

Ohio State University Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Program Review

**Final Report from the
External Review Committee**

November 2020



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

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Preface

Purpose

The purpose of a program review is to guide program development on a continual basis. A program review is a process that evaluates the status, effectiveness, and progress of programs and helps identify future direction and priorities. Program reviews are a standard practice in youth development programs (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016) and higher education (Halonen & Dunn, 2017). The Ohio State University Extension Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Program Review is a voluntary practice for self-study and external review.

External Review Committee Process

An external review committee, comprised of four leaders from statewide Extension family and consumer sciences programs, accepted the invitation to participate in the review process. They convened via webinar, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in September 2020, after reviewing documents on the state of family and consumer sciences in Ohio, an internal self-study, and crowdsourcing Insights. They met with more than 50 people in several different groups to further inform them about the Ohio State University Extension Family and Consumer Sciences program.

The Review Included Five Elements [\(link\)](#)

- *The State of Family and Consumer Sciences in Ohio* [\(link\)](#)
- *Ohio State University Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Internal Self-Study* [\(link\)](#)
- *Ohio State University Extension Crowdsourcing Insight Summary: Family and Consumer Sciences* [\(link\)](#)
- External committee visits and final report
- Key stakeholder communication throughout the process

Context

Ohio State University Extension embarked upon a multi-year effort to build the Extension organization of the future. That journey began with the [Vice President's Conversation on the Future of Extension](#). The overall goal of that effort was to ensure that OSU Extension remains relevant and responsive to the needs of Ohioans well into the future.

Data gathered through the *Vice President's Conversation* was used as a foundation for a [designEXT effort to put ideas into action](#). One of the designEXT steps included partnering with individuals and communities to co-create multi-faceted solutions for current and emerging issues.

The *OSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Program Review* is part of a series of OSU Extension program reviews.

Our land-grant mission –

OSU Extension delivers knowledge from Ohio State to every county in Ohio, and we work WITH people right where they live to strengthen their own lives and communities.

(excerpt from OSU Extension Interim Director update, Jackie Kirby Wilkins – August 2019)

Contact

This Ohio State University Extension program review was conducted on behalf of Dr. Jackie Wilkins, director of OSU Extension and associate dean, College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences. The review was led by Dr. Greg Davis, with support from Terri Fisher.

<https://extension.osu.edu/strategic-initiatives/>

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External Reviewers

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Jennifer McCaffery, assistant dean, Family and Consumer Sciences, University of Illinois

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Cindy Fitch, associate dean for Research, West Virginia University

For the purpose of this report, the Ohio State University Extension [Family and Consumer Sciences](#) program may be referred to as simply as FCS.

Summary of Recommendations

Programs 7

- a. Extension administration should clarify expectations of faculty with partial appointments in another tenure-initiating unit for Extension programming and engagement with county educators, and should communicate those expectations across all of FCS.
- b. Provide clear policies and processes for statewide and local program development, including any required approval processes.
- c. Examine program marketing materials and methods for diversity and inclusion to better reach underserved audiences.
- d. Encourage county educators from all four program areas to work across program lines to support and promote all OSU Extension programs.

Structure 8

- a. Establish a structure to provide a unified direction, expectations, and procedures that the subsequent collaborators can use to align goals and expectations. Provide structure and procedures for how to work with other colleges. Create systems for how to collaborate with Extension in terms of funding, documentation of outcomes, and expectations of involvement from field staff.
- b. Establish a system between state program and county program to establish unified goals and benchmarks for programming.
- c. Communicate the role expectations for faculty specialists and field staff to foster understanding and alignment toward programming goals.

Cohesion and Connection 9

- a. Develop a clear vision and communicate it broadly.
- b. Map out focus and expertise so faculty can identify.
- c. Facilitate a speed-dating scenario where specialists can share their focus areas and educators can learn more about each other. This is mainly to serve as a mechanism to break the ice and begin establishing or strengthening relationships.
- d. Make an effort to branch out to other campus departments who may be a good fit to facilitate projects for the work being done. This may require some seed funding for pilots.

