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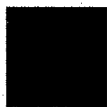
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# Diversity Plan for the Minnesota Extension Service



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**MINNESOTA  
EXTENSION SERVICE  
DIVERSITY PLAN**

Working Definitions Relative to the Plan:

*Diversity*—All diverse groups and protected classes.

*Protected Classes*—Persons that have been or are being discriminated against because of their race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

*Faculty*—All persons with continuous appointment tenure, or term appointment.

*Staff*—All persons (county, area, district) that work for and receive a paycheck from the University of Minnesota Extension Service.



# *Preamble*

**T**HE MINNESOTA EXTENSION SERVICE has long been an established leader in education. As the outreach arm of the University of Minnesota, Extension's role is to be on the cutting edge of educational research, theory, application, and evaluation; developing and applying educational programs that will enrich the lives of all citizens of Minnesota. The purpose of this diversity document is to establish Extension's commitment to inclusion of all protected class individuals—race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, and sexual orientation.

The demographic report “2000” put together by the U.S. Labor department clearly states that by the year “2000” the racial minority and women will be the majority in the U.S. workforce. This will require changes in the workplace.

The Minnesota Extension Service will acknowledge, appreciate, celebrate, understand, and value diversity among faculty, staff, support staff (civil service), county partners, clientele, and cooperating agencies. Diversity shall be welcomed and sustained. In preparation, development and implementation of this document Extension embraces a “**vision of fairness**” that underlies and gives rise to the rich diversity of human experience. To fully achieve this “**vision of fairness**” it is of crucial importance to understand racism, sexism, ethnocentrism, ageism, anti-semitism, homophobia, and class prejudice in ourselves, our discipline, our organization, our university, our community, and our culture.

Everyone in Extension must understand that the “**vision of fairness**” can only be achieved and reach fruition if every individual involved in Extension takes on the full responsibility of making it happen. Then and only then will an environment that sustains and values diversity be woven into the fabric of the Minnesota Extension Service.

## DIVERSITY PLAN

### MINNESOTA EXTENSION SERVICE

#### GOAL

**Maintain and improve the quality of programs in Minnesota Extension Service and promote visibility by increasing diversity in the employment of faculty, staff and the development of programs.**

#### OBJECTIVES

**I. Create an awareness of diverse programs relative to protected classes and models already in existence.**

#### Recommendations:

**A.** A task force (work group) to be appointed to plan and establish an exclusive ongoing training to be required for Minnesota Extension Service staff. This training for all employees, should be in addition to the current training but, in cooperation with the Staff Development Office.

**1.** Encourage periodic review by extension staff of various printed materials for information about any and all aspects of diversity.

**2.** Consider well planned site visits to diverse organizations in both county and cluster areas. Visits should involve extension educators from all specializations in that county or cluster plus state staff member(s) working with the cluster or county.

**B.** The training for program facilitators, volunteer persons, etc. should involve some of the Minnesota Extension Service staff that have been trained (core teams) prior to this level of training.

- C.** A variety of training models be made available to use with the various protected classes in the state.
- 1.** Provide diversity sensitive educational programs.
  - 2.** Encourage Minnesota Extension Service faculty to be proactive in providing programming that bridges diversity barriers and eases or prevents tensions.
  - 3.** Ask program development committees to plan training on working with very limited income and diverse audiences.
  - 4.** Encourage Youth at Risk design team to incorporate models that work with diverse audiences.
- D.** Take steps to increase awareness of diversity opportunities for employees of Minnesota Extension Service. eg. add to the EXTEND-U network a ECN Bulletin Board—Ethnic, Cultural Network.
- E.** Establish a depository, referral and dissemination plan (Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action office or other office designation) for programs, training, etc. and materials to support Minnesota Extension Service activities in promoting diversity. This would include the new public school education and gender fairness documents.
- F.** Compile or identify the source(s) for a directory of minority references, agencies, programs, and resources in Minnesota. Request county faculty to participate in the development.
- G.** Encourage the collection of extensive information and practical research of diversity relative to protected classes such as but not limited to demographic data.

(continued next page)

**II. Establish exchange programs and selective linkages within Minnesota Extension Service to increase the awareness and understanding of diversity.**

**Recommendations:**

- A.** Establish an exchange program within Minnesota Extension Service for the staff that facilitate the urban, rural, inner-city, suburban diversity.
- B.** Select appropriate exchanges within Minnesota to enhance the understanding of the Minnesota Extension Service and what linkages are priority.
- C.** Develop a marketing brochure that describes the Minnesota Extension Service in terms that are inviting for persons who would like to link with Minnesota Extension Service and explains how this can be accomplished.
- D.** Establish a model for staff to set goals that include linkages and seek opportunities to serve on diverse advisory boards, groups and joint forums, seminars, exchanges, etc.
- E.** Establish a forum that invites each protected class as defined in the human rights act to meet with Minnesota Extension Service personnel and share needs and resources.

**III. Establish a plan to recruit, orient, support and retain people of all cultures.**

**Recommendations:**

- A.** Use current vacant positions to *assertively* recruit minority staff members.
- B.** Establish a competitive internship program that allows county faculty and state faculty to work with minority faculty from other states.

- C.** Involve the faculty (staff as appropriate) in minority recruiting by supporting experiences that will bring Minnesota Extension Service staff in contact with minority staff at other institutions.
- D.** Work with staff in all units of the institute and others to identify appropriate graduate and undergraduate classes that would lead to better understanding of diverse issues they face.
- E.** Encourage staff to propose short-term leaves that will enhance their ability to help others be aware and understand diversity in Minnesota and the United States.
- F.** Actively work to diversify Minnesota Extension Service staff at state and county level. Develop ways to overcome the barrier of the Master's Degree requirement by 1995. Consider some entry level options.
- G.** Actively recruit persons of color from other agencies. Work to develop more diverse candidate pools.
- H.** Develop strategies for success and retention of diversity.



## DIVERSITY TASK FORCE

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*Special Acknowledgment  
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