our youth.

A note about this will be added to the next Extension Update.

Eric

- Eric noted that he has also had more questions this year about the background check procedures and the language in the letter people receive about it.

PLT Update – Bill and Jan

- PLT met on campus November 14. There was a lot of feedback on Forum. The Mental Health First Aid class was a big success. The research event for graduate students had great attendance, and the Associate Dean of Graduate School agreed to sponsor lunch next year so we can continue to offer the event and have more students involved. It needs to be made clear that graduate students can register for Forum without paying a fee. PRU session overlap was a challenge as always. We need to continue to work on how to have meetings for content update and participate in Forum sessions.
- PLT has been asked to move PRU funding applications up earlier in the year. Some groups want to use funds as of January 1, but can't with the current schedule. The deadline has been moved to early January, and awards will be announced by January 15. This way those PRUs who want to have events early in the year will know about funding sooner. One PRU did not spend all of their funds in 2017 and asked if it could be used in 2018, which it cannot.
- The next PLT meeting will be just prior to the annual Governor's Agriculture Forum, on Feb. 20.
- A reminder that the CPRS reporting deadline is coming up December 31. There will be some updates in the reporting system for next year (2018), such as definition updates.

Revised Performance Appraisal Document – JoAnn

JoAnn reported that the committee did not make significant changes to the document, but was responsive to what the organization said. It will be posted online and Travis will talk about it at the CAD meeting.

Joint Appointments for Instructors with Extension – Lou

Lou talked about a request for instructors with the Master of Extension Education program to have joint appointments with CSU Extension. This is a departmental decision, and he sees it as a benefit to do so. Agents are also able to hold joint appointments in academic departments where appropriate, per that department's guidelines. We will ask those who are interested in holding a joint appointment with Extension to submit a CV and letter of interest.

CO Regional Health Connectors – Ashley

Ashley shared information about the Colorado Regional Health Connectors. It's a group that has federal funding trying to link resources together, and they have put representatives in communities within the last year. There is potential for connections with Extension work, and they are eager to connect with us. Ashley distributed a map showing their regions, their contacts and projects. She encourages people to reach out to the contacts in their areas. This is a way CSU may be able to move into the health arena.

CJ has been working with Don Nease from PACT Council, a separate organization doing community health engagement, introducing them to local Rotary Clubs as a way of connecting in communities.

Forum Evaluation – Judy

Judy summarized the online Forum evaluation responses. There were 102 responses, with 58% having attended Forum six or more times, and only seven reporting it was their first time.

- Comments included: preference for earlier dates (next year is tentatively scheduled for Oct 22-26, 2018); need to address food concerns, better information on how people should get individualized meals; needing passing time between sessions; positive comments on Mental Health First Aid; issues with banquet timing; rotating the schedule so certain PRUs are not always last on the schedule; suggestion of doing an awards luncheon instead of evening banquet; provide more updates in writing instead of waiting until Forum; start registration earlier; fix issue with registration site print button; biggest benefit of attending is the networking.
- Use of Guidebook was up a bit. Suggestion to check into putting meal tickets on guidebook to avoid having people try to keep track of paper tickets.

1980-2017: Extension Then and Now – Judy

Judy shared a report that she compiled comparing Extension employee similarities and differences over a 37 year period. This originated from a request from NIFA asking states to confirm their assumption that national Extension lost 1/3 of its employment base from 1980 to 2010. Judy used personnel directories to gather data for CSU. She found that there was an overall 23.6% decrease in FTE from 1980-2017. Data is presented on numbers and location of staff, and by county. Campus specialists decreased by about 40%, and almost every field area decreased. Lou plans to share the information on the sharp decrease in campus specialists with the President and Provost.

Judy will share the completed report with DAC.

TMS Update – Lori

- Beth Huelle is still working on entering position descriptions and she will be with us into January. All administrators and directors have been entered, and she is now working on agents.
- Judy and Lori are splitting duties on searches. There are normally 10-15 active searches at any given time, and several search waivers have been done.
- Jacki commented that the new templates have made the process smoother.

Michigan State University research survey – Lou

Lou was approached by a PhD student at Michigan State University who is working on urban sociology and perceptions on urban Extension. She would like to distribute a survey through CSU Extension, primarily on the Front Range. Lou asked if there were any concerns about distributing

the survey, and heard none. He will reply that we are willing to participate and would like for her to share her results.

University Budget Update – Jana

Jana reported that there are no proposed resource requests this year, and the university will work on catching up on unfunded requests from last year if funding is available at all. The regular budget process will start in spring, and there will be no budget hearings as in past years.

CSU Online Organization Update – Ashley

Mike Palmquist has changed his focus and is no longer with CSU Online. Lou is now Director, and Ashley is continuing as Interim Senior Director while a national search is conducted for that position. She has taken on more responsibility after Mike's departure, so she is balancing those duties with time at Extension. Things are going well, and strategic and operational planning is ongoing. They are working on a new non-credit course platform, keeping Extension needs in mind.

eXtension and Adobe Kickbox – Ruth

CSU is co-hosting an eXtension Designathon event in Denver in February. Robert described his experience with a past event. Participants bring a project or problem and eXtension brings thought leaders in different areas of expertise, then they work together to solve the problem. Teams are encouraged to participate, and afterwards they may do conference calls or blogs. VPE may be able to help fund attendance for a few agents if needed. A registration announcement will come by email.

Ashley described the Adobe Kickbox she and Lou received at a recent APLU meeting. It includes materials such as a bad ideas booklet which encourages repurposing of ideas, links to more innovation & information on how to use the concepts. If anyone would like to see it let her know.

Agent Trip to Spain – Bill & Joanne

A group of 22 agents and Extension personnel just returned from a two week trip to Spain. The focus learning about agriculture and culture in Spain, and on team building. The trip was very valuable and Bill encourages DAC to look into ways to support agents in doing more of this. There is value in team building and comradery, and working with the people in the communities. Joanne is setting up a blog where participants will write posts and share photography. Robert invited them to present at a Diversity Catalyst Team meeting.

Branding update – Joanne

Branding materials will be hosted on an Extension Google drive, and Communications & Creative Services will update them when needed. There have been a few updates since the USB drive was distributed at Forum. Templates for business cards, envelopes and stationary are almost ready. Various templates will be available online through Lucid Press, and there will be webinars and documentation on how to use them. Since the Extension logo is fairly small on the new nametags, from now on we will use the next larger size, which is ¼ inch bigger.

CASS visit – Lou

A small group from Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Rural Development Institute recently visited, and it went well. They went to three family operated farms in the Bennet and Sterling areas, and the Northeast Regional Engagement Center. These are policy makers for the central China government.

Anhui Agricultural University wants to implement a 4H program, and University of Nebraska will provide youth development specialists to advise them. We are also working on an exchange visit with

Nebraska, where a Chinese delegation will split into two groups and visit sites in both Colorado and Nebraska.

The next DAC meeting will be held on campus on the afternoon of Monday, March 12.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.