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Our Legacy - Dr. Seaman A. Knapp

As you begin your career in Extension, we would like to introduce you to one of the most important people in the history of Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Dr. Seaman A. Knapp. Dr. Knapp has been dead for almost a 100 years; however, his lessons in outreach education are etched in the hearts of every successful Extension educator today and those who have been part of Texas Extension's rich history since W.C. Stallings was appointed as the first County Extension Agent in Smith County Texas in 1906 (more than 7 years prior to the passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914).

Dr. Knapp had a distinguished career as a minister, school teacher, college professor, college president, and farmer (Seevers, Graham, Gamon, & Conklin, 1997). In 1879, Dr. Knapp was appointed professor of Agriculture at Iowa State College where he rapidly established a reputation for teaching practical methods in agricultural production practices (Seevers et al, 1997). Dr. Knapp vigorously promoted agriculture education, drafting a federal aid bill to agricultural experiment stations, which in 1887 became the Hatch Act.

In 1896, Dr. Knapp resigned as president of Iowa State College to assume the management of a private company planning to colonize over a million acres in Louisiana (Seevers et al, 1997). While in Louisiana, Dr. Knapp established demonstrations to convince settlers that rice would be the best crop for area, but the commercial varieties available were unacceptable (Seevers et al, 1997). In an effort to assist Louisiana rice producers Dr. Knapp traveled to the Orient to identify better varieties of rice to introduce to the United States (Seevers et al, 1997).

Dr. Knapp later was appointed to a position in the Bureau of Plant Industry of the USDA to encourage farmers to adopt better farming practices (Seevers et al, 1997). In this position Dr. Knapp promoted the concept of a demonstration farm model and was appointed head of this program. These farms were designed to demonstrate how to increase yields of the standard crops (Seevers et al, 1997). Dr. Knapp captured his philosophy by saying "what a man hears, he may doubt. What he sees, he may still doubt. But what a man does himself, he cannot doubt."

The historical event that set the stage for Extension programs nationally occurred when E.H.R. Green, president of the Texas-Midland Railway, became interested in a "community demonstration farm" and invited Dr. Knapp to Terrell, Texas (Seevers et al, 1997). Dr. Knapp convinced local businessmen to raise \$900 to insure against crop losses and Walter C. Porter agreed to farm seventy acres according to Dr. Knapp's instructions (Seevers et al, 1997). The Porter Farm Demonstration attracted much attention, especially when Porter reported that he had made \$700 more as a result of farming by Dr. Knapp's recommendations (Seever et al, 1997).

In 1903, Dr. Knapp received a special allotment of money to establish cooperative demonstrations for cotton farmers facing ruin from the boll weevil (Seevers et al, 1997). About seven thousand demonstrations were enrolled by 1904, and twenty-five to thirty men called "special agents" were appointed that year to work with these demonstrators (Seevers et al, 1997). Cotton yields on

demonstration farms were reported to be as large as twice the average yields of farms in the same locations where the demonstration methods were not followed (Seevers et al, 1997). This field man concept was so effective that local farmers and businesspersons in Smith County, Texas, petitioned Dr. Knapp to have a man work exclusively in Smith County. W.C. Stallings was the first county agent appointed in a cooperative agreement with USDA on November 12, 1906.

For more information related to Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, Father of Extension, visit the following website:

<http://www.rogerknapp.com/knap/seamanknappHistory.htm>

Introduction to Texas AgriLife Extension Service Programming Concepts

Extension educational programming is an intentional effort to fulfill predetermined needs of people and communities (Seevers et al, 1997). A single event or activity rarely results in the types of behavioral changes necessary to realize this mission. The word **program** refers to the product resulting from all activities in which a professional educator and learner are involved (Seevers et al, 1997). Many times educational programs are interpreted as meaning an educational activity, workshop, clinic, or field day when in reality these activities may only be a component of the overall educational program. The educational program is the sum of all the components/methods and is consummated with the evaluation of the entire program, which reflects Extension's impact from a social, environmental and/or environmental perspective.

These programs are designed to address issues identified by local clientele with committees and task forces being involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation and interpretation. Programs are designed utilizing a variety of educational methods (field days, educational meetings, workshops, result demonstrations, newsletters, mass media, etc.).

Program planning is defined as the process designed to bring about effective programming (Seevers et al, 1997). This process can be viewed as a system of interrelated parts which work together to achieve defined goals (Seevers et al, 1997). Boone (2002) stated that program planning, "includes the individual and collaborative efforts of the adult education organization, the adult educator, and the learner in planning, designing, implementing, evaluating and accounting for educational programs" (p. 1). The Extension Committee on Policy (1974) defined Extension program development as "a continuous series of complex, interrelated processes which result in the accomplishments of the educational mission and objectives of the organization" (Seevers et al, 1997, p.92).

Reviews of program development models have identified three main components of the program development process; planning, design and implementation, and evaluation and accountability. These components or processes are systematically linked to result in successful programming.

The planning component includes several steps that influence the formation of a program: identification of issues, prioritizing these issues, establishing goals, determining needs, identification of target audiences and development of program objectives (Seevers et al, 1997).

The design and implementation component builds on the planning component to include selection and/or development of program content, selection and/or development of program delivery methods and resource materials, and creation of time lines for program implementation and evaluation, including putting a program into operation (Seevers et al, 1997).

The evaluation component includes the planning and implementation of procedures to measure various dimensions of program success and impact (Seevers et al, 1997). Evaluation is defined as “the systematic process of determining the worth of a person, product or program” (Seevers et al, 1997, p. 165).

