

# Cooperative Extension Civil Rights Redesign

## Report to CEAC September 2006

### Background

Cooperative Extension is required to comply with the civil rights guidelines of the United States Department of Agriculture, CSREES. In 1998, a comprehensive program to assure compliance was created. This program has been updated since that time, but has not been assessed or changed in comprehensive ways. Following is a report of the first phase of redesigning the program.

Impetus for change comes from colleagues suggestions for changes aimed at increased effectiveness and efficiency. Also recently, the principles of responsibility based culture have encouraged the realignment of organizational processes and procedures to reflect organizational values. The civil rights redesign process is one of the first major organizational realignment efforts since the beginning of the responsibility based culture initiative.

The first phase of civil rights redesign began in spring 2006 and continued through the summer. A Redesign Committee of 11 colleagues developed a blueprint for a new civil rights program for the organization. A Response Committee consisting of 10 people followed the work of the Redesign Committee and provided suggestions. All materials generated during this period are available on a Cooperative Extension Desire to Learn (D2L) site that will continue to be a repository for materials as workgroups create the tools and processes for the new program over the next year.

### Guiding Principles

The two committees agreed on a number of principles that will guide the new program:

- The objective of civil rights outreach work is to increase access to Cooperative Extension education and to promote valuing differences among staff and clientele.
- The program will be implemented with an attitude of helpful education of colleagues and working together to improve educational programs.
- New processes will be guided by efficiency and effectiveness while meeting the requirements of federal guidelines.
- The program will be broad in scope, beyond racial/ethnic and gender categories protected by civil rights laws, including other traditionally underserved audiences.
- The philosophy of all aspects of the program will be individual responsibility and individual accountability rather than compliance.

### Goals for New Processes, Resources and Tools

- Accelerate movement towards parity
- Improve civil rights education among colleagues
- Create a common foundation of understanding across Cooperative Extension
- Maximize effectiveness

- Maximize relevancy to educational programming
- Maximize consistency within civil rights work and across systems
- Integrate civil rights into other systems

## Recommendations for Workgroups

The Redesign Committee divided its specific recommendations into six areas, each one being a component of the new civil rights program. The components are:

- Boundary conditions based on federal guidelines and our vision
- Demonstrating accountability and the review day
- Record keeping
- Technology and tools
- Training and education
- Organizational leadership

For each component, the Redesign Committee developed a grid of characteristics, specific recommendations for implementation, a timeframe and notes for implementation. Grids with this information are located on the CEAC and the Civil Rights sites in D2L. Details on the grids will guide the work of implementation teams over the next year.

## Implementation Workgroups

The following workgroups will be established to work over the next year to develop processes, resources and tools and ongoing leadership structures for the new civil rights program. *JoAnn Hinz and Larry Jones will invite colleagues to be on workgroups. Recommendations for members should be sent to JoAnn.*

### **1. Organizational Leadership**

- a) Make decisions about requirements about requirements for accountability based on federal guidelines in Boundary Conditions grid. Set content parameters.
- b) Work to align and integrate civil rights into other Cooperative Extension systems. Work with CEAC to incorporate expectations into tenure, promotions and merit systems.
- c) Secure necessary organizational resources for the work of other workgroups
- d) Establish ongoing shared leadership for the civil rights program with central support
- e) Coordinate technology
- f) Plan evaluation and assessment

Membership (max. 5 people) criteria:

1. Link to other work groups
2. 4-H colleague familiar with the new 4-H civil rights tools
3. Understanding of federal guidelines
4. County colleague
5. Representation from Redesign Committee & Response Committee
6. Academic department chair or CASI representative (to integrate systems)
7. Technology expert

### **2. Demonstrating Accountability/Record Keeping**

- a) Develop guidelines for accountability (documentation and demonstration of outreach activities)
- b) Develop record keeping tools
- c) Develop frameworks for the civil rights day during which people will report on their civil rights and other diversity work. Consider how county Extension Committees, County executives, CPAGs can be involved.

Membership (large enough to divide into two groups is necessary: Group 1-accountability including the review day model, and Group 2-recording keeping) criteria:

1. County colleagues representing multiple program areas (new people and those successful at expanding access). Committed to completing this work in a short period of time. People who will be reviewed next Spring.
2. People who understand the federal guidelines
3. Staff who know other CE reporting requirements
4. Staff who understands the new 4-H civil rights tools
5. Someone with an advanced knowledge of the use of demographics

### **3. Education and Training**

a) Identify the resources needed

b) Develop education and training tools

b) Levels of education and training:

- General approaches to expanding access and valuing differences
- Specific civil rights obligations
- How to gather documentation, use tools, record data

Membership (max. 5 members) criteria:

1. County colleagues representing multiple program areas (new or successful at expanding access). Committed to accomplish the work in a short period of time. People from counties who will be reviewed in Spring 2007.
2. MAT trainer
3. New Colleague Orientation committee member or Human Resources Network member
4. Instructional design
5. Staff member recommendation: Meg Gores
6. Someone with advanced knowledge of the technologies available to us
7. Program support expertise (assessment, evaluation, curriculum development)

### **4) Tools & Technology**

a) Develop an overall vision for the use of technology in the civil rights program

b) Find technical resources

c) Recommend how technology can be applied

d) Work with other three groups

e) Web, database, interactive on-line learning, printed materials and publications, demographic resources that connect with database record-keeping

Membership criteria:

1. Applied Pop Lab
2. Interactive learning
3. Accessible technology
4. Web design
5. Cold fusion (data base)
6. Instructional media
7. Publications
8. One person from groups 1-3 as part of Tools & Technology

## Timelines

**Following is the timeline for completing the civil rights redesign process:**

- February 2007-- District Meetings/In-Services: Share some pieces in place.
- Early Spring 2007: Share parts of the new process, resources and tools that are in place
- Spring 2007 Reviews: Reviews will pilot new approaches to the review day
- Fall 2007: Reviews will use more new processes, resources and tools
- February 2008: Begin educating colleagues in a consistent manner about civil rights.