

OSU Extension Guiding Principles

OSU Extension continues to be committed to accomplishing our mission of *engaging people to strengthen their lives and communities through research-based educational programming* and realizing our vision as a *dynamic educational entity that partners with individuals, families, communities, business and industry, and organizations to strengthen the lives of Ohioans*. During the organizational restructuring, administrative cabinet utilized the following guiding principles to assist with decision making. As we move forward with implementation, they will continue to be guiding principles. They are:

1. Locally Focused and Relevant to Ohio Citizens

We take programming directly to the people of Ohio, the counties being our focus. Extension has always involved local citizens in planning and implementing programs that address their needs and help them to shape their future. Helping people where they are, OSU Extension uses local needs assessment, clientele input and specific program efforts to provide effective educational opportunities addressing issues and concerns relevant to Ohio families and communities. We also bring state, national and global initiatives to the community for integration into their local programming.

2. Proactive, Holistic Integrated Programming

In a fast changing world, it is important to anticipate critical issues affecting Ohio. Extension has committed to forecast emerging issues and identify targeted statewide initiatives that we will help to address. To accomplish this, we will leverage resources from across the world and involve other institutions, agencies and organizations. Doing so will move us into a proactive mode instead of simply reacting to issues. This will position us to allow for more opportunities, programming, funding and research. It will also help to market us to the public and funders.

Complex issues require multiple specializations to be properly addressed. Programs that focus on these issues should be identified, planned and implemented with interdisciplinary teams representing various fields and program areas. This will represent a diverse spectrum of geography, disciplines, and people. Doing so will insure that multiple perspectives and viewpoints are considered. Programs will be implemented at any geographic level.

Complex issues require multiple specializations to be properly addressed. Programs that focus on these issues should be identified, planned and implemented with interdisciplinary teams representing various fields and program areas. This will represent a diverse spectrum of geography, disciplines, and people. Doing so will insure that multiple perspectives and viewpoints are considered. Programs will be implemented at any geographic level.

3. Flexibility in Staffing and Operations

OSU Extension requires staff with depth in their respective discipline base but with the flexibility to apply that expertise to ever changing problems and issues of Ohioans. We will maintain personnel with discipline expertise and specialization in Content areas that are essential for ongoing base programs in Extension. However, as high priority issues impacting Ohioans emerge, we may need additional areas of expertise, for finite periods of time, for which we do not have permanent staff. Rather than hiring permanent faculty or staff, we will increasingly contract for needed expertise or short-term staff. These resources may come from the OSU campuses, from other universities across Ohio, nationally or internationally, through partnerships with other state Extension systems, from partnering agencies or organizations, etc.

4. Entrepreneurial Thinking and Action

OSU Extension is seeking to apply concepts of social entrepreneurship in how we think and act. Social entrepreneurs use earned income strategies to cover the cost of a program not to seek profit. They are seeking ways to sustain programs through new ways of working. Furthermore, according to Bill Drayton, social entrepreneurs are not content to just give a fish or teach how to fish. They will not rest until they have revolutionized the fishing industry.

5. Diversified Funding Supports Programs

Closely linked to the concept of social entrepreneurship is diversified funding. Social entrepreneurs seek to fund their efforts in a sustainable manner, with less dependence upon public sector subsidies. They seek self-sufficiency. The majority of OSU Extension's funding has historically been based on public sector sources. As those sources have changed significantly: they are less consistent, come with more strings or expectations attached, and with increasingly challenging accountability requirements. We need to step up our efforts significantly to seek new funding opportunities. Teamed with entrepreneurial thinking and action, there are many sources we have never explored. This will require the creativity and action of all of us not just those in Extension administration.

With the above items as guiding principles in mind, a summary of the reorganization is as follows. For summary purposes they are described under the general categories of Organizational Program Structure, OSU Extension Centers, Field Operations, and other. While listed separately, they will operate in a collaborative and integrated manner.