Recommended Readings

The following are on-line journal articles and websites for your review:

<http://www.joe.org/joe/1998june/rb5.html>
<http://www.joe.org/joe/2005april/rb3.shtml>
<http://www.joe.org/joe/2002december/a1.shtml>
<http://www.joe.org/joe/2003february/a6.shtml>
<http://www.joe.org/joe/2006february/tt2.shtml>
<http://texasvolunteer.tamu.edu/vol-curriculum.htm>
<http://web1.msue.msu.edu/aoe/volunteerism/Volrismpaper.htm>

The following is suggested readings that will enhance your knowledge in Extension history, philosophy and programmatic objectives.

Campbell, J.R. (1995). *Reclaiming a Lost Heritage*. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press.

Rasmussen, W.D. (1989). *Taking the University to the People: seventy-five years of Cooperative Extension*. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press.

Seevers, B., Graham, D., Gamon, J., & Conklin, N., (1997). *Education through Cooperative Extension*. Albany, NY: Delmar.

Glossary of Terms

Adoption- “A decision to make full use of an innovation as the best course of action.” (Rogers, 1995, p. 21).

Annual Plan-Plan of action that puts the educational programs in operation. Involves setting specific objectives in terms of the behavioral change desired, the selection of teaching methods, the scheduling of activities, and the dividing of responsibilities among Extension professionals for each program area.

Clientele-Individuals who Extension serves through the educational process.

Committee- A group of individuals who have the responsibility to perform a function, such as identifying issues, plan programs, assist in marketing programs to clientele, assist in developing educational design strategies, assist in implementing educational programs, assist in evaluating educational programs, and interpreting educational programs.

Diffusion-“The process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. Diffusion is a special type of communication concerned with the spread of messages that are new ideas “ (Rogers, 1995, p.5).

Educational activity- Part of a program that has been planned and conducted to meet specifically stated educational objectives.

Evaluation-The systematic process of determining the worth of a program. Includes the planning and implementation procedures to measure various dimensions of program success and impact.

Extension educational process- The composite of actions where an Extension educator conducts a situational analysis of individual or community needs, establishes specific learner objectives, implements a plan of work and evaluates the outcomes to determine the social, environmental and/or economic (SEE) impact that has occurred.

Futuring-A planning strategy that encourages participants to think about the future; improve understanding of trends and their implications; anticipate consequences of intended or unintended behaviors, decisions, and policies; and enhance vision of a desirable future. Futuring is a technique used for longrange or strategic planning.

Goals-A clearly written statement about the desired direction or outcome of an educational program.

Issues-Matters of wide public concern arising out of complex problems impacting individuals or communities.

Issue Description-Information that provides justification as to why the issue is being addressed. This includes information on the scope and severity of the issue, who the issue affects, and the social, environmental and/or economic (SEE) costs of the issue.

Issues programming-Educational efforts that focus on issues facing individuals in their own context or setting. Issues programming involves identifying the problem or issue, the audience, the method of program implementation, and resources necessary to address the issue.

Land-grant philosophy-Education outreach with emphasis on practical and useful knowledge, linkage to research, the use of hand-on learning approaches, and programming in a nonformal setting.

Needs assessment-The systematic process of analyzing gaps between what learners know and can do, and what they should know and be able to do.

Objectives-Precise statements defining what program participants should be able to do upon completion of the program. Objectives state the intended changes in individuals, groups, or communities as a result of the educational program.

Outcomes- The clientele changes or reactions measured in social, environmental and/or economic (SEE impact) impacts.

Outcome program plan- A series of educational activities, events, and/or experiences that use appropriate methods designed to help targeted audiences to reach a goal (clientele change level). This means that the Extension educator is providing sequential learning opportunities for the same audience over several educational meetings. The result of these educational meetings is outcome or clientele change. The clientele change levels include; Behavior Change/Adoption of best practices or new technology, change in attitudes, development of skills, or increase in knowledge. Evaluation strategies are purposefully developed to measure toward one of these clientele change levels.

Output plan- A series of educational activities, events, and/or experiences that use appropriate methods designed to measure targeted audiences' satisfaction levels and general clientele feedback.

Program (Extension educational program)-A planned sequence of educational experiences guided by specific objectives. Includes activities and events that are planned, conducted and evaluated for their social, environmental and/or economic impact (SEE impact). Usually conducted over a period of time.

Program development-The continuous series of complex, interrelated processes which result in the accomplishments of the educational mission and objectives of the organization (ECOP, 1974). Most Extension program development models identify three main components of the program development process: planning, design and implementation, and evaluation and interpretation. The terms program planning and program development are frequently used interchangeably.

Situational analysis- A description of the community and circumstances surrounding a proposed program that enables the educator to understand the environment for programming more completely. May include social, historical, educational, environmental, economic, political, and personal factors.

Strategic Planning- Is a process of deliberately and methodically addressing missions, goals, emerging needs and opportunities as institutional priorities are established.

Stakeholders- People who have a vested interest in a program.

Target audiences- A group of individuals with specific needs who becomes the focus of Extension teaching.

References

- Boleman, C., Cummings, S. & Pope, P. (2005). *Keys to education that works: Texas Cooperative Extension's program development model*, Texas Cooperative Extension, College Station, Texas. Publication #345.
- Boone, E.J., Safrit, R.D. & Jones, J. (2002). *Developing programs in adult education: A conceptual programming model*. (2nd ed.). Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc.
- Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP), (1977). *National guidelines for staff development*. Durham, NH: University of New Hampshire.
- Prawl, W., Medlin, R. & Gross, J. (1984). *Adult and continuing education through the Cooperative Extension Service*. Extension Division, University of Missouri, Columbia.
- Seevers, B., Graham, D., Gamon, J., & Conklin, N., (1997). *Education through Cooperative Extension*. Albany, NY: Delmar.