

DAC Minutes
Thursday, January 9, 2020
205 University Square

DAC members in attendance: Wes Alford, Susan Baker , Sam Lowery, Dan Goldhamer (Denver, horticulture, , Megan Griffith, JoAnn Powell, CJ Mucklow, Bill Nobles, Jana Smilanich-Rose, Ashley Stokes, Ruth Willson, Eric McPhail (Gunnison Western Slope representative), Cary Weiner, Blake Naughton, Erick Hammond (front range), Dennis Khaan (Golden Plains Director/Peaks and Plains), Glenda Wentworth (Western), Jacki Paone (Peaks and Plains), Kurt Jones (Directory Buena Vista)

On the phone: No one on the phone

Absent: Jean Glowacki (Sam Lowery attended for Jean Glowacki), Lori Bates

Guest; Ragan Adams (veterinary specialist, CSU campus)

The meeting began at 12:26 pm

The group provided introductions.

Ruth Willson asked that an update be provided on the status of a new communication director for Extension.

Blake Naughton – addressed the group:

Communications Director – the job description has been developed and is being finalized for a strategic director at the divisional level with a coordinator within Extension. The Chair of the search for the Strategic Director will be Ann Claycomb from the President’s Office. Timing: The Strategic Director will be hired first, with the intention of having the coordinator position ready to be hired once the Strategic Director begins.

The meeting in January is a better time for Blake because he’s had a few more weeks to recognize and learn about the people and infrastructure of the organization. He has observed that Engagement and Extension doesn’t have a well-defined vision of purpose of the work and the messaging to our constituents of our impact and why they should care is inadequate.

The goal of potential changes going forward is to build consensus that will resonate with our stakeholders and will also align with President McConnell’s vision for the University and Engagement & Extension’s place within that plan ultimately determining how it delivers its mission to Coloradoans.

One critical question in line with this thinking is, how do we bring our peers and colleagues along as new processes are implemented?

By examining regional meetings such as, Fall Forum, Mega Meeting, 4-H, CAD and examining what are these meetings building towards? Conversations within these meetings should have a new, better defined understanding of what our organization is about which will build towards Fall Forum 2020 where the next phase of change implementation will be communicated.

Blake has an open, direct, and transparent leadership style. He will be calling upon peer leaders such as the RDs and Jean, amongst others, to help him with trust building to get honest feedback from our constituents and create dialog.

Patti Schmitt, Kerri Rollins, and Cary Weiner are working on how to have these conversations and strategically obtain feedback form constituents all around our counties and policy leaders.

In general – go slow to go fast.

Another method of getting feedback is ongoing in Blake’s participation in the Presidential and Chancellor listening sessions. As of this meeting, two have occurred in the Pueblo and Sterling areas in addition to upcoming trips to Douglas and Otero counties in early February and the Western Slope in March.

Dan Goldhamer provided an update from recent activities of the Diversity Catalyst Team. There were 43 responses to the most recent climate survey from Extension totaling around 25%, which is a good sample size. Proposed updates to the diversity strategic plan are intended to include comments and findings and changes made. Getting it out of the DCT hands and beginning to implement across the organization. DCT is not the thought police despite a recent comment/concern that was expressed to Dan. 2020 DCT scheduling plans six meetings scheduled. Work teams around goals that have been identified in the plan. Living working document.

Professional development opportunities: On January 14th at 1 pm as part of the annual Professional Development Institute (PDI) Laura Larson/Shannon Archibeque-Engle will present a session on the multicultural organizational development model. On January 23rd the College of Agricultural Sciences is doing an outreach event on diversity and student success. In addition, Wes is working on getting more remote trainings for professional development opportunities offered by Talent Development in order to improve efforts to reach out to better support our off-campus colleagues.

The first Colorado Food Summit on Tuesday, January 7th in Denver. Sustainable Food Policy Council removed sponsorship because they felt CSU was not holding up their principles of community by having a diverse representation of speakers and participants. This may be viewed as an example of when we look through these lenses and how we seek to improve our business practices and outreach to our communities.

Ashley spoke with Food Summit organizers who reached out to diverse panelists and made requests for participation, but they were consistently getting their requests/offers declined.

Ragan noted the lack of producers and commodity group representatives included in the summit.

