



EXTENSION

Providing Learning Opportunities for Extension Educators, Youth, Volunteers and Others

Professional Development for Extension Educators

Professional development is an integral part of helping employees stay informed of new research, curriculum, policies/procedures, and resources to help them better address the needs in their community. Professional development is provided for Extension employees year-round. No minimum or maximum number of hours are required, except for new employees to complete onboarding. Employees select what we refer to as “in-service” training that supports areas of interest for expanding or gaining knowledge and skills to stay abreast of current research, resources and tools to serve their community or grow personally. Trainings may be one-day, multi-day or offered virtually, for example, as a monthly webinar updates on topics such as horticulture, nutrition, and IT. Employees are expected to participate in in-service sessions in which they enroll for an in-service (but sometimes situations come up that require them to withdraw or miss).

In-service proposals are solicited in the Fall for the coming year from Extension specialists, administrators, and experienced educators. The Program and Personnel Development Specialist also plans and schedules training for onboarding, mentoring, interns, and other trainings throughout the year. The goal is to have the in-service system populated with most of the in-services by the beginning of the year; however, many are added throughout the year when emerging issues are identified, requests are made, dates/locations are finalized, or new specialists are hired and have content they can deliver.

Another opportunity to share professional development with Extension employees is the Biennial Conference held in even years. This event is typically held in January, preferably before classes begin for the Spring semester. The planning committee publishes a call for proposals in fall before the conference and selects approximately 30 sessions to fill 60- and 90-minute sessions. This offers a great opportunity to share with Extension and learn more about how Extension might interface with your programs/projects.

Learning Opportunities for Youth and Volunteers

Youth audiences and volunteers are accessible through the 4-H Youth Development Program in OSU Extension. 4-H clubs across the state are led by volunteers. Educators provide training for volunteers throughout the year. District and state training opportunities for educators and volunteers are also provided by 4-H specialists.

The State 4-H Parent Volunteer Conference is held annually in June at OSU. This offers an opportunity to share activities, lessons, curriculum, camp opportunities, and more with the network of volunteers across the state. The 4-H Volunteer Specialist, Karla Knoepfli (karla.knoepfli@okstate.edu), works with the State Volunteer Board to plan and conduct the State 4-H Parent Volunteer Conference. She also coordinates quarterly webinar trainings for educators and volunteers.

4-H Program Specialists who coordinate training at the District level include:

- Leslie Lewis, Northeast District (Leslie.lewis@okstate.edu)
- Sara Randolph, Southeast District (sara.randolph@okstate.edu)
- Kendra Alcala, West District (kendra.fringer@okstate.edu)

In addition to these 4-H faculty, other specialists within OSU Agriculture provide training and support in STEM, Healthy Living, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Safety, Leadership, and Civic Engagement.

4-H welcomes new resources to support the many 4-H projects and assistance in updating and modernizing curriculum. Ideas for partnering with a 4-H specialist to work on resources for which training could be offered are welcomed.

Oklahoma 4-H Roundup is held annually in July at OSU. This event brings approximately 650 youth (13-18 years old), volunteers, and educators to campus for educational and competitive events. A call for workshops is sent out in the Winter to fill approximately 70 workshop slots, some 1 hour and some 2 hours. Workshop sessions have included tours of departments or facilities on campus and hands-on learning in labs or classrooms. Kelly Wardlaw, STEM Specialist, (Kelly.wardlaw@okstate.edu) is the coordinator for Roundup workshops. If you or others in your department/college would like to be added to the contact list for Roundup workshops, please email Kelly.

4-H specialists provide retreats targeting teen leaders to equip them to deliver programming on a particular topic. An example is the 4-H Innovate Summit. County teams of youth and adults participate in STEM education, learn how to lead activities effectively, and develop a plan to deliver programming. In 2023, this event trained 100 teens from 21 counties who delivered 150 workshops, reaching more than 6,000 youth through STEM programming. Events like this would be an excellent way to partner with the 4-H program to reach youth who can help deliver content across the state.

Procedures for Offering Professional Development for Extension Employees

Faculty and staff from other departments/colleges outside OSU Agriculture may work with the Extension Program and Personnel Development Specialist to offer professional development opportunities for Extension employees. The internal system where in-

services are posted is only accessible to Extension employees. Though registration using Microsoft Forms, Zoom, or other systems may be used, it is recommended that

they be listed in the Extension in-service system so that attendance can be recorded. Extension employees include a list of completed in-services with their annual performance appraisal. The in-service site assists them in generating this report.