Identity, Internal and External Visibility 11

- a. Extension leadership – the committee recommends that Extension administrators familiarize themselves with FCS programs and partnerships by reaching across academic units to the College of Education and Human Ecology; and when circumstances allow, by traveling to counties to meet with county educators and observe programs.
- b. FCS leadership – the committee recommends that FCS leadership (FCS director, program directors, and program specialists) should be intentional about ways to integrate community nutrition education with other FCS programming to address human health in a holistic manner.

Leadership 12

- a. Build a leadership team that can balance the demand between campus, field, and external stakeholder needs to encompass the broad nature of FCS. Leadership should ensure consistency between these aspects of Extension programming.
- b. Establish priorities and provide direction for how those priorities should be executed across FCS; include direction for what is not an FCS priority and how those areas will be sunset.

- c. Establish a unified communication mechanism across the FCS team that fosters transparency and unifies all aspects of the program.
- d. Unify leadership at the top to continue to engage the local area, yet provide support and direction that follows strategy and creates consistency.
- e. Establish accountability measures for FCS educators that provide benchmarks for programming that meets statewide goals.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)..... 13

- a. What matters is named and measured. There is a lack of naming diversity, equity and inclusion as a priority in foundational [documents/statements](#) for both FCS and Extension as a whole. It is essential to review these documents and prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion in hiring practices, programmatic efforts and staff training. Potential prioritization statement(s) and goals could include prioritizing reach to diverse communities or changing the makeup of the staff to be more diverse. Without goals in this arena at the college level, it is not surprising that the general FCS program and FCS staffing do not reflect parity.
- b. Embrace and lean on the strength of EFNEP's history and purpose. EFNEP's national goal is to reach the poorest of the poor in a state. Honor that history and name it proudly as an important FCS program leading the way for both FCS and Extension. EFNEP did reach parity for educational reach, build on its example.
- c. While this review was not a civil rights compliance review, including the findings and goals of the most recent [review](#) would provide context and continuity of prioritization in the arena of programmatic reach and staffing.
- d. Review civil rights compliance review data and recommendations to ensure that data in the report is known and informs the future FCS diversity, equity, and inclusion plans in training, staffing, and program planning.
- e. Develop a diversity, equity, and inclusion plan that encompasses: local diversity statistics (not statewide averages) for parity staffing, position descriptions that are written to encourage people of color to apply, promotion and advertising of positions so people of color see the position openings, onboarding practices, training for all staff to understand what it is to be an anti-racist workplace and organization – including micro-aggression training for all staff throughout Extension, and training on how to retain people of color on staff.
- f. Prioritize in-service training with DEI topics – none were listed in inservice topics provided.
- g. Work in diversity, equity, and inclusion must occur throughout the entire organization. FCS staff work beside youth development, agriculture and natural resources, and community development colleagues; and ALL must be on a journey of understanding how to be a welcoming place of work for people of color.
- h. Build upon some of the Ohio State resources for Extension work such as a “Land Acknowledgement” [statement](#). Acknowledgement of the history of how the land, for land-grant universities, was acquired provides humility in our diversity, equity, and inclusion work – especially in a state where there are not sovereign American Indian lands.

I. Executive Summary

Introduction

To help guide Ohio State University Extension as a learning organization, the external review committee for the 2019-2020 OSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Program Review reported their observations and recommendations for program development on a continual basis. The observations are based on visiting with more than 50 people from seven different groups, as well as reviewing three documents and related resources.

The following interwoven themes surfaced across groups and documents: programs, structure, cohesion and connection, identity, leadership, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. Based on these themes, the external review committee made recommendations which are not intended to be critical, but are intended to highlight key issues, build upon strengths, and help the program move forward. Strategic recommendations include the following:

- Clarify expectations for state specialists in other tenure-granting units and broadly communicate policies and procedures for program development and delivery.
- Establish a structure that provides a unified direction, expectations, and procedures for how colleges collaborate with Extension in terms of funding, documentation of outcomes, and expectation of involvement from field staff.
- Develop a clear vision for FCS and map out the focus and faculty expertise to meet that vision.
- Ensure that Extension leadership within CFAES knows and embraces the broader mission of FCS that includes nutrition as an integral part of FCS programming.
- Support the leadership team members in their efforts to balance the needs of on-campus faculty and field faculty and staff.
- Develop a diversity, equity, and inclusion plan that encompasses local diversity statistics (not statewide averages) for parity staffing, position descriptions that encourage people of color to apply, promotion and advertising of positions to underserved and marginalized populations, and onboarding practices and training that promote an equitable and inclusive workplace.