For DCT members – they served in an extra advisory capacity above and beyond their regular roles and jobs. Blake and Ashley will be looking at the plan. It is not DCT’s main role to implement the diversity strategic plan. A structure for reporting of issues is in place but it’s up to the leadership across the organization to implement.

Blake asked, the DCT has existed for 10 years? Yes. Then evidence would suggest that the level of needed change has failed to be catalyzed based on the responses to the most recent climate survey. The two lowest performing (negative response) units were Extension and CSU Online which is part of Engagement.

Core 5-6 people on the DCT leading the efforts and participating the most, with about 12 broadly, and 40 in the list serv.

Blake asked to hear from the DAC on thoughts on what is holding us back as an organization.

Response from Cary Weiner: adequate professional development across Extension is lacking. The DCT has been led by a volunteer group in its duration. While some trainings have been done around diversity, they haven't adequately provided the tools needed to reach out to new community members or those who may want to be part of our organization. In the past, there was a diversity strategic plan that was "on the books," but not implemented. Now there is better awareness of efforts to improve the climate of Extension.

JoAnn Powell – time and tradition, developed long-standing arrangements/relationships with audiences. Freeing up the time and energy into cultivating new and different audiences. There is a concern how our traditional audiences will respond to these new audiences.

Jana Smilanich-Rose – there is a lack of time, resources and awareness.

Jacki Paone – Eagle County community consists of 30% Spanish speaking community members, with some schools with students 80%-90% Spanish speaking. It is a challenge to get [programming] into Spanish speaking communities. There is a language barrier with FLTI participants, for example. They don't understand 4-H and the resources available to them for participation, because 4-H may not be familiar to the Spanish speaking population. Need increased financial support to help lead efforts in promoting 4-H to these communities for better awareness and increased participation. In Eagle County, Youth Power 365 is the dominate programming to Spanish speaking audiences. They have a well-established culture of competency and have relationships with area schoolteachers.

Susan Baker – 70% of EFNEP participants are lower income, Spanish speaking designated. Local EFNEP staff could potentially help promote opportunities and increase awareness in these communities. Pay scale is much lower than agents and cost to CSU State Office.

Blake - Do EFNEP educators have outreach efforts now?

Susan – could be piloted late spring or summer. Long-standing community relationships established in EFNEP program with bi-lingual staff already in place that could be leveraged as an experiment to see what improvements could be made.

Blake – when these problem-solving conversations are happening how are we including the individuals within the counties that are not just the DCT members? What is being done to get help from community and business partners that can benefit from funding or supporting our programs to help their business needs (factories hiring non-English speaking immigrants, for example).

Dan Goldhamer – there is need to improve rewards and incentivize different impact outcomes. For example, horticulture classes for white middle-class women, (the traditional audience) take less time to develop and deliver to than broader multi-identity audiences. How are our agents being evaluated and rewarded (number of attendees vs. diverse attendees)?

Blake – USDA Equal Opportunity Audit will come sooner or later. The bar is set very high and we will be hammered in these reviews based on current standings. The USDA funds organizations with the expectation that they serve everyone and can take away funding for those that do meet the bar.

Eric McPhail – what are the ideal outcomes? What's acceptable from the USDA audit?

Blake – It's not Ashley and I saying here's your magic number; the agents and specialists define what success looks like. Organizational climate success goals align with the University's overall efforts to improve climate across its communities. Accountability is a key factor and Extension's upcoming faculty status adoption and will be based on these outcomes.

Ashley Stokes provided an overview of need for development of CSU Extension Holiday Schedule Policy. For clarification that sets the expectation when holiday schedules are differing from CSU and at the local and state level.

Jacki – do we have our policies posted in one place on our web site? This policy will be in the Extension faculty handbook. There is a need for posting policies on the web site in a differently organized way.

Kurt Jones – there are some county employees who work 4, 10-hour days for example of differing schedules.

Blake – made some minor language changes for clarification purposes.

Break – 1:51 pm

Ragan Adams presented on current efforts in emergency management planning and implementation. She became involved in the 'big green arrow model' around this topic. Initially the emergency planning task force included 12 agents and focused only on animals (livestock) in disaster planning. Since efforts began, two Smith-Lever grants have been awarded and improvements have been made in the connection between Extension and emergency management in approximately 20 counties around the state. Routt and Larimer counties developed their county plans facilitated by their own agents.

