

SPIT significant issue discussion held 6/24/09 at the MUB

In attendance: Charlie French, Amy Ouellette, Lisa Townson, Julia Peterson, David Foote, Charlene Baxter, Darrel Covell, Mike Koski, Wendy Brock, Amanda Stone, Ken La Valley, Catherine Violette, Michelle Gagne, Claudia Boozer-Blasco, Debbie Luppold, Sue Cagle, Suzanne Knight, Deb Cheever, Nancy Evans, Kathy Jablonski, Malcolm Smith, Paul Bonaparte-Krogh, Cathy Neal, Juli Brussell, Ellen Rondina, Mark Wiley, Sarah Smith, Paula Gregory, Maryann Kasprzack, Charlotte Cross, Jeff Schloss, Sharon Cowen, Karen Blass, Deb Maes

Lisa explained that the significant issues draft papers will be placed on the Intranet, in order for staff to comment, make additions, deletions, suggestions, etc.

We would like the significant issues papers finished by September 1. This will help us write our 2010 POW.

In the future.....we hope for new projects, modified (and improved) programs, grant opportunities, new and better campus and agency partnerships and of course, measurable outcomes and better reporting of our progress.

See power point slides -

<http://extension.unh.edu/Intranet/documents/June24presentation.pdf>

Questions /Answers / Comments

SI = significant issue

Q. How will this change our personal logic models and the way we report?

A. Each SI program/project will be programmed into the on-line reporting system as an umbrella “issue” or “problem” and components of our existing logic models will fit under these. Staff will still report to the same outputs/outcomes for the most part – no need for duplicate reporting.

Q. Who will decide how the SI’s will be organized on the on-line system?

A. Teams will decide, and let Lisa know – and she will reorganize into the on-line system.

Q. How will we insure we’re getting input and coordinating with other agencies, so we’re not tripping over each other?

A. Will be up to each issue team to make sure they share information with and get further input from appropriate agencies.

Q. Are SI statements going to be limited in length?

A. No, but they shouldn’t be too long, so it doesn’t take a long time for people to read them.

Q. Will the Survey Monkey tool will influence staff to “fit” into an issue team to make sure his or her work is justified?

A. We hope not – the intention was never to create a list of issues/problems that comprehensively fit all of the work we do.

Q. Who is it that we’re writing these statements for?

A. There are multiple audiences like stake holders, legislators, councils....but mainly ourselves to begin with. The first thing we do is write a white paper. This gives us the back ground to be used to write a logic model. From there, the statements are written and shared with others.

Q. Should these issues be framed in terms of regional priorities to position NH and NE for grant dollars?

A. Yes, geographic scope and opportunities for grants that provide money for national issues on a local scale is a good idea. Most of our issues do fit well into the recent needs assessment done by eXtension – on needs-based issues for new eXtension Communities

Top 12 issues/topics for the Northeast region (for new Communities of Practice)

Rank	1st Priority	2nd Priority	3rd Priority
1	Health/nutrition (14)	Health/nutrition (12)	Health/nutrition (10)
2	Youth (12)	Food (10)	Youth (7)
3	Food (11)	Families/parenting (9)	Financial management (7)
4	Horticulture (10)	Financial management (8)	Food (6)
5	Families/parenting (9)	Community/economic development (8)	Community/economic development (6)
6	Financial management (9)	Horticulture (8)	Homes (4)
7	Energy (7)	Youth (7)	Sustainable agriculture (4)
8	Community/economic development (7)	Energy (5)	Energy (4)
9	Water (5)	Water (5)	Forestry (3)
10	Agriculture marketing (5)	Agriculture marketing (3)	Horticulture (3)
11	Homes (5)	Forestry (3)	Animal welfare (3)
12	IPM (4)	Leadership (3)	Families/parenting (2)

of Practice (2009).

Q. Is there any talk of expanding SPIT?

A. Leadership Team has discussed and members of the current SPIT Team have been given the opportunity to step down if they choose, however when the team was formed it was with the intention of maintaining a consistent group for the entire five years).

Comments:

- Surprised that our goals don't include to "inform policy makers".
- Don't like the word "problem". Don't use "issue" and "problem" interchangeably. Better to use "issue statements".
- Let's get back to "needs" vs. "problems". It makes sense to her to use more of a positive/strength-based perspective. I.e. "All kids need good role models"
- We should look at these drafts from an outsider's point of view. We need to use clear, succinct statements that everyone can understand. It's better to have a statement that is more than the title alone but less than the two pages in length. Many liked the notion of a "white paper" that is clear, relevant, public value is defined, consistent, local data included.
- We need a statement that "BAM" states the issue – very powerful problem statements.
- We keep hearing the word "relevance" brought up in discussions with COA's about county commissioners and budgets. We need to do a better job at telling how UNHCE is relevant. This is reflected in the public value statements. Our relevance is that we're addressing the needs = issues = problems
- I'm excited about this process. It gives us an opportunity to change our programs and market Extension at UNH and to become identified as a source of information. For example, energy and alternative fuels are up and coming and important issues...This frames how are we might be involved.
- This can create an opportunity for Extension staff to work together, collaborate with other program areas, break down the silos.
- Take a look at eXtension - people.extension.org For example, home energy is a topic being discussed by extension staff around the country. It is not viewable by the public yet. It's a great place to communicate and collaborate with our peers around the country.
- We should emphasize the local-perspective of the issues. This is most impactful when communicating with our county funders. Need to use local data.

- Right now, the SI statements are not convincing and the choice of data is biased by what was chosen and what was not. (We know but we had to start somewhere.)