Conclusion

The need for comprehensive family and consumer sciences education across all ages and stages of life has never been greater. OSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences is well-positioned to provide evidence-based, educational programs to address critical issues that impact individuals, families, and communities. FCS is highly regarded and valued by internal and external partners and has the potential to leverage resources to support or expand specific programs. The committee heard some perceived disconnect between county educators and on-campus faculty that should be addressed to enhance program impact and effectiveness. Program leadership, faculty, and county educators expressed their embrace of and commitment to the mission of OSU Extension and the Family and Consumer Sciences program.

For more about family and consumer sciences in OSU Extension, visit <https://fcs.osu.edu/>.

II. Observations and Recommendations

Each theme includes 1) brief background statement, 2) summary of observations, 3) recommendation(s), and 4) resources related to current and best practices. The external review committee recognized the value of a strategic approach to change that accounts for the links between themes, the complexity of a family and consumer sciences program rooted in the land-grant university, and the dynamic reality of changes within OSU Extension at the time of the review.

A. Programs

1. Background

Family and consumer sciences as a discipline is broad with many diverse topic areas that relate to human health and quality of life across the lifespan. OSU Extension FCS has identified three broad areas of health under which to categorize its programs: healthy people, healthy relationships, and healthy finances. These areas were referred to frequently in conversations with the review committee and provide a structure for FCS programs. *The State of Family and Consumer Sciences in Ohio* notes that the theoretical framework underlying FCS Extension is the Human Ecological Systems Theory that recognizes individuals develop within the contexts of family, communities, and society, and their developmental outcomes are influenced through interactions within these contexts.

2. Summary of Observations

The following strengths, opportunities, and questions emerged from the review of documents and stakeholder interviews in relation to FCS programs.

Strengths include:

- FCS programming is built on a solid theoretical framework.
- FCS programming has three recognizable foci – healthy people, healthy relationships, and healthy finances.
- FCS has several strong internal and external partnerships built around mutual program priorities.
- The crowd-sourcing survey indicated strong organizational support for programs to address food, nutrition, and financial literacy.
- OSU Extension has a presence in every county and is seen as a reliable source of information.
- Great Extension programs are shared across a community by word of mouth.
- State priority programs have uniform training, delivery, and evaluation to show statewide impact.
- Working from home because of the pandemic increased the use of virtual programs and increased opportunities to have experts from outside of a county deliver an educational program and to reach people from across the state.
- Administrative support exists for evaluation, design/marketing, and online instruction.
- County educators work together to update and create educational programs.

Opportunities include:

- Faculty with partial Extension appointments could work more closely with county educators to design and implement research-informed programs to address state needs and get feedback about societal needs, program implementation, and impacts from county educators.
- Internal partners noted that FCS has an opportunity to connect undergraduate students with Extension programs in counties.
- FCS has opportunities to partner with faculty from other Ohio State schools and colleges, and state agencies, on grants and collaborative agreements to support new programs.
- External partners noted a need for programs that empower youth, particularly those from low-resource communities, to manage their finances, recruit into higher education, and recruit into healthcare fields.
- The committee heard from county educators at all levels of experience that they would welcome more structure and programmatic leadership from administration and specialists at the state level.

Questions and areas that require leadership clarification include:

- Does the university reward and recognize applied research, program development, and evaluation equally to basic research?
- How are Extension leaders without a background in FCS educating themselves about the breadth of FCS disciplines and program opportunities other than food science and nutrition?
- How can you help county educators find balance between responding to the needs of their counties and participating in statewide priority programs?

