

Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service Intercultural Action Committee for Extension Strategic Plan

Vision Statement

The Intercultural Action Committee (IACE) for the Purdue Cooperative Extension system will provide the leadership to create and maintain a pluralistic environment that values, respects, and celebrates the diversity among faculty, staff, volunteers, clientele and programs.

Pluralistic organizations are defined as organizations that:

- Value human differences as a competitive advantage;
- Create a culture that reflects the interest, contributions and values of members of diverse groups;
- Have full and influential participation by all members of the organization; and
- Eliminate discrimination throughout the organization.

Mission Statement

We are committed to a philosophy of inclusion that embraces the basic tenets of democracy and cultural pluralism.

Therefore, WE WILL....

- Serve as a central communication point for planning and implementing activities related to multiculturalism and internationalism.
- Serve as a linkage between Extension and related committees and activities within schools associated with Extension and the University.
- Serve as a coordinated core of expertise and experience that will link resources and energies throughout the state and the nation in a collaborative effort to build inclusive communities and strengthen democracy in Indiana.

Definitions of Terms

Diversity: defined as a kaleidoscope of people who bring a variety of backgrounds, life experiences, styles, perspectives, personalities, values, and beliefs as assets to the groups and organizations with which they interact. It is the differences among people with respect to factors such as age, class/economics, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practice, and other human differences.

Multiculturalism: theory and practice that promotes the peaceful coexistence of multiple races, ethnicities, and cultures in a given society, celebrating and sustaining language diversity, religious diversity, and social equity.

Internationalism or global education: to prepare youth and adults for a globally interdependent world.

Culture: learned behavior which is the sum of attitudes, customs, and beliefs that distinguish one group of people from another. Culture is transmitted, through language, material objects, rituals, institutions and art from one generation to the next.

Pluralism: an organizational culture that incorporates mutual respect, acceptance, teamwork, and productivity among people who are diverse in the dimensions of human differences listed above as diversity.

Intercultural Competence: the overall capability of an individual or organization to manage key challenging features of intercultural communication: namely, cultural differences and unfamiliarity, inter-groups dynamics and the tensions and conflicts that can accompany this process. It is a two-way interactive process that requires both the ability to stress the common aspects of human life and the will to solve conflicts that emerge from the differences between people of different cultural backgrounds.

The Purdue Cooperative Extension Strategic Plan for the infusion of multiculturalism/internationalism will focus on the ten fundamental aspects of intercultural competence.

Ten fundamental aspects for the successful development of intercultural competence:

- Detection of an individual's own ethnocentrism;
- Dealing with things that appear strange or unknown;
- Laying the bases for understanding;
- Accepting and valuing differences;
- Stressing things in common
- Encouraging solidarity;
- Training of reasonable conflict-techniques – dealing with cultural conflicts and cultural relativism;
- Awareness of the possibility to learn from each other and to enrich lives through cultural contact; and
- Remove frontiers by understanding the global responsibility of everyone.

Organizational Structure

An advisory and coordinating committee was formed in June 2003 to create a link among and integrate the work of various groups through the Purdue Cooperative Extension System.

The committee members represent the multicultural and international interests of campus and field staff, including key representatives of partnering units and other liaison persons. The function of this committee is to set priorities, mobilize resources, integrate programming initiatives and provide overall leadership to interculturalize Purdue Cooperative Extension.

Active efforts should be pursued to network with the various units on campus with intercultural outreach missions to coordinate activities, share resources, and catalyze initiatives.

All Extension administrators at both management and programmatic levels are needed to provide leadership, encouragement and support to the integration of the intercultural dimensions in Extension programming. Program Directors, District Directors, and County Extension Directors have special opportunities to promote and reinforce the incorporation of multicultural and global perspectives through program planning processes, personnel counseling and supervision processes and budgeting functions.

Goals

Goal 1: Environment

→ *Create an environment within which staff and volunteers can readily acknowledge, value and respect difference in a pluralistic society.*

Strategies:

Promote open and honest communication within Extension between administration and Educators/Specialists.

Create a mentoring and shadowing program.

Develop a resource list for new Educators/Specialists that would include ethnic restaurants, stores, salons, etc. within the community or within close proximity.

Create a “Welcoming Wagon” approach for new staff by partnering with existing Extension professional organizations.

