

Proposal for National Summit for Future Workforce Challenges

Rationale

The National Summit for Future Workforce Challenges is planned to bring together the best and brightest minds in extension, research and academia to discuss an impending change in academic culture, the workforce of the future. As the current generation of employees within the land-grant community moves toward retirement, the system must look toward succeeding generations who will replace those engaged in extension, research and teaching, as well as examine the clientele and students they will serve.

Definition

Members of ECOP subcommittees propose a national summit to evaluate the current status of workforce challenges and to strategize how to prepare the land-grant system for the future. The use of the word summit describes this conference as one of high level importance. Because of the significance of workforce issues now and in the future, leadership from across the system needs to come together to strategize for the future.

Audience

The primary audience should be those doing the hiring for extension, research and academia. These would include people currently in the following positions: department heads, directors of extension and research, directors/managers of human resource department, and appropriate field staff. There should be a concerted effort to insure a balanced mix of the above positions from extension, research and academia from across the discipline array in land-grant institutions.

Format

The format should be designed to take participants to an understanding of the future workforce and the implications on hiring, personnel development and retention. Additionally the format would allow participants to develop specific strategies and recommendations for the system. Format possibilities include: one or two day face-to-face conference, regional conferences, satellite downlink, or any number of combinations.

Expected Outcomes

Armed with more knowledge about the future of the workforce in the United States, strategic planners and others within the land-grant community will be situated to plan for changes in culture coming to extension, research and academia. Administrators, faculty and staff members will understand the impact of demographic shifts on staffing and program thrusts in the future. They will start discussions about designing supportive curricula for students who will fill the positions. The business of "doing business" can then be shaped to meet these challenges before they are upon us.

Plan

Upon approval by ECOP, a diverse group of extension, research and academic people will be recruited by SPC to form a workforce summit committee. The committee will begin work in January 2001 with regular reports to ECOP, ESCOP and ACOP. The proposed summit would take place in 2002.

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