3. Recommendations

- a. Extension administration should clarify expectations of faculty with partial appointments, in another tenure-initiating unit, for Extension programming and engagement with county educators and then communicate those expectations across all of FCS.
- b. Provide clear policies and processes for statewide and local program development including any required approval processes.
- c. Examine program marketing materials and methods for diversity and inclusion to better reach underserved audiences.
- d. Encourage county educators from all four program areas to work across program lines to support and promote all OSU Extension programs.

B. Structure**1. Background**

Extension at The Ohio State University is administratively located in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES). Due to the broad nature of FCS Extension, faculty specialist and programming collaboration stem from other colleges. FCS educators (field staff) are located in counties, are hired upon determination of local needs, and operate under FCS generalist terms unless they are part of the SNAP-Ed or

EFNEP program. The community nutrition staff receive direction from campus and are located in counties based on target audience eligibility.

2. Summary of Observations

Strengths include:

- Representation across the university pertaining to the focus areas of FCS.
- Dedicated faculty who are invested in FCS programming.
- New supporting administrative positions for marketing, programming, etc.
- Well-structured community nutrition programs.
- Growth in the number of field staff in the past few years providing representation across the state.

Opportunities include:

- Streamline leadership direction within Extension and CFAES.
- Alignment across colleges.
- County-based structure that fosters consistency.
- Expectations at the local level for hiring an FCS educator (priorities, qualifications, onboarding).
- Alignment and a structure that provides equality between community nutrition programs and core FCS.

Questions and areas that require leadership clarification include:

- Future of faculty specialists and how they are funded.
- How local Extension leadership works with state administration to establish programming priorities.
- How interdisciplinary programming is led and prioritized from both a state and county perspective.

3. Recommendations

- a. Establish a structure to provide a unified direction, expectations, and procedures with which the subsequent collaborators can align goals and expectations. Provide structure and procedures for how to work with other colleges. Create systems for how to collaborate with Extension in terms of funding, documentation of outcomes, and expectation of involvement from field staff.
- b. Establish a system between state program and county programs to establish unified goals and benchmarks for programming.
- c. Communicate role expectations for faculty specialists and field staff to foster understanding and alignment toward programming goals.

C. Cohesion and Connection

1. Background

Looking into the future, the OSU Extension FCS program should consider actively connecting and aligning stakeholders on campus and around the state toward a strategic direction. There is evidence of a strong base of core support for FCS educators and buy-in for “the three healthies,” but more is needed.

2. Summary of Observations

Strengths include:

- There is a strong group of state-based faculty and county educators who represent diverse backgrounds, with significant experience, and who do collaborate. The county educators support each other in their programming when one has more subject expertise than the other.
- FCS educators value when they can connect with a team, and especially with the state faculty. State faculty whom we spoke with also place a lot of value on the collaborations.
- There is evidence of highly cohesive projects when involving state and county collaborations that include statewide training, delivery, and evaluation. There are strong models of cohesive programming to be shared across the FCS program.
- Ohio State is a large land-grant university with numerous departments focusing on issues that parallel Extension's issues from health sciences to others. There have been strong examples of these collaborations with faculty studying brain injury who wanted patients to learn about the DASH diet. This type of precision Extension project greatly enhances collaboration potential.
- The Snap-Ed program is well-connected to programs in and out of the college.
- Several external partners see strong value in the role Extension can play in addressing their areas of concern (e.g. financial literacy) along with academic departments on campus.
- There is a team in place to assist with evaluation, design, and marketing. This can greatly assist in having regular communication with the FCS program and stakeholders.

Opportunities include:

- FCS educators would value a clear vision. This is an opportunity to bring state specialists and county educators together along with stakeholder input to further shape and disseminate it. This may also help those who are doing so much to be able to find some focus.
- Ohio is a large state with a mix of new and more established educators. It would be helpful to map out the expertise and programming focus of these faculty as well as that of state specialists. This can help identify potential collaborators.
- By leveraging the land-grant university idea, there is a good opportunity to strategically engage departments around campus who are interested in family-oriented community participatory work to further strengthen the role and visibility of FCS. It would also increase research support for Extension programs.
- There is a good opportunity to strategically engage state agencies in Ohio, from the Ohio Treasurer to others who are interested in family well-being. It would also be helpful to leverage existing relationships (e.g. Ohio Department of Health) to have higher-level conversations about possible collaborations.
- Conduct regular communication opportunities (e.g. monthly webinar) that facilitate communication among state specialists and county educators.