In today's world we live in a 365-day emergency management cycle, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation; and the need for emergency readiness is not just seasonally as we have experienced in the past.

Ragan wants administration to define ways to outline guidance, policies, and practices for our agents

Ashley - we had several MOUs in the past that indicated agents could not leave their counties during an emergency. It would be great to have more specific language that addresses ways that we can support emergency management operations. Extension has not yet mandated the steps outlined in Ragan's proposal such as formally talking to emergency managers, taking the FEMA courses for certification.

JoAnn – we need the language in the MOUs that commissioners sign off on, so that they're on the same page.

Ragan – how can we announce/communicate leadership support for this policy?

Jacki – would like to see some additional training around this topic.

Bill – make sure counties are on board with this and want CSU to operate as outlined in these policies.

Action Items related to emergency management:

Wes – design/implement professional development opportunities; Jana – amend the MOUs; Ashley/Cary – get the PRUs on board and develop a plan for rollout. Ragan will talk to state emergency management planners to inform them that we are working on this intentionally.

Susan Baker – documents include four program areas – MOUs to reflect all areas involved. EDEN (emergency management at the national level) working groups in most extension related areas.

Ashley - convene working group to develop next steps. CJ include legal to help advise as we draft our plans.

Digital measures, Darrin Goodman –Ashley video message including updates on digital measures was sent to admin bb list serv earlier in the day. Cary and Darrin are working on rolling out digital measures training for early spring. Pilot survey came back and we scored a 3.9 out of 5. Biggest negative response was around where to find the appropriate field to report activities due to many more field options to choose from.

People like they can keep track of professional development and add work in multiple PRUs. Other feedback indicated the program is more user-friendly and much simpler than CPRS, flows well, cleaner straight forward. January and February Darrin will be working with Digital Measures (software developers) to make recommended improvements. February and beyond will be the rollout of training for all staff. The training plan includes webinars, cheat sheets, video snippets, in person at regional meetings.

Susan – is there a plan for providing training to on campus specialists? Cary - there will be. Thanks for the reminder.

Faculty Status – Blake and Ashley met with the Provost on Monday January 6, 2020 and went over the draft of the proposal in its current, 18th version. Approved for it to go to the chair of the faculty council – to establish Extension as a unit like a college. Will be taking the proposal to Faculty Council for their approval at their spring all-faculty meeting.

Question: as we fine tune our processes will it have to go back to the Provost's office to make sure it aligns with other non-tenure track faculty processes and procedures?

Blake – the more our structure is aligned with the University and less like a state agency, the better. Making this change will require us to develop our agents to work and think/operate as faculty. DAC needs to help think of ways to communicate what success looks like for them but not exactly the same success measurements as campus-based specialists. We need to be explicit about that.

Ashley – the timing of this along with the rollout of the use of digital measures is great. The first year of digital measures can help inform how we conduct our annual review processes and how faculty status and activities are evaluated and recognized by the University within this new structure.

Question from Eric McPhail – will all Extension agents [who qualify for faculty status recognition/promotion and tenure] move everyone at once all approved and signed off?

Response, once faculty council has approved the proposal has to go to the CSU Board of Governors. With their final approval then those who are eligible will become faculty starting at the appropriate initial ranking, then they can submit their packets for promotion through the standard faculty ranking system. This will be a much smaller group [going through the process] than the non-tenure track faculty. President McConnell indicated we are not phasing it in. If people are ready to go it should be done all at once, but we need to help our people be prepared when the time comes.

Other items:

National Western Center, now Spur, Engagement and Extension is evaluating what are our opportunities and what will our space look like. The groundbreaking is April the 30th 1:30-3 pm in Denver. The system's view is that this is a Colorado, national and global asset and opportunity.

State magazine before did not mention 150th of Extension but has been included in the most recent issue.

Meetings have occurred with alumni and admissions with the intention of building better connections around the state to communicate plans/projects and presence in the counties, so they have some synergy and present a more unified connection with Extension.

Dan – It is great to work with the alumni association, and admissions has some areas they really want to target to connect with county directors and agents; visits during programs and county fairs, for example.

