

Extension Educator Council Meeting Minutes
March 8, 2006

Present: Matt Tarr, Geoffrey Njue, Lisa Towson, Steve Turaj, Alice Mullen, Karen Blass, Alan Eaton

We reviewed the minutes from January 11, 06 meeting, corrected two typographical errors and accepted them.

We discussed the Heckel Award Nominees and Materials. We selected Mary Tebo as the winner this year. We decided to recommend (as a group) Tina Savage for the extension “above and beyond” award.

Lisa Towson’s updates:

Nancy Franz is headed for a position at VPI &SU; spouse’s health problems still being addressed. Lisa will field plan of work questions. The annual accomplishment report was submitted (to Washington) last week. Nancy is working on some POW details while she waits/visits hospital.

The 4- state system of planning and reporting is now in use in Maine. We will begin using it in fall of 2006 after county-by-county training Lisa will lead. This would replace TERS. It is more comprehensive, and is based on logic model. There will be no more codes. Reporting is in 1 day increments. One problem: it won’t get rid of the performance management reporting. Most people will probably report once/month, but is somewhat based on pay cycles. Unplanned time will have a significant part of reporting, so people can respond to needs & issues. We won’t be asked to plan 100% of our time. The system will provide better tracking for time spent on grants. Incorporating interdisciplinary teams work will be challenging. The leadership team has the freedom to dissolve interdisciplinary teams if needed. Program leader still makes the decision if a staff member must serve on a team.

Joint OS/PAT/EEC Meeting. Alice shared her list of EEC member duties & responsibilities, and asked for reaction of EEC members. PAT council has a prof. development subcommittee; we should be aware of prof. dev. offerings by PAT, and inform our staff. We agreed the duties should read that we “work with other councils to provide prof. devel...” Alice will talk to John Pike, make changes, and report back.

OS/PAT/Ext Educator Council Retreat(Jan 31st): Alice provided a summary of past & current priorities of each council. The big discussion this year: EEC developing web page, having Dean Pike attend 2 EEC mtgs/yr, improving EEC visibility among ext staff, improving prof. dev opportunities, improving ext visibility to USNH employees.

Web page and Blog: good concept; difficult to get participation? Would provide avenue of input on issues. A place for open discussion? We need to demonstrate there is a need. Univ. doesn’t want us to use blackboard; worried we would “flood” the system.

Steve Judd joined us to discuss setting up website/blog

We discussed logistics, access, identity/anonymity, low use of current ext forums, maintenance effort, logistics, email clutter, “sticky topics” (info that stays at the top of the

comments lists, so stays visible), capabilities. We discussed having interesting topics at the beginning, to interest people in participating.

Karen will work with Steve Judd, to set this up. Three people will probably be encoded to set it up: the chair, vice chair and secretary of EEC

From President's staff meetings: No meetings in the last 2 months.

Systems Policy & Procedures Committee

- working on a policy allowing a leave of absence if employee is a victim of a crime. This is based on RSA changes.
- also working on making "compassionate leave" be system-wide.
- Policy on solicitation within the workplace is being revised. It won't be totally prohibited, but allowed in certain locations/times ("neutral territory" like lunch times.
- Board of trustees policy on fraud has been modified. Under use of university equipment for personal use it now just says not for unlawful use...
- ARC buyout and BCC: retirees have up to Dec 31st if they want to participate in ARC buyout (BCC means benefits coverage confirmation(?))
- Health Coverage: Usually the university contract is put out to bid every 5 years. Now we have Cigna coverage, and officials are looking to get Harvard Pilgrim to bid this year. Currently Cigna is the only choice.

Jim Grady joined us and reported:

His new interim duties officially start March 20th. In the next 6 months, he will be looking at ways to shift some of his duties to other(s). This precipitated a general discussion on staff losses and how to fill vacancies/needs. Some problems we create (?) When we have someone "retire", yet work part time for a while. It makes it difficult to replace a position when the needs are still being met. Convincing county commissioners is difficult, for example.

ADJOURN 12:30 PM

Notes from Alan Eaton and Matt Tarr