Questions and areas that require leadership clarification include:

- What relationships are best poised to increase the visibility and impact of FCS programs? Will those partners work toward this?
- With changing needs for state faculty, is there an additional model of a position to help directly with implementation, and is this the role of program specialists?

3. Recommendations

- a. Develop a clear vision and communicate it broadly.
- b. Map out focus and expertise so faculty can identify.
- c. Facilitate a speed-dating scenario where specialists can share their focus areas and educators can learn more about each other. This is mainly to serve as a mechanism to break the ice and begin establishing or strengthening relationships.
- d. Make an effort to branch out to other campus departments who may be a good fit to facilitate projects for the work being done. This may require some seed funding for pilots.

D. Identity, Internal and External Visibility

1. Background

The OSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences program encompasses food science and nutrition, health management and wellness, human/child development, family relations, and personal family finance. These focus areas are categorized into three areas of emphasis: healthy people, healthy relationships, and healthy finances. These areas of emphasis, frequently referred to as “the three healthies,” were used to forge a common identity for FCS; and this came through in the internal self-study and the crowd-sourcing insight summary. In the interview sessions, the committee heard concerns from faculty and staff about their identity as FCS being subsumed by community nutrition education.

2. Summary of Observations

The following strengths, opportunities, and questions emerged from the review of documents and stakeholder interviews in relation to identity and visibility.

Strengths include:

- FCS enjoys a strong reputation among internal and external stakeholders.
- Staff are responsive to requests and an unbiased source of information.
- Programs are relevant to issues that impact the people of Ohio.
- FCS staff extend the reach of the university as an agency into the community.
- The director (interim at the time of this review) of Extension has a background in FCS and is supportive of the program.

Opportunities include:

- Create a unified FCS program that can impact physical, emotional, and financial health for Ohio individuals, families, and communities.
- Work across colleges to increase FCS visibility within the university.

- Provide branding and marketing from Extension administration to increase visibility across the state.
- Extension administrators should learn more about FCS programs outside of the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES).

Questions and areas that require leadership clarification include:

- What barriers prevent identity clarification and marketing of FCS programs?
- How can community nutrition education (EFNEP and SNAP-Ed) be fully integrated into FCS to address health holistically?

3. Recommendations

- a. Extension leadership – the committee recommends that Extension administrators familiarize themselves with FCS programs and partnerships by reaching across academic units to the College of Education and Human Ecology, and when circumstances allow, by traveling to counties to meet with county educators and observe programs.
- b. FCS leadership – the committee recommends that FCS leadership (FCS director, program directors, and program specialists) be intentional about ways to integrate community nutrition education with other FCS programming to address human health in a holistic manner.

E. Leadership

1. Background

FCS Extension at The Ohio State University has recently had a leadership change in the past few years. There have been leadership changes at the Extension director level as well as within the FCS program leader position. In both cases, an internal person was appointed to the new role. This transition has brought about change and currently the following strengths and opportunities.

2. Summary of Observations

Strengths include:

- Leadership has identified “the three healthies” program areas and has been working to provide vision under these three core areas within FCS.
- FCS leadership has identified and created partnerships across campus that support new areas of growth within the FCS discipline (pharmacy, public health, mental health, etc.).
- New supporting positions for marketing, programming, etc. were created.
- Clear leadership and direction for community nutrition programs is underway.
- Innovation and grassroots leadership from the local level has created a system of strong identity within specific local areas and within sub-sections of the team. This has spurred strong programming and innovation from a grassroots level that could be a place to build from.

Opportunities include:

- Empower leadership within FCS to focus on priorities and balance roles (leaders are stretched too thin).

- Foster transparency and communication about leadership decisions.
- Share more information about strategy and execution of the vision.
- Create a unified vision for all of FCS.
- Limit what FCS does to focus on the greatest opportunities for impact.