CJ – asks about the status of the proposal to approve administrative credit in the amount of \$2000 for new hire county directors and looking at retention existing directors at the \$2500 level. Response: this is a salary task force topic which needs Jana to indicate whether Extension has the necessary funds. Compression in the system is still a significant issue and the task force is still evaluating the most equitable way to implement this increase if approved.

Jana – it's a very manual process of evaluation and calculation.

Ashley - salary task force should reconvene. Faculty status does not need anything from the salary task force because under faculty status promotional salary increases are determined by campus.

Agents' Update

Eric Hammond – Carol O'Mera has been hired as a horticulture entomology agent in Boulder county and is working on getting her fact sheets translated into Spanish, using her own funds for this project. Wants to make sure the need for financial resources for this purpose is on the radar for Extension leadership, and hopefully continue with the practice if we can find alternative funding. The cost is \$500 a fact sheet.

Eric McPhail – what is the DAC? It needs to be better defined by current Extension leadership. It would be good to outline more formally what our internal groups are and to obtain guidance on how we function.

Blake – asks the group what they think about the structure and purpose of these groups and how they best serve their functions.

With the recognition of faculty status Extension will have key roles in University level decision-making discussions as they will be formally recognized at the faculty level and it may change the function of Extension's advisory groups, including the DAC, the joint-boards, and PLT.

Jacki – the three groups have different representative roles, both at the county and regional levels. Not all agents belong to a professional association, and therefore are not represented at the Joint Boards. PLT is focused on programming and not on policy, which is under the purview of DAC.

A reference to a previously adopted formalized guidance process for DAC was made. **Action item:** locate this and bring it back to the group in the spring for review.

Eric: employee study privilege provides employees 9 credits per year, but online classes are more expensive than resident instruction classes which can be a financial barrier for our off-campus agents (employees). Taking more than 9 classes per year can be a taxable benefit and agents are required to pay those taxes? Ashley – says this is correct. Eric: can anything be done to help lessen the financial burden for our agents?

Discussion from Ashley and Blake with further explanation on the parameters.

Dan – there are also professional scheduling impacts for agents enrolled in academic programs.

Eric – there are accessibility burdens for the University mandated supervisor training classes only offered at certain times of the year and fill up rapidly. It is very difficult for agents and leadership off-campus to complete these requirements. Can they be recorded and then approved after a quiz has been taken to better accommodate our field staff?

Wes – talked about efforts to meet this need with the OVPD for the inclusive excellence components of the supervisory training courses. There is an ongoing discussion with OVPD and Talent Development to meet this need. **Action item:** report back on this at the next DAC meeting.

Can we partner with CSU Online to help us develop better delivery mechanisms and courses to meet these needs? What specifically course-wise does Extension need?

There are still issues occurring around religious demonstrations at 4-H club meetings, especially in areas where the clubs are affiliated with a church.

Ashley and the University's chief attorney are working on getting some better clarity and possible updated language, recommendations, and guidelines to ensure we're living up to our inclusive principles and best practices to address these issues.

Glenda – can we do something through the commitment to campus program to partner with county benefits and other wellness programs that Extension staff cannot take advantage of on campus (to meet these needs)? For example, Vail provides \$800 taxable benefit for health & wellness to its employees.

Joann – employees should consider working with our other university partners such as CU and RTD on bus passes, for example.

Kurt – county directors pay – covered. Extension credentialing in JSEPT. Competencies there is some work around that. JSEP leadership conference.

Dennis indicated employees who receive federal funding or are county reimbursed for mileage and other work expenses may need to consult with a tax advisor as some of the new tax laws may affect agents being paid/reimbursed by counties rather than CSU.

Jacki – cyber security is an issue that Extension may need to address for its employees. Jefferson county provides cyber security online training every other month to its employees and it tracks who is taking the courses. There was an issue with the Master gardener volunteer hours portal with everyone using one sign in account which is not secure. Best practices and overall awareness of cyber security issues are needed at all levels of the Extension organization.

Response: ACNS is hiring more security professionals at the campus level.

Bill – some agents may need additional training from the Stat Office fiscal team to better understand the travel authorization and reimbursement processes to make sure travel approval is happening correctly in the CSU systems.

The next DAC meeting will be held on April 8, 2020 at 12 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 3:47 pm