

## **Evaluating Extension Excellence**

### Academic Rank Coaching Questions for Extension Educators

Excellence in Extension is a goal of all faculty and staff within Nebraska Extension. But what does excellence in Extension mean in practice? How do we know it when we see it? How will we demonstrate excellence to every person, in every interaction?

Just as there are many ways we develop and deliver quality Extension programming to meet the needs of our stakeholders, there are many ways we can excel in Nebraska Extension. We each have different strengths and skills that we bring to bear on our Extension and engagement efforts. The variety of programs in which we work, the issues we address, and the audiences with whom we engage are also diverse. Consequently, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to assessing excellence in Extension. Therefore, any attempt to assess excellence, whether by the educator themselves, or their supervisor or promotion committee, must be flexible enough to incorporate the diversity that is Nebraska Extension.

The following questions were created to guide Extension educators, supervisors, and promotion committee members as they assess Extension excellence in a clear, transparent, and consistent manner. The purpose of these questions is to guide reflection and discussion. They will help Extension educators reflect on the relative excellence of past efforts and consider how future efforts will incorporate excellence in Extension key practices. They give promotion committee members a good grasp of expectations for each educator rank. Finally, these questions can help supervisors guide discussions that affirm what professionals are doing right and coach in areas of potential growth.

There are guiding questions for each Extension educator rank in every excellence in Extension key practice. While excellence in Extension applies to all Extension faculty and staff (see Extension employee resources website,) these questions were specifically designed to help lead Extension educators to achieve excellence, at each stage of their career. Questions for beginning ranks also apply to subsequent ranks.

#### **Professionalism**

##### Assistant Educator

- What are your professional development goals? How do they help you attain knowledge and skills that will benefit you in your role?
- How are you building your professional network and getting to know your community and accountability region? How do you plan to grow your programming reach?
- Describe ways you are contributing to your local office team and supporting the building of that team?
- How are you developing your skills in managing your priorities and time as a member of Nebraska Extension?

##### Associate Educator

- How is your network continuing to grow? Who is new to your network and how are they important to your work?

- How are you managing your priorities and time as a member of Nebraska Extension?
- What are you doing that is innovative and/or new programming?

#### Full Educator

- How are you helping newer professionals be successful and/or providing leadership in the organization and system?
- What are you known for? How will you grow and continue to be the go-to in this area?
- How are you managing your priorities and time as a member of Nebraska Extension?

### **Engagement**

#### Assistant Educator

- How are you working with stakeholders and advisory groups to assess programming and product needs?
- What partnerships have you developed that you are excited about?
- How are you engaging with focus area teams to contribute to statewide efforts?
- What value have you found as you build relationships with your colleagues? Have you engaged a mentor or sought out a specialist?
- How have you been involved in University-wide community engagement?

#### Associate Educator

- What have you learned from your relationships with stakeholders and advisory groups that is driving your current body of work?
- Who are your most valuable partners and how does your collaboration bring value to Nebraskans?
- How are you leading progress in your focus area teams?
- Are you working with or partnering with other Extension faculty and staff in your area?

#### Full Educator

- How are you keeping your engagement with stakeholders and advisory groups fresh and relevant?
- How are you leading the next generation of Extension faculty to build valuable programs and products?

### **Exceptional Teaching & Learning**

#### Assistant Educator

- Describe your target audiences.
- How have you matched your delivery strategy to your program objectives?
- How are your programs aligned with UNL, IANR, and Extension priorities and with local needs?
- How has the input or feedback you have received from past programs changed your current educational offerings?
- What professional development have you sought out to improve your teaching and learning?

#### Associate Educator

- What have you learned from times when your programs missed the mark?

- How are your learning objectives and experiences scaffolded to reach a continuum of learners?

#### Full Educator

- What actions have you taken recently to increase the depth and/or breadth of your programming?

### **Innovation**

#### Assistant Educator

- Tell me about the local demographics of your area.
- What/which local partners have you developed relationships with?
- What skills do you need to bolster to be innovative in your programming efforts?
- Which other educators on your team or in your area have you connected with?

#### Associate Educator

- What types of information about any partnership opportunities have you shared with other Educators or Assistants?
- Describe how you develop your professional development goals around innovative projects.
- Describe where your programming has been innovative.

#### Full Educator

- How have you pivoted your programming to adapt to the changing times or changes in clientele needs?
- What is your involvement with University service related to innovation? How are you helping others be innovative?

### **Relevance**

#### Assistant Educator

- How do you stay relevant to the needs of learners? How do you leverage your team to stay relevant?
- Share adaptive tools and approaches you use to meet the needs of learners. How do you assess that these tools/approaches are working?

#### Associate Educator

- What changes are you seeing or what do you anticipate will change?
- How will you prepare for these changes?
- How will your program adapt to these anticipated changes?

#### Full Educator

- Provide evidence of relevant programming that has made transformative impact to the learner, community, and is known statewide and regionally.
- How are you collaborating with other faculty within and outside of your programming area to bring value to Nebraskans?

### **Meaningful**

#### Assistant Educator

- How do you anticipate clientele needs for content?

- In what ways have you involved clientele in identifying local emerging issues?
- How does the information you put out support improved clientele decision-making?

Associate Educator

- Describe how your major program area meets the demands of "just-in-time" learners.
- How has your program moved learners from just gaining knowledge to changing their behavior?

Full Educator

- How have you been a change agent in your community? In your focus group team?

## **Impactful**

Assistant Educator:

- How are you assessing the needs of your accountability region?
- What tools are you using to assess the impact results of your programming?
- How are you reporting and communicating the value of utilizing your programming?

Associate Educator:

- How are you contributing to the collaborative efforts of your focus area team?
- How are you assessing knowledge, behavior, practice change, and impact of programming?
- What assessment tools have you used or helped develop to measure impact?
- How are you communicating the impact and value of programming to stakeholders and industry leaders?

Full Educator:

- What leadership are you taking to build team collaboration, assess impact and identify long term value of programming?
- How are you communicating long term impacts to stakeholders, clientele, industry leaders and professional organizations?
- How are you measuring long term behavior and practice-change impacts on public value?

## **Research and Discovery**

Assistant Educator

- How do you remain current on research within your focus area?
- How do you identify if information is research-based?
- What are some examples of how you have used current/latest research findings in the information/education you provide?
- How have you established effective working relationships with relevant specialists and industry professionals?

Associate Educator

- How have you connected with clientele to identify areas needing further research? How have you communicated those research needs with specialists and other researchers?
- How have you collaborated with specialists on research projects?

Full Educator

- What opportunities have you had to present findings from research that you have been involved in?
- When were you recently listed in a grant, or other funding, proposal to help deliver the outreach component?

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