Expanding Access to Cooperative Extension

2015 County Civil Rights Days
Expectations and Guidelines for County Office Teams

Introduction

Civil Rights Days offer Cooperative Extension colleagues the opportunity to share with a Visiting Team of peers and administrators their efforts and challenges in expanding access in educational programs to audiences protected by the Civil Rights Act.

During the visit, the county colleagues describe intentional efforts and activities to serve audiences who are protected or underserved. This means describing:

- demographics of the county and resources used
- decisions about which audiences to build relationships with,
- strategies used to build relationships,
- determinations about educational needs of the audience,
- what the educational response was, and
- the outcomes and impacts including lessons learned.

The focus of the county teams’ discussion should be on the audiences and relationships established, more than on the educational outcomes. There is no expectation that all efforts discussed be “successful.” Relationship building takes time. Trial and error is a normal part of this process. Cooperative Extension encourages calculated risk-taking and continuous learning to improve our reach and effectiveness.

During the visit, the Visiting Team serves both an administrative and a coaching role. They verify for the federal government that colleagues are making and documenting all reasonable efforts to reach protected and neglected audiences. They also learn from colleagues about promising practices in use around the state and offer ideas for improving outreach efforts. The primary assumption of the Visiting Team is that colleagues want to do their best at demonstrating inclusion and creating accessible programming. The Visiting Team will offer suggestions for improving the documentation of your efforts and explain strategies to effectively engage protected and underserved audiences.
Components of the Civil Rights Day

Civil Rights Days provide a time and space for a county office team, along with a visiting team of colleagues, to have a conversation about expanding access to people in that county who are protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Law of 1964 and other equal opportunity laws in addition to other groups underrepresented among program participants.

The primary focus will be on all reasonable efforts to reach out to and not discriminate against women; the following races: African Americans, American Indian and Alaska Natives, Asians, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders and people identifying as being of two or more of those races; Hispanics or Latinos; people with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency. In addition, efforts made to provide access to other groups in the county that are underrepresented in Extension programming may be discussed. Civil Rights Days will include a conversation consisting of:

- 30 minutes at the beginning for the visiting team to review civil rights files for the county office and program areas that demonstrate the all reasonable efforts and activities toward nondiscrimination in educational programs.

- A county-led discussion demonstrating knowledge of county residents, including demographic data, culture, values, beliefs, educational needs, and power and privilege dynamics.

- A county-led discussion of how knowledge of county residents drives educational programming and outreach efforts towards protected audiences and those that have been underserved.

- Descriptions of public notification of the UW-Extension policy on discrimination and harassment and intentional efforts carried out by all office colleagues and a discussion of successes and challenges.

- Discussion of anticipated action steps for the coming year on public notification of the UW-Extension non-discrimination policy, all reasonable efforts and movement toward parity in program participation.

Resource materials for civil rights activities can be found at the Cooperative Extension Civil Rights Outreach website.

Agenda for the Day
(See sample agenda on Civil Rights website)

The county office team is responsible for creating the specific agenda for the Civil Rights Day and for facilitating the day which will be from 8:30am – 3:30pm. Please send your agenda to the leader of the visiting team one week before the county visit. The agenda will vary based on the size of the staff, demographics of the county and outreach examples discussed. Below is a suggested outline; the agenda for
the day should include details such as names of audiences to be discussed, names of Extension programs and colleague names.

8:30 a.m. Visiting Team will do a general review of civil rights files. Please have files ready for the team and a room reserved for that purpose.
9:00 a.m. Visiting Team and county colleagues meet for the discussion of the county and its’ residents and all reasonable efforts to reach protected and underrepresented audiences.
12:00 p.m. Lunch - (Visiting Team and office colleagues together).
12:45 p.m. Visiting Team meets to compile notes while county team meets to discuss action plans
1:45 p.m. All county colleagues and the Visiting Team discuss action plans and reflections of the day
3:30 p.m. Adjourn

Review of Documentation in Civil Rights Files

The Visiting Team will review records in civil rights files. All program areas or all major multidisciplinary programs (in county offices that are not structured by program area) are expected to maintain up-to-date files of documentation that demonstrate all reasonable efforts to reach out to groups protected by civil rights laws. See the documentation list on the Civil Rights Outreach website for how to keep records and contents of files.

Review of Data Submitted On-line:

Each program area or multidisciplinary program in a county office is expected to enter data about audience demographics. For programming that occurs in 2015 this is data that has been entered into the online Recording Results System (Participant and/or Partnering Volunteers Record segments.). For 2014 programming colleagues completed Civil Rights charts found in Civil Rights Reporting in the accountability site.

The visiting team will check the online recording system one week before the visit and will expect to see information about programming for the current calendar year. Answers to the questions at the bottom of Chart 1 (completed for 2014 programming) and in the Results Narrative for both 2014 and 2015 programming is important documentation of all reasonable effort to reach out to protected audiences and make progress toward parity. County colleagues are urged to discuss the data they collect and record, and the visiting team will comment on the information during the visit and in a report after the visit. Provide paper copies of all 2014 charts and 2015 Participant/Volunteer records to the visiting team at the Civil Rights Day.

