



SR-PLN COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MINUTES 2020 JOINT MEETING OF SR-PLN AEA & ASRED TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 1:30 - Opening Session

Welcome

Introduction of New Members

(see PLN-newcomer spreadsheet)

Curricula Discussion

An initiative started two years ago to create curricula for Extension Communications Competencies and Objectives for new employees or as a refresher for current employees. There are six domain modules including (1) ADA and 508 Compliance, (2) Branding, (3) Marketing Local Programs, (4) Writing, including scientific writing, (5) Media Relations, and (6) Social Media.

Currently, the module examples in the committee's Google Drive are in different Word file formats. An idea of a draft template was suggested. There is no current information on how the curricula should be packaged and what format they should be delivered through (e.g., PPTs, slide decks, videos, PDFs).

Guidance is also needed from the SR-PLN Program Staff and Development (PSD) Committee on how to package the modules. Additionally, the PSD committee said what we were calling competencies, should be called domains. Gina said she would reach out to the PSD chair. An evaluation instrument and peer-review process is needed.

(see SR-PLN Recommendations for Communications Competencies and Objectives document)

The Committee agreed to form a sub-committee to review the objectives for clarity. Volunteers include: Dawn, Hayley, Denise, and Latasha plus a designated PSD committee member.

VOTE: Elizabeth moved the sub-committee be created. Dr. Eubanks seconded.

An understanding of all learning objectives should not be required for new hires, as some would be part of a training process. New hires should bring basic skills such as writing, and the rest can be acquired on the job. The question is, what learning objectives do you need to get hired and which do you learn on the job. This will be

different across institutions. There is no one-size-fits-all answer. The recommendation is to build in a process so that users can assign what is most important to their program. These should be thought of as SR-PLN recommended best practices.

Module Product and Package Discussion

Administrative advisors believe this is needed at their institutions. The Communications Committee could work with individual institutions but could also have a regional training. A shared and flexible platform is required to share the modules. The focus is on foundational skills - not how to do this, but what are the guiding principles.

BREAK

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 3:15PM - 2nd Session

Suzanne will meet with the PSD committee about an evaluation instrument so that leaving the identification of the skills needed in the hands of the institution is intentional. The Communications Committee may be able to teach or train, but it is not clear at what level.

Katherine Spiering said the modules can be housed on our Communications Committee website.

SR-PLN Recommendations Document

What we have in place currently is not structured like the recommendations. We should include more clarity by using complete sentences. All modules need to be migrated into the correct format. Priorities should be determined by domain as objectives are important to the domain. Are domains critical or elective? Writing, Branding, and ADA 508 Compliance are critical. Marketing Local Programs, Media, and social media are electives.

(See SR-PLN Recommendations for Communications Competencies and Objectives document in the Google drive.)

Annual Plan of Work Accomplishments Document

There are ten items from the 2019-2020 Plan of Work

(see 2019-2020 Plan of Work PDF file)

Completed items include:

#3 The promotional video to raise awareness for the necessity of being federally compliant was completed by Tobie Blanchard and is available in Google Drive (called Why comply?). The video is an accomplishment and will be posted on the Communications Committee website.

#6 Scientific Writing domain competencies and objectives were completed by Dawn White and Denise Attaway and is available in the Google Drive folder.

#10 For the hashtag campaign, the Committee voted to adopt the hashtag #ExtensionHasAnswers for all social media posts from our respective institutions. We will use this hashtag for a year and then, at our next annual meeting in August 2021, review the success of the hashtag. We will then decide whether to continue it or adopt a new one.

Remaining seven items:

The following three items fit together, but none are done at this time: #1 ADA 508 compliance training series, #2 ADA 508 compliance one-pager, #5 ADA 508 Compliance domain module.

#4 Refining communications curricula based on PSD recommendations is close to being done.

#7 Webinar at ACE to present best practices for communicating Extension's value and relevance is pending and will be added to this next year's Plan of Work

Add #8 Slide deck and guiding document for training Extension personnel on how to present best practices for communicating Extension's value and relevance will be added to this next year's Plan of Work.

#9 Further develop common measures for evaluation will be pushed back to February 2021.

Of the following three items - #2 and #5 need to be completed first: #1 ADA 508 compliance training series, #2 ADA 508 compliance one-pager, #5 ADA 508 Compliance domain module.

For #7 and #8 on training and best practices for communicating Extension's value and relevance, materials will be drafted for November and then a decision will be made on developing a proposal to present at ACE, AEA, and PLN in 2021.

Committee Survey

Suzanne and Dawn developed a committee survey that was sent out the week before the conference. There were only six responses, but they can be used to help lay ground for discussion going forward.

ChaNáÉ Bradley discussed the relevance and importance of the committee with regard to a large collaborative effort for the curricula development and other projects on which 1862s and 1890s have been able to collaborate.

Michelle Olgers shared a view about the Communications Committee purpose - that it is not professional development. It's actually the opposite. We are professionals and leaders working in a large system. We take our professional development gained and experiences, and we put it back into the system. This helps all of us as a region. A side benefit is that we can learn and borrow from others. It can be looked at as a bucket view - we give and sometimes we get.

SR-PLN allows us to come together, and they expect us to contribute back - to leverage our abilities to improve. We demonstrate value.

ADJOURN

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26 SR-PLN

Opening

Suzanne discussed how the plan for curricula evolved two years ago by identifying needs and teasing out major competencies. Curricula could be unified across the southern region. Last year, the Communications Committee submitted the domain modules to the PSD Committee. They provided feedback and added ADA and 508 Compliance to the list of domain modules.

