

## SARE Sustainable Agriculture Curriculum and Continuing Education Program for Cooperative Extension Faculty and other Ag Professionals

7<sup>th</sup> Conference Call: November 15, 2004

### To do:

- Team members write general outcome statements, and list of benefits for each Major Topic Area: Vern #2, Kim #3, Julie #4, Andy #5. Send to Dave by Nov. 30.
- Dave complete detailed outline for Module 1 and send to design team by Nov. 30.
- Dave draft framework review protocol and meet with Kim and Deb Young discuss and finalize. Present to design team at next conference call.
- Dave, Julie and Brian continue to work on design templates.
- Next conference call is Monday, December 13. 1-2 Pacific (2 p.m. Arizona, 3 p.m. Central, 4 p.m. Eastern).

**Participants:** David Chaney, Kim Kroll, Vern Grubinger, Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant, Andy McGuire, Julie Sexton, Valerie Berton

### Agenda

1. Agenda Review
2. Streamlined Curric. Framework: Decide what general outcome statements should cover for each module. What participants should expect to go away with for their investment of time (2-3 hours). “By the end of the course you will...”
3. Curriculum Framework Review: Regional Focus Groups. Who, When/Where, What... Outcomes for the framework itself, questions to address in the focus groups.
4. Module 1: Next steps.

### Streamlined Curriculum Framework

The simplified form of the framework for each Major topic needs some general outcome statements written for each.

Is the generalized “knows and can explain/communicate” description for the national level course sufficient? Or do we need to be more specific.

Recommendation is to use the “knows/understands and can explain/communicate” idea, but actually develop specific statements for every sub-heading in each topic area. There are three sub-headings in Competency 1, so there would be 3 outcome statements.

A separate issue/discussion is how to advertise and promote the course to agents and other professionals. In this case we can identify potential benefits to them for taking the course... what they might expect to get from the course for their investment of time and energy.

We brainstormed what the potential list of benefits might be for someone participating in Module 1:

- Better qualified to compete for grants
- More able to respond to questions and inquiries from a broader spectrum of people.

- Understanding and awareness of the range of resources related to the topic.
- Improve the effectiveness and relevance of your research and education program.
- Broaden research program to include new areas.
- Learn about farmers and ranchers using innovative production practices.

Dave will write outcome statements and develop the list of benefits further for Major Topic 1. Team members volunteered to do the same thing for the remaining Topics: Vern #2, Kim #3, Julie #4, Andy #5.

### **Curriculum Framework Review**

Dave outlined general review strategy which is to hold regional focus groups of selected state coordinators and other.

Vern expressed some concern that it will be difficult to present to colleagues without a sample of the first course to accompany it. People are going to have a hard time completing the picture without seeing what the national online course will actually look like.

Julie mentioned that the Southern Region course will probably be available to view on the Web by January, and that may be able to serve as an example.

Dave indicated that some sample pages of the first module could actually be developed pretty quickly, knowing that they are just a mock-up and will likely change. But it would give people an idea.

Kim said that a big part of the focus group review will be to look at the CONTENT of the framework, and that activity could go forward apart from any course mock-up. We are identifying in the framework what we think are the ESSENTIAL topics for an agent to be trained and well-versed in sustainable ag. From the focus group participants: Do you agree? Are there other essential topics we haven't included? Are some of the topics we HAVE included non-essential?

Dave identified the general outcome statement for the framework from the original project proposal:

“SARE Regions and state programs have a more clearly defined framework and guide for building in depth professional training without having to spend time on the basics.”

We need to develop some more specific outcomes/benefits based on this. Then from those outcomes, list the questions we want the focus groups to address. Possible outcomes:

- help regions and states make funding decisions about education proposals
- help fulfill legislative mandate to train all new agents
- can direct people to national online course to get basics before participating in more in-depth trainings at state level.

etc...

Dave, Deb Young, and Kim will meet by phone to discuss this further and develop an evaluation protocol that will be presented and finalized at our next conf. call.

Questions may be organized under three headings:

**Content**

Do the topics listed cover everything, or are there some key things missing? Or are there some areas that could be left out?

**Format/Presentation**

Readable? Easy to follow?

**Process**

How will you use the framework? Is distinction-connection between national online course and in-depth regional state trainings clear? Do you see how this can guide development of your state level course and workshops for professionals?

**Module 1: Next Steps**

Dave outlined basic process for beginning work on Module 1 of the online course:

1. Finalize design templates with Julie and Brian.
2. Write detailed course outline. [Dave is working on a draft of this and will complete and send it to the group for review by Nov. 30]
3. Valerie will begin writing the course content based on the detailed outline. As sub-sections are completed, she will send those to the group for detailed review and comments on text, plus suggestions for graphic components and elements, case studies, quizzes, interactive activities, outside links, resources. After incorporating those suggestion, Julie will make conduct her review with Brian and make final suggestions and recommendations.
4. After above step, revised text and all additional information about accompanying page elements goes to Brian for design and creation of Web pages.

Also need to develop pre- and post- tests for Module 1, but that can be discussed at the next conference call. Kim suggests getting assistance from others with expertise in writing test questions.

*Summarized by David Chaney*