



College of Agriculture and Home Economics Visioning Process 2007

Network Planning Team Recommended Actions

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Purpose: To create a culture of continuous collaboration and communication across administrative and geographic divisions within the college in order to enhance everyone's effectiveness.

Desired Result: The faculty and staff have access to a means of on-going dialog within the college regarding our teaching, research, and Extension efforts.

It is the Network Planning Team's recommendation that the College of Agriculture and Home Economics:

- 1. Reinstitute a college-wide staff development/networking conference.**
 - a. The conference would be named something other than 'All College Conference' such as "Connecting Across the College". Faculty and staff should be made aware that the new conference format is not the same as previous events. The conference should focus on staff development and networking, and should include ample opportunities for social interaction and family participation.
 - b. The conference would be held during the second-week of January in every-other year, beginning in 2008. Efforts should be made to avoid the first week of the new-year, following the holiday break, and the beginning of spring semester activities. The conference should begin on the afternoon of Day 1, include an evening social function and conclude by noon on

- Day 2. This will enable most off-campus staff to be away from home for only one night.
- c. All faculty and all regular exempt and non-exempt staff should be invited and encouraged to participate in the conference. It should be made clear that attendance is expected, but not required, and if necessary, outlying offices may be closed for this event, or if it is necessary that the office remain open, it may be staffed by temporary employees.
 - d. The conference should include a variety of sessions, formats and opportunities for interaction. The following are viewed as essential components of a successful conference:
 - i. Poster Sessions – with designated time for viewing and interaction with authors, with consideration to grouping by topic (ie. water).
 - ii. Plenary Sessions – with a keynote topical speaker of interest to the diversity of employees represented by CAHE
 - iii. Concurrent Breakout Sessions – tailored to meet the needs and interests of the range of faculty and staff working for CAHE. Sessions for faculty and technical staff may be based on areas of interest, research methods, or teaching practices. Sessions for clerical and office staff may be based on procurement, property management, or personnel matters. Sessions for farm/ranch staff may focus on safety matters, equipment training, or other interests.
 - iv. Awards Sessions – to recognize staff and significant accomplishments.
 - v. Social Functions – to facilitate opportunities for interaction and networking in a non-structured environment. Should allow more opportunity for interaction than listening to a banquet speaker, and should allow for broader participation than golf or bowling tournaments.
 - vi. Facility Tours – tours to locales of interest in the general area.
 - vii. Family Activities – daytime tours, programs of interest, and child care services should be provided for out-of-town participants.
 - e. CAHE Administration should provide funding to cover basic costs for staff to attend.

2. Provide competitive “seed grants” to foster collaboration and community building across divisional boundaries by awarding competitive grants to CAHE faculty and staff in the areas of program and project planning and development, student engagement, and rapid response teams.

- a. Grants should address the use of funds towards the sustainability of the project, whether through internal or external sources.
- b. Grants should include interdisciplinary collaborations during the planning and implementation stage, substantive student engagement or use of strategies to become self-sustaining.

- c. Grants should provide one or more of the following:
 - i. Apply innovative and scholarly knowledge to a well defined problem.
 - ii. Influence professional practice.
 - iii. Improve the quality of life for the citizens of New Mexico.
 - iv. Identify relationships with external constituencies.
 - v. Include a diffusion plan (communication and distribution).
- d. Proposals should be judged on criteria such as:
 - i. The number of faculty and staff that would be involved in the activity
 - ii. Linkages between AES, CES and across departments,
 - iii. Creativity and activity
 - iv. Expected outcomes.
 - v. Relevance to CAHE mission

3. Improve Email communication across CAHE.

- a. Convert to list serves instead of distribution lists. People must subscribe to list serves. This would help to cut down on mass mailings on ricochet e-mails from individuals voicing personal views.
- b. Thin out unnecessary daily e-mails by creating a regular e-mail newsletter to an employee list serve that would post announcements, calls for nominations, grant opportunities, upcoming events, new personnel, job postings, etc., modeled after *Hotline*. All areas would be included, extension, teaching and research. This E-newsletter could also include a calendar so users could find dates for relevant events.
 - i. Have users e-mail their announcements and events to an E-newsletter coordinator who would compile them for that week's newsletter. Suggested name for newsletter: *Ag-Enews*.
 - ii. Include in weekly E-newsletter information on e-mail etiquette to remind users how to use the college's e-mail more efficiently. This newsletter could also include an informative section about each department within the college and help phone numbers.
- c. Continue exploration of alternative methods of web based communications such as My Space/Face Book and encourage the CAHE Technology Department to provide training on such methods.

4. Establish a non-mandatory peer-mentoring program.

- a. Pair every new faculty and staff with a colleague with shared professional area, for peer-to-peer mentoring within or among departments, on or off campus.
- b. Establish lists of 'Resource or Go-to People' with self-identified areas of expertise (i.e. Banner, hiring procedures) to encourage newer staff to seek out information and learn new approaches or methods that will help trouble shoot problems/road blocks.
- c. Provide regular opportunities for mentor training and social networking.

5. Create social outlets for networking.

- a. College Coffee – monthly event
 - i. Modify the traditional ‘coffee’ in GT Hall Lobby so that it is hosted by different Departments on a rotating basis so that each Department has the opportunity to showcase its programs and individuals are motivated to attend.
 - ii. Include off-campus Science/Extension Centers as appropriate.
- b. Organized walks at lunch – to encourage a healthy outlet for information exchange and networking. Announce that walkers should meet at the Pond on certain days of the week at noon. Provide maps, pedometers.
- c. Awards Day – continue current annual lunch for awardees and guests.
- d. Other opportunities might include a rotational breakfast in which administration hosts a monthly breakfast with three or four veteran faculty or staff member and a similar number of more recently hired individuals from different departments or program areas. A special effort should be made to include off-campus personnel.

6. Continue to utilize a consensus-based approach to support the CAHE administrative decision process.

- a. Prior to implementing changes that affect many users, CAHE administration should consider seeking user input through processes designed to facilitate the open exchange of ideas. Continued use of the Visioning Team, general staff meetings, and focus groups are encouraged.
- b. Advance training should be provided prior to implementation of procedural changes.

7. Encourage additional interaction among Extension, teaching and research units.

- a. Conduct an in-depth review of the CAHE administrative and departmental organizational structure as a means to increase collaboration and communication across the college.
- b. Explore additional opportunities for networking through the exchange of ideas, description of programs, and review of faculty and staff evaluation processes to increase recognition of networking.