Be sensitive and caring when organizing events (time, place, food). Religious holidays should be reviewed and events not scheduled on those dates.

Recognize individuals and organizational units for exceptional progress in creating an inclusive and inviting climate through an awards process.

Purdue Cooperative Extension has grievance as well as EEO processes. All counties and associated organizations should be aware of this established complaint process. It is likely that disputes will arise in a pluralistic organization. Use of this mechanism can resolve disputes and prevent escalation of disputes which can be key to achieving harmony.

Measures of Success:

- Existence of a mentoring/shadowing program.
- Resource list included in New Educators/Specialists training.
- Establishment of individual and unit awards for intercultural involvement.
- Number of counties/organizational units having a dispute resolution process established and publicized.

Goal 2: Organizational Culture & Procedures

→ *Hire and retain staff reflective of state demographics.*

Strategies:

Expand hiring practices and processes to reach a diverse applicant pool for all positions.

Include intercultural activities in staff reporting and performance evaluation.

Assess intercultural sensitivity of applicants.

Measures of Success:

Incorporation of questions in the interview process related to intercultural involvement and strategies.

Incorporation of questions in performance reviews related to intercultural programming.

Annual performance reviews and work performance standards will include assessment of each individual's ability to achieve intercultural competence and inclusive programming.

Increase shown of diversity among applicants.

→ *Provide training opportunities and educational tools for staff to broaden and enrich our understanding of the interdependence within a global society.*

Strategies:

Create a web site which would provide Extension staff, volunteers, and the public with resources to develop and enhance competencies related to interculturalism.

Develop a series of fact sheets and provide opportunities that would increase the awareness and understanding of the importance of interculturalism for our traditional Extension stakeholders and supporters, e.g. P-CARET.

Provide domestic and international opportunities for Extension staff to participate in study teams and exchange programs, and deliver Extension programs in other countries or cultural contexts.

Provide intercultural training opportunities to Extension staff and volunteers on a regular and continuing basis.

Provide all current and new staff with training that addresses the data measuring Indiana's demographic changes and the probable consequences of these changes in aspects of everyday life.

Collect and disseminate Extension experiences in working with communities undergoing population change. Changes may include ethnic, economic, cultural and others that affect relationships among people.

Utilize the broad network of university-based resources and non-university based resources in Indiana to support staff development opportunities for assessing the Extension needs of diverse populations in Indiana.

Measures of Success:

Educators/specialists partake in local, regional, or international cultural experiences.

Counties conduct analyses of their cultural makeup and identification of program needs.

Monitor usage of web site (# of times accessed) and comments received from staff.

Monitor distribution of fact sheets (# of times dispersed) and comments received from staff.

Monitor numbers of trainings requested and conducted by IACE.

Goal 3: Partnerships

→ *Create mechanisms to coordinate information, resources and activities on and off-campus, and to maintain relationships with programs and organizations that support intercultural involvements.*

Strategies:

Utilize existing international programs such as those provided by 4-H, Rotary International, VOCA, etc., to provide staff with international experiences.

Develop partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions and Native American Tribal Colleges to provide exchange opportunities for staff to experience a different perspective on culture and programming.

Measures of Success:

Develop a directory of potential partners for intercultural activities for field and state staff.

Monitor amount and quality of partnerships developed.

→ *Build membership of county and state level committees which reflect local or state diversity.*

Strategies:

Offer specific programs based on local demographics.

Provide leadership development opportunities for potential volunteers who represent diverse groups.

Encourage committee leadership to annually review group membership to determine if local diversity is represented.

Provide opportunities to include voices from the community in the decision making process relative to program planning and activities that impact them.

Measures of Success:

Increase the diversity of committee membership.

Increase in the number of programs serving cultural groups identified in the county analyses.

Increase in the number of diverse members participating in programs.

Goal 4: Marketing

→ *Build understanding of economic change and the impact of globalization of markets to enable employees and employers to accommodate change.*

Strategies:

Facilitate educational programs on international trade as a public issue.

Help agricultural and horticultural producers to capture markets for ethnic food and other products and services.

Measures of Success:

Provide forum for local ethnic business persons to discuss business and marketing issues, products, etc.

Document the global connections of consumer goods purchase in local communities and the global markets for goods and services produced in the county.

Track the number of newspaper articles and other print materials dealing with the structure of local economies and their ties to global markets.