3. Recommendations

- a. Build a leadership team that can balance the demand between campus, county, and external stakeholder needs to encompass the broad nature of FCS. Leadership should ensure consistency between these aspects of Extension programming.
- b. Establish priorities and provide direction for how those priorities should be executed across FCS. Include direction for what is not an FCS priority and how those areas will be sunset.
- c. Establish a unified communication mechanism across the FCS team that fosters transparency and unifies all aspects of the program.
- d. Unify leadership at the top to continue to engage the local area, yet provide support and direction that follows strategy and creates consistency.
- e. Establish accountability measures for FCS educators that provide benchmarks for programming that meets statewide goals.

F. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

1. Background

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are mentioned in the mission and values [statements](#) for OSU Extension. OSU Extension states it values "Diversity in all of its forms." It is also stated that Extension educators "Apply knowledge and practical research to meet the diverse needs and interests of Ohioans in rural, suburban, and urban communities."

Ohio is a state of contrasts with rural and urban areas, and much of the diversity by race is found in the urban centers. This portion of the review is not meant to duplicate a civil rights compliance review, but rather to look at similar data and its impact in reaching FCS programmatic goals.

Data provided stated the overall minority population in Ohio is 21 percent. This number will be used for initial parity analysis. Both programmatic reach and staffing will be discussed in this section.

2. Summary of Observations

Strengths include:

- In SNAP-Ed and EFNEP programming, parity is reached for state average data.
 - The SNAP-Ed program met parity for overall minority population in Ohio
 - 57% non-white; 43% white for actual count
 - 33% non-white; 67% white for estimated count
 - 38% non-white; 62% white for total (combination of actual and estimated)
 - 2019 EFNEP met parity for overall population in Ohio – 3,037 total number of families: 62% to 64% white; 38% to 35% non-white.
 - 2019 EFNEP youth met parity for overall population in Ohio – 7,978 youth: 37% white; 63% non-white.

- The EFNEP team was proud and confident of their reach of diverse audiences and doing so in a culturally appropriate and respectful way. One quote from staff: *“Our attention to cultural differences (are) strong; we’re serving limited resource families, and noting cultural differences is integrated into how we serve the community.”*

Opportunities include:

- In FCS overall (non-EFNEP or non-SNAP-Ed), of those reached through direct education, 9% were people of color. This percentage of reach does not reach parity for FCS overall programming.
- Parity for staff is unmet
 - Of 238 staff, 11 are people of color (4.6%).
 - Of 132 SNAP-Ed staff, two are people of color (1.5%).
 - Of 38 EFNEP staff, five are people of color (13%).
- Parity for supervisors is unmet –
 - Of 238 staff, there are two people of color who are supervisors (less than 1%).
- From the data above, there is great opportunity to increase the diversity of staff throughout FCS.
- Consider starting with increasing the supervisors of color, and then in turn recruit and hire staff of color.
- There is no surprise that the overall FCS program reach does not meet parity in programming or staffing when there are no county educators of color on staff and a low number throughout the unit. As one county Extension educator stated, *“Programming can be strengthened by broadening our approach to our communities. Diversity and equity go untouched across the state. We really need to be teaching all communities, not just the ones we’re comfortable teaching. We’re not going to reach our potential if we don’t reach all populations in the state.”* Another educator stated, *“On a county level, some educators are actively doing that, and other groups are trying to create a space for underrepresented groups; but there is a lot of resistance. I don’t know that Extension supports those efforts.”*
- There is a desire to reach more diverse and nontraditional audiences. A review of current programs by who attends (age, ethnicity, race); as well as time of day and day of week courses are offered would be a place to start; also, to conduct a needs assessment with non-Extension participants and agencies who serve them for the needs of Ohio residents. This educator quote supports this opportunity, *“Our programs are reaching the people that they were built to reach. Programs go to people who have always gone to those programs, white women who drag their husbands along and are free to meet at 1:00 in the afternoon. There are huge swaths that we’re missing. I do everything we’ve always done, and I can’t help who comes to my classes, passive recruitment. There needs to be an effort to reach out proactively. Talk to agencies that serve and see what their needs are and what will appeal to their communities.”*

Questions and areas that require leadership clarification include:

- How can accurate data be available for administrators so they can confidently discuss the percent of diverse individuals and families reached in programs, and confidently discuss the number and percentage of staff of color on their teams?

