

**Personnel and Organizational Development Committee (PODC)**  
**Report to ECOP**  
**February 14 –15, 2001**

**Action Items**

The information technology work group recognizes the need for a Web based, searchable database for sharing state information technology tools and applications. They discussed the need for the cataloging of state applications and uses of information technology. PODC recommends that ECOP and CSREES consider the creation of such a system.

**Information Items**

**Information Technology**

The information technology work group was formed at the October 2000 meeting. It is moving forward with items relating to awareness, database, core competencies, program delivery and linkages.

- Awareness of the future of technology and its implications for Extension -- A need exists for Extension educators to be aware of the future of information technology and its implications on the structure and delivery system of Cooperative Extension. The work group recommends Extension avail itself of the following opportunities to discuss the above referenced item: joint meeting of SPC, PLC and PODC in May, NASULGC meeting(s), Extension professional association meetings (NACAA, NAE4-HA, ESP, NEAFCS, Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals), Web base teleconference through CSREES.
- Core competencies associated with information technology -- Organizational change and organizational learning are necessary for the Extension system to adequately meet the evolving needs of clientele. Accordingly, Extension should identify the core competencies needed by its personnel, not only with regard to information technology but also related to program development and delivery. The work group will continue to explore this area and expects to work in conjunction with the training/competency work group.
- Adaptation of core competencies in developing and delivering educational programs -- Identification of core competencies without subsequent, appropriate use of those competencies is futile. The work group will explore mechanisms to ensure not only the identification of core competencies but also the use of those competencies to meet the needs of clientele.
- Awareness and/or creation of linkages between Extension educators and information technology professionals -- Some confusion exists relating to the existence and function of various Extension technology groups. The PODC work group will seek more information regarding existing technology groups and explore opportunities for linkages.

**Training (Professional Competencies)**

The training work group gathered conflict of interest statements from several universities and plans to include information about conflict of interest policies in the *Guidelines for Professional Development* booklet. This being done the training work group is “recessed.” In its place, a professional competencies work group was proposed and approved by PODC. This group developed a purpose statement which is, “Develop a strategy to help states assure that Extension employees have and continue to have the

necessary core and discipline competencies to anticipate and deliver quality educational programs of relevance and importance to our publics.”

- The work group first intends to find out what work has already been done around this issue by other states and possibly by graduate students. Larry Arrington offered a possible graduate student to do this research. If this grad student isn't a possibility, the committee members will search their regions for this information. Jim Kells will visit with Joe Levine of MSU, Larry Arrington will ask Howard Ladewig at Florida, and Keith Niemann will check with Julie Middleton at Missouri.
- Outcomes hoped for include: an on-line competency bank where states can go to develop their own competency lists; the identification of centers of excellence in states where exceptional work has been conducted around competencies; the possible identification of differing “levels” of competency; and the development of web based modules for training on needed competencies.
- The work group also suggested that the previous PODC publication on *Alternative Revenue Sources* be reviewed for its relevance and possible revision. Larry Arrington volunteered to work on this project which could result in a fourth PODC work group. He invited members to review the *Alternative Revenue Sources* materials prior to the May meeting. The final report can be found on the web at <<http://www.nasulgc.org/publications/altrev.htm>>. The *Journal of Extension* (JOE) article can be found at <<http://www.joe.org/joe/1999august/comm1.html>>.

#### Organizational Culture

The organization culture work group is continuing to focus its efforts on benchmarks. David Campbell, Community Development Extension Specialist for University of California, Davis met with PODC at the January meeting. He led a learning session and discussion on *Outcomes and Impact Assessment*.

- Kim Rodrigues will forward the December 20, 2000 EASE update to all PODC members. Members are encouraged to review and comment. <http://www.ease.tamu.edu>
- Kim Rodrigues will send cover letter and report to ECOP, SPC and PLC to update them on benchmark work to date. Any further work or opportunities to link to EASE is dependent on development of an EASE Advisory Committee.
- Carl O'Connor will share the goals outlined in his state Extension system for the work group to review and discuss any application to the larger Cooperative Extension system.
- Bill McGowan will contact Scott Peters and forward all relevant information and references to review prior to May meeting to ensure work group members start from similar points of reference.
- The work group will work on a single parameter for the System, linking to the Subcommittee on Extension Diversity (SED). Kim Rodrigues will review *Pathways to Diversity* and identify potential benchmarks that may provide specific measure(s) to assess the achievement of a desired outcome. She will send these potential benchmarks to A.J. Dye prior to March 3 SED meeting. A.J. Dye will send the survey used with Change Agent States to the work group.

#### Subcommittee on Extension Diversity (SED)

The Change Agent States for Diversity (CASD) project selected a project coordinator, Kathy Castania, Cornell Migrant Worker Program. The eight states recently received a baseline survey to determine what the current status is in each state with respect to diversity and pluralism. The next SED meeting will be

in Montgomery, Alabama in March 2001 and will overlap with the CASD member states. All of the directors/administrators have approved the nominees for the new members of SED.

#### National Extension Leadership Development (NELD)

Sally Horton is continuing as chair of the NELD Advisory Council with Peter Bloome as co-chair. NELD is a subcommittee to PODC. Judith Jones is PODC liaison to NELD. She shared information about the current status of proposals and the timeline for selection of a new site.

#### General Information

- During the January PODC meeting Larry Yee, County Director in Ventura County, California led a discussion on *Chaordic Organizations*. Larry told of his 1996 sabbatical experience in working with Dee Hock, retired Visa International executive and founder of the chaordic organization movement. The discussion centered on these four questions posed by Larry Yee.
  1. How confident are you that the organization or institution to which you belong is capable and has the capacity to deal with the increasing rate of change and increasingly complex social, economic, environmental, educational, cultural and technological challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
  2. How could we organize human endeavors if we could develop a different understanding of how life organizes itself?
  3. How can we be different together?
  4. Is Cooperative Extension capable of fundamental institutional change?
- Keith Niemann chaired a committee to develop a process to select the nomination for the chair-elect of PODC. This process is being finalized and will be used in 2001.
- Work continues on scanning documents for the searchable PODC web site. It will include: minutes, rosters, agendas, correspondence, reports and publications.
- Five members of PODC – Brenda Sue Black, Judith Jones, Carl O'Connor, A.J. Dye, and Donna Donald – will be attending the Partnerships Conference.
- PODC is pleased to welcome several new members. Ted Alter and Carl O'Connor are the new ECOP administrative advisors. PODC looks forward to their input to the committee's work.

Donna K. Donald, Chair  
ddonald@iastate.edu