Proposal for Onboarding Communications Committee Members

Dawn Anticole White presented a proposal to create an onboarding guide for the Communications Committee to provide new members with a list of resources and materials. The Committee agreed to have her draft up a guide for review.

(see SR-PLN-comm-onboard-drive PPT from Dawn Anticole White)

Presentation by Faith Peppers from NIFA

NIFA is a sort of clearinghouse for all Extension moneys. Her comments included

- Pathway internships for graduating students
- Value of subscribing to NIFA updates; she has a spreadsheet of every communicator at all land-grant universities and sends out alerts about grants.
- Land-grant national impact database, Share Your Science.

- Weekly NIFA in the News clips from across the country about NIFA-funded projects
- Emphasis on inputting into the impact database.
- #NIFAImpacts hashtag use for state NIFA projects
- landgrantimpacts.org website is public and very searchable.

Faith will develop a one-pager summarizing her comments on sharing, utilizing, and implementing. She is developing an advisory committee for units from all regions.

Proposal for Organizing the Committee Google Drive

Dawn Anticole White presented a proposal to reorganize the Google Drive for the Communications Committee and provide an index of materials and guidance as to what files are included.

(see SR-PLN-comm-onboard-drive PPT from Dawn White)

Plan of Work from Last Year and Committee Leadership Changes Discussion

Every year we decide what items we want to accomplish for the coming year and rotate committee leadership. When leadership changed abruptly as Angela left in November, and Suzanne became chair and Dawn became vice-chair. Suzanne thinks we need a full year to be effective in our positions. Daniel Nonte was going to be the secretary but had to drop off. This year a communicator from an 1862 is supposed to be the chair. Discussion was requested with administrative advisors as to options.

Continuation on New Plan of Work Discussion

Suzanne announced the PSD Committee discussed the creation of an evaluation instrument for online curricula and decided it would be something they would like to carry over into their new plan of work for us. Todd Hurt from the PSD committee will serve as the liaison.

LUNCH BREAK

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 26, AFTERNOON

Todd from the PSD committee recommended the development of an evaluation instrument that is specific to each training and based on the objectives as opposed to a general, over-all evaluation instrument. The PSD Committee is moving forward with the development of a training/resource repository database. They will work with us to refine learning objectives and next steps in moving resources into a shared database.

Slide Deck and Guiding Document Communicating Best Practices for Communicating Extension's Value and Relevance

The committee discussed sharing the document in a broader way and developing a slide deck and document specifically for communicators as well as non-communicators (agents and specialists who have the responsibility of servicing as communicators for their program area).

Originally, AEA and ASRED asked the Communications Committee to develop the document that is now in the Google Drive.

Following discussions, the Committee will develop a PowerPoint and white paper that is shorter and simpler as the deliverable for communications professionals who can provide training at their institutions.

(see PLN Ext Relevance doc on Google Drive)

Crisis Communications Plans in light of COVID-19

Elizabeth brought out that what is being created by agents and educators during these COVID times is not becoming a part of Extension's Body of Knowledge. In addition, she informed the committee that Lyndall Stovall has an excellent crisis communications plan. Lyndall posted her plan in the State Report folder on the Google Drive.

Dawn offered to share their Return to Work protocol with committee members.

Michelle introduced a new plan of work item that involves developing a guide that outlines which communications tool is best to use and when as well as a list of best practices for communicating during a crisis.

Committee Meeting with Administrative Advisors

Dr. Gina Eubanks weighs in concerning the leadership discussion in terms of Suzanne and Dawn continuing in their current positions as chair and vice chair. Both were elevated prematurely due to the original chair leaving the committee. Dr. Eubanks noted that in the past, what has been turned in to PLN was accepted. She didn't see a problem with both continuing.

The Committee was asked to participate in an anonymous poll, and it was unanimous that Suzanne and Dawn continue as chair and vice-chair for the Committee. Erica Shambley agreed to serve as secretary.

Advocacy for Legislative Priorities on the Local Level

Dr. Latimore discussed the great need for local communication connections as it pertains to advocacy on legislative priorities. He suggested that each university create information packages that include success stories, for example, to support advocacy at their local levels.

Joint Meeting for Racial Injustice and Diversity Discussion

Dr. Eubanks discussed the AEA’s and ASRED’s request for \$80 M to support the Extension System during COVID. In addition, she discussed the joint meeting of the directors and administrators in the 1890 and Southern Regions about racial injustice and diversity. The group is initiating a series of joint conversations focused on “coming together” for racial understanding. All of the southern states and some states outside of the southern states are involved in the initiative. There have been two rounds of trainings in the Southern Region.

A proposal may come out of the discussions and will be developed on a national level.

ADJOURN. Reconvene at 9:30AM

THURSDAY AUGUST 27

Randy Taylor, vice chair of the ANR Committee presented the following for consideration:

Since Extension systems across the region shifted to digital delivery platforms for programs this spring with little opportunity to consider methods for evaluating programs delivered in this manner, the ANR Committee is proposing to create a SR working group to determine best practices in virtual program delivery, challenges, and evaluation / impact reporting. As this issue impacts all program areas, the proposal is to form a multi-disciplinary work group by October 1. Please contact Randy Taylor randy.taylor@okstate.edu if you have interest or feedback.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 4, 2020 @ 1 p.m. CST/2 p.m. EST

ADJOURNMENT

Tracy Courage made the motion to adjourn at 11:47 a.m. EST. Dawn seconded the motion; it was voted and carried.