*Charts for 2014 programming can still be completed indefinitely in the Accountability Site for Civil Rights Reporting. There is not an option to complete charts for 2015.*

Demographics Presentation:

The county office team will present demographic information about the county population. The presentation should draw on census data as well as data and information from local formal and informal
sources. County colleagues should describe how demographic data is factored into decisions about Extension programming and all reasonable efforts expand access.

The presentation will include information such as (but not limited to): race and ethnicity, gender, age, income, poverty rates, employment, school data, family profiles, in and out migration, differences by geographic area, population trends, important political/public issues, profiles of power and privilege across groups of people.

**Steps for Describing Intentional Outreach Efforts**

Civil Rights Days are most effective when the agenda is organized by protected and underserved audience groups rather than by program areas. Each person in the office should participate and discuss their role in building relationships, using marketing and outreach efforts for expanding meaningful access to Cooperative Extension programming to these audiences.

**Participation of County Colleagues:**

Each county colleague (faculty, academic staff, classified/county support staff, those with special appointments such as VISTA and other limited term employees) will participate in the discussions of the day and communicate about the civil rights activities they carry out and support. Check with the Visiting Team if there are questions about who should participate in the visit and how.

- County colleagues take the lead in planning the detail of the agenda and facilitating discussions.
- Discussions should focus on specific protected or underrepresented audiences, all reasonable efforts, the impact of the efforts, the barriers and challenges encountered, and efforts to overcome the barriers and challenges and other lessons learned.
- Discussions about cross-program outreach and total county team efforts are encouraged though not all discussions need to be about team efforts.

**Guiding Questions**

- What potential audience in your county population have you decided to make special efforts to reach out to? Is it a protected audience (protected by federal civil rights laws) or another underserved audience?
- Discuss the demographics and characteristics of that audience (ex: where they live in the county, their history in the county, income levels, literacy and English language proficiency, issues that impact various groups of residents, educational need your office identified, their power and privilege in the county, etc.)
- Explain why you decided to reach out with your programming to this audience.
- What partnerships have helped you reach this audience? How did you develop relationships and build trust?
- What were your all reasonable efforts? How have you incorporated the activities of civil rights outreach into all stages of your program planning and implementation? (What were efforts to engage audience to increase or establish their participation in your program(s)?
- What were the roles of the colleagues involved in this outreach? What role did support staff play?
- What barriers have you encountered as you work to expand access?
• What have you done to overcome the barriers?
• How do your participant numbers demonstrate the impact of your outreach?
• What action steps might you include in a civil rights action plan to continue building on this effort? How did your last action plan contribute to your progress?

Reflections of the Day: Discussion of County Colleague Insights for Action Planning

• Office colleagues will begin the discussion by sharing insights and thoughts on what they learned after preparing for and participating during the day along with their questions. This will be integrated with observations, recommendations and questions from the Visiting Team. County colleagues should continue to facilitate the discussion in the afternoon. Together both the Office colleagues and the Visiting Team will share ideas for action plans.
• County colleagues will develop civil rights action plans for each program area (or each major program when mostly cross-disciplinary work is carried out in the county) and for the county team as a whole. The action plan should be sent to the visiting team leader no more than 3 weeks after the review day. The team leader will forward the plans on to the rest of the Visiting Team, the Regional Director, the State Program Directors, and to the Office of the Dean and Director.

Expanding Access Action Plan

The plan should move the local office toward reaching parity for protected groups and expanding access to other underrepresented groups. Action plans should describe actions you will take in the next year and include:
  o A brief demographic overview of the county
  o Action items detailing
    ▪ name of protected groups targeted for all reasonable efforts,
    ▪ specific outreach actions expected to be carried out,
    ▪ expected community partners,
    ▪ names and roles of Extension colleagues participating in the outreach,
    ▪ estimated timeline.

See an example Action Plan template on the Civil Rights Outreach website.

Coaching from the Civil Rights Leadership Team

Members of the Cooperative Extension Civil Rights Leadership Team will provide leadership for the Visiting Teams that will attend county civil rights days. These colleagues will schedule coaching sessions with county teams in each region a few months in advance of civil rights day to assist in the preparation for civil rights days. See the 2015 schedule for the name of this individual for your region on the Civil Rights Outreach website.

If you have questions about this document and the Civil Rights Day process, feel free to contact the members of the Civil Rights Leadership Team.
Definitions

Protected Groups/Audiences for the purposes of civil rights all reasonable efforts and data recording—Women, Black or African Americans, American Indian and Alaska Natives, Asians, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, those who identify as some other race, people of mixed race, Hispanics or Latinos. Note: When possible, it is always better to name the specific group of people being referred to or addressed than to use general terms such as protected groups. Example: African Americans, Native Americans, etc.

Other Underserved Groups/Audiences—We use this general term to refer to groups protected against discrimination by Cooperative Extension as identified in federal and state laws. More specifically, this term also often includes people with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency. The term refers to people in the community that have historically not been served by Extension or are currently not being served by the same extent as other groups or segments have been or are being served. For instance, it can refer to low income individuals, religious groups, the incarcerated, males for programs that have historically not served males, youth for programs that have historically not served youth, older adults, etc. Note: When possible, it is always better to name the specific group of people being referred to or addressed than to use general terms such as underserved, underrepresented. Example: people with disabilities, people with limited English proficiency, etc.