

Administrative Lines of Responsibility for Extension Specialists

Proposed Changes

Jeffrey C. Silvertooth

Associate Dean and Director for the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension

11 December 2020

Present Situation:

- Each Extension Specialist has a base of operation in an academic unit in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CAL S) in the Division of Agriculture, Life, & Veterinary Sciences, and Cooperative Extension (ALVSCE).
- The Cooperative Extension System (CES) is a distinct entity within ALVSCE and is not part of CAL S.
- The CES is fully responsible for all Extension programs.
- As Extension faculty, Specialists have programmatic responsibilities to the CES mission but no direct line of reporting.
- Specialists report directly to the unit head for their academic base of operation.
- Academic unit heads are direct reports to the CAL S Dean, who is also currently the ALVSCE Vice President, whom the CES Director reports to.
- The CES Director and any Associate Directors and/or Program Leaders have at best a dotted line relationship to academic unit heads and are therefore three steps removed from Extension Specialists.

Current Concerns and Considerations:

- The CES administration has the responsibility for program oversight and management.
 - County-based Extension operations have direct lines of reporting responsibility to the CES Director.
 - Extension Specialists in academic units have **no direct** connection to the CES Director or the Associate Directors and/or Program Leaders. Therefore, Extension programs emanating from academic units have **no direct** line of responsibility to Extension program leadership.
- There is a general lack of appropriate integration and coordination of programs and operations among Extension Specialists, academic units, County Agents and other personnel based in statewide Extension units.
- As the CES prepares to invest in expertise and hire Specialists from other colleges, which would be in academic units, it would be poor management to fully handover Extension resources to fund the faculty line and imbed that line into a college beneath a dean and an academic unit head without any direct CES administrative authority.

- Directing resources without having sufficient oversight and lines of responsibility for the direction and integration of programs in the CES is both poor management and fiscally irresponsible.

Proposed Changes:

- **Implement a direct line of responsibility between Extension Specialists and the CES Administration.**
 - The CES would have direct oversight and input on program management, direction, and annual review.
 - Direct lines of interaction with the Extension administration should primarily be with Extension Specialists and the appropriate Associate Director and/or Program Leader.
- **Academic unit heads will have a dotted line responsibility to Extension Specialists.**
 - Academic unit heads would still be paid a portion of their stipend from the CES and have regular unit level oversight and responsibility with Extension Specialists.
- **All other current relationships of Extension Specialists to their academic units would remain the same.**
 - Offices and labs.
 - Intramural service, graduate programs, etc.
 - Peer review and P&C procedures would continue to be based in the academic units.
 - Salaries would not change with changes in administrative alignments.

Philosophy:

The objective of this change is to ensure CES Legislative appropriations are directed to the mission of serving the citizens of Arizona with applied Extension work that brings research to bear on practical problems. To achieve this objective the change required is not simply a technical problem. The change in lines of responsibility would serve as a first step to drive a cultural or adaptive change that we have been attempting to implement for at least nine years with very minimal success.