3. Recommendations

- a. What matters is named and measured. There is a lack of naming diversity, equity, and inclusion as a priority in foundational [documents/statements](#) for both FCS and Extension as a whole. It is essential to review these documents and prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion in hiring practices, programmatic efforts, and staff training. Potential prioritization statement(s) and goals could include prioritizing reach to diverse communities or changing the makeup of the staff to be more diverse. Without goals in this arena at the college level, it is not surprising that the general FCS program and FCS staffing do not reflect parity.
- b. Embrace and lean on the strength of EFNEP's history and purpose. EFNEP's national goal is to reach the poorest of the poor in a state. Honor that history and name it proudly as an important FCS program leading the way for both FCS and Extension. EFNEP did reach parity for educational reach, build on its example.
- c. While this review was not a civil rights compliance review, including the findings and goals of the most recent [review](#) would provide context and continuity of prioritization in the arena of programmatic reach and staffing.
- d. Review civil rights compliance review data and recommendations to ensure that data in the report is known and informs the future FCS diversity, equity, and inclusion plans in training, staffing, and program planning.
- e. Develop a diversity, equity, and inclusion plan that encompasses: local diversity statistics (not statewide averages) for parity staffing, position descriptions that are written to encourage people of color to apply, promotion and advertising of positions so people of color see the position openings, onboarding practices, training for all staff to understand what it is to be an anti-racist workplace and organization – including micro-aggression training for all staff throughout Extension, and training on how to retain people of color on staff.
- f. Prioritize inservice training with DEI topics – none were listed in inservice topics provided.
- g. Work in diversity, equity, and inclusion must occur throughout the entire organization. FCS staff work beside youth development, agriculture and natural resources, and community development colleagues; and ALL must be on a journey of understanding how to be a welcoming place of work for people of color.
- h. Build upon some of the Ohio State resources for Extension work such as a “Land Acknowledgement” [statement](#). Acknowledgement of the history of how the land for land-grant universities was acquired provides humility in our diversity, equity, and inclusion work – especially in a state where there are not sovereign American Indian lands.

G. Key Recommendation Themes

Key Recommendation Themes

- Vision and structure
- Program priorities
- Communication and transparency
- Promoting a diverse and inclusive workforce
- Serving a diverse audience and cultural competency
- Cohesion and collaboration within FCS and OSU Extension

III. A Response to the Questions for External Review

The following questions were prepared by:

- Michael Gutter, associate dean for UF/IFAS Extension, University of Florida
- Jennifer McCaffery, assistant dean, Family and Consumer Sciences, University of Illinois
- Patricia Olson, associate dean, Extension Center for Family Development, University of Minnesota
- Cindy Fitch, associate dean for Research, West Virginia University

In answering the questions, the committee took into consideration information gained from *The State of Family and Consumer Sciences in Ohio*; *Ohio State University Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Internal Self-Study*; the *Ohio State University Extension Crowdsourcing Insight Summary: Family and Consumer Sciences*; and stakeholder interviews. The intention was to provide primary areas of interest, not to provide a directive.

Q1. Does a clear and compelling vision exist for the OSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) program? What are the priorities for the OSU Extension FCS program? How do these priorities connect with the vision for OSU Extension and CFAES? What evidence is there of alignment?

- a. When asked about a vision, staff indicated that FCS had “the three healthies,” but felt there was no real strategy for what to do with each of them or how the vision was operationalized. The faculty overwhelmingly would like a clear vision that includes the “how,” the “what’s next,” and “what are we working toward?”
- b. FCS Extension is broad and draws from many aspects of the university, but there is no alignment to an overall vision for FCS within CFAES and how it relates to the broader university.

Q2. What theoretical framework guides the work of OSU Extension FCS faculty and staff?