Recommended steps to planning and offering professional development for Extension employees are:

- Contact Cheryl Newberry, Program and Personnel Development Specialist, to discuss potential training, target audience, and other details for the event. She can provide guidance in planning to help reach the target audience. (cheryl.newberry@okstate.edu or 405-744-7969)
- The in-service coordinator is responsible for securing the location, covering costs, if any, and planning other details to host an event. If a registration fee is required to cover meals/breaks, facility costs, etc., that will also need to be handled through your department. If the coordinator needs help in identifying locations for training out in the state, recommendations can be provided from the Program and Personnel Development Specialists and/or District Directors.
- Once a date and location is secured and other details are mapped out, provide Cheryl Newberry the information noted below so that an in-service listing can be added to the in-service enrollment site.
 - Title of event
 - Description of event
 - Date, start time and end time
 - Program area and issue team(s) for which the in-service is targeting. If not specific to program area, it will be listed as general professional development. (*Figure 1*)
 - Location of event – provide specific address. If virtual, provide link to register or join via webinar.
 - Whom do you expect the educators to reach as a result of participating in this training? (parents, volunteers, producers, etc.)
 - Who are the in-service instructors?
 - List up to 3 objectives of the training.
 - What core competencies does this training address? (*Figure 2*)
 - Who is your target audience?
 - Method of delivery – in-person, virtual, hybrid, or field day/tour.
 - Enrollment deadline – allow time for making accommodations for meals/break refreshments if needed, preparing materials, etc.
 - Registration fee, if applicable, and what do fees cover?
 - Are travel funds available?

 - What is the appropriate dress? (casual, business casual, professional business)
 - What is the minimum and maximum registration? Sometimes a minimum is set and used as a basis for whether to hold the training. If 10 is the

minimum and only 5 register, there may not be enough interest. Maximum registration may be set if space is limited or the training is best delivered to a smaller group.

- Develop marketing information to promote the professional development opportunity to a target audience. The Program and Personnel Development Specialist can share information to targeted groups using Extension listservs. Typical methods include an email invitation to the target audience and perhaps a marketing flyer that can be attached.
- Take roll at the in-service and provide a list of participants to Cheryl Newberry. Submit the attendance list following the event and attendance will be recorded in the in-service system.

Providing Learning Opportunities for Others in a County

County educators appreciate knowing if someone with an OSU affiliation is planning an event in their county. You can find contact information for the [county Extension office](#) on the Extension [website](#). They may be able to assist in connecting you with potential partners or point out useful marketing channels. In rural counties especially, local stakeholders expect that Extension personnel will know about OSU-led initiatives in that county.

Figure 1. Program Area and Issue Teams

Indicate the Program Area(s) associated with this In-Service (*):

4-H ANR FCS CRD DASNR

Indicate the Issue Team(s) associated with this In-Service (*):

Choose at least one team for each Program Area associated with the Inservice. *Do not* choose teams from other areas.

4-H Teams	ANR Teams	FCS Teams	CRD Teams	DASNR Teams
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Crops	<input type="checkbox"/> Finances Jobs	<input type="checkbox"/> Community	<input type="checkbox"/> IT
<input type="checkbox"/> Civic Engagement & Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Resilience	<input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Horticulture	<input type="checkbox"/> Health Hunger	<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Development	
<input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Living & Consumer Science & Safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Livestock	<input type="checkbox"/> Environment Safety		
<input type="checkbox"/> STEM	<input type="checkbox"/> AgBusiness			

Figure 2. Core competencies

Choose the Core Competencies for this Inservice(*):

[More information on Core Competencies](#)

Interpersonal Competencies	Personal Competencies	Extension Competencies
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication and Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/> Adaptability	<input type="checkbox"/> Extension Organization/Administration and Resource Management
<input type="checkbox"/> External Relationships and Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/> Life Long Learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Program Planning and Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Customer Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiative	<input type="checkbox"/> Teaching and Learning
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/> Application of Subject Matter Expertise
<input type="checkbox"/> Diversity and Inclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Professionalism	<input type="checkbox"/> Program Evaluation and Accountability
<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Teamwork	<input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology Integration