



Cooperative Extension Procedures for Refilling Position Vacancies

Background: For the last four years, Cooperative Extension has averaged 91 vacancies a year. These vacancies are a combination of faculty and academic staff whose funds come from a combination of grant and GPR funds. During the last fiscal year, funding for forty percent of our vacancies was from GPR and sixty percent from grants and contracts. The state portion of funds supporting faculty position funds are always GPR. Academic staff positions funding is GPR, grants, or some combination of funds. In addition, this year nineteen employees elected to take advantage of the early federal retirement opportunity.

Unless Wisconsin experiences a dramatic change in economic conditions or tax policy, Cooperative Extension anticipates a 5-10% reduction in state GPR in the next biennial budget. At the same time, county governments face continuing challenges dealing with proposed reductions in shared revenue funding and increased interest in sharing service delivery. These real threats to funds available from both county and state government create an extremely challenging fiscal environment.

To ensure the least disruption in program delivery and maintain secure funding for faculty and staff, Cooperative Extension needs to save base dollars and create a pool of one-time funds. Cooperative Extension understands that unsecured county dollars, if lost from county budgets, will be extremely difficult if not impossible to reinstate.

Refilling criteria: Given this complex environment, Cooperative Extension use the following general criteria when refilling vacant positions.

1. Our core values clearly identify maintaining a strong local presence is a priority. A strong local presence continues to be vital. Cooperative extension will continue to refill vacant county positions where funding is stable and where long term risk of losing funds is low.
2. Cooperative Extension will commit fiscal resources to provide a core program in each county. Where possible, this will include four program areas. Where resources or local community needs do not allow/require this program breadth, program priorities will be determined by local stakeholders in collaboration with UWEX partners.

3. Cooperative Extension will invest fiscal resources in ways that maximize partner matching funds to extend resources to the greatest extent possible. We will encourage and support efforts to acquire new funding opportunities and new partnerships.
4. Cooperative Extension encourages regional and/or multi-county approaches to programming.
5. When more than one position in a program area exists in a county, refilling "second" vacancies continues to be on a case-by-case basis. Maintaining one faculty position for program areas represented in the county program is a priority.
6. Cooperative extension will invest in county/state partnerships and staffing arrangements that address overload for county department heads/county directors.
7. Cooperative extension must derive base savings from every vacancy.
8. Cooperative Extension is committed to maintaining funding for presently employed faculty and staff. To that end, we are implementing a procedure to allow employees first access to position vacancies. That policy is attached.

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October, 2002