Staff were able to articulate several theoretical frameworks that form the foundation of their work, but feel it is individual in nature and dependent on their background and expertise. This included the socioecological model consistent with other reports of “the three healthies.” However, most faculty were not familiar with a universal guiding frameworks when asked.

Q3. To what degree does the OSU Extension FCS program engage with the academic departments of the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, the College of Education and Human Ecology, or other colleges on Ohio State campuses to enhance and advance programmatic efforts? What opportunities for collaboration should be pursued?

There is a wide array of engagement including the College of Education and Human Ecology. Several emerging and opportunistic possibilities exist with health sciences programs across campus; these should be pursued.

Q4. Do the demographic characteristics of Ohio residents engaged in OSU Extension FCS mirror the population of the state? If not, what groups are underrepresented? What strategies might be used to increase participation by those groups? How do the demographic characteristics of OSU Extension FCS personnel reflect those of the state?

- a. Within the nutrition program, the goal of diversity is well-achieved; however in many other program areas, this is less the case. Please see recommendations section for opportunities to increase participation.
- b. The staffing does not fully reflect the demographics of the local counties, especially urban counties. This was clear from the data as well as the conversations.

Q5. How do county-based OSU Extension FCS professionals describe their role?

Please see the word clouds from five groups interviewed asking the question “What are the top three to five priorities for your position?” pp. 21-22 in the Appendix

Q6. Do county-based OSU Extension FCS faculty and staff feel they are supported by FCS state-based faculty and staff? What specific suggestions may be offered to provide county-based FCS faculty and staff with the support they feel would strengthen the program?

OSU Extension county faculty and staff would welcome more communication from specialists/state faculty. Personal finance subject matter was a good model of what they are looking for from specialists. There needs to be clear and regular communication from a unified state program voice.

Q7. Does the OSU Extension FCS program overall feel they are supported by Extension administration? CFAES? Relevant support units? The broader university?

There was some lack of understanding from both county educators and administration about the nature of each other’s roles. There seemed to be some disconnect across the system and to other Extension programs. Opportunities exist by creating linkages to food systems work.

Q8. How do current stakeholders and partners of the OSU Extension FCS program advance the goals and growth of FCS in Ohio? In what ways might each constrain attainment of goals and growth?

Financial literacy has a strong partnership with the Ohio Treasurer’s office that continues to see opportunities for further collaboration. The Department of Public Health has a strong regard of FCS Extension and is likely to help provide connections to funding as well as other opportunities. One challenge is that these partners do not have a full vision of all that FCS Extension can do; and as such, it is important to educate on the potential.

Q9. How can OSU Extension FCS work more effectively to increase public support?

OSU Extension FCS must invest in visibility efforts. These efforts must include campus, county government, legislators, key stakeholders, and partners across the state. There needs to be key articulation and alignment of the goals of both FCS and partners. Some key ideas included empowering underserved youth for health education and career development, financial education, workforce preparedness, and food security.

Q10. To what degree are OSU Extension FCS program efforts aligned with others such as NEAFCS, AAFCS, National Council of Family Relations, eXtension, nonprofits, and government agencies focused on FCS at the regional/national/international levels?

The reports provided outlined key areas where OSU Extension was aligned to these broader initiatives. Staff are highly engaged in national organizations and initiatives. Participation in these initiatives should align with strategic goals of the OSU Extension FCS program in the future to ensure maximum benefit.

IV. Appendix

Key Elements of the Review

The State of Family and Consumer Sciences in Ohio

Report led by Pat Bebo (FCS assistant director), state and county FCS professionals.

Ohio State University Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Internal Self-Study

Report led by Pat Bebo (FCS assistant director), state and county FCS professionals.

Ohio State University Extension Crowdsourcing Insight Summary: Family and Consumer Sciences

Research and report generated by Dr. Debby Lewis, Amy Elhadi, Brian Butler, and Danae Wolfe from OSU Extension Learning and Organizational Development.

Key Stakeholder Communications

OSU Extension Director Jackie Wilkins, professor and associate dean, College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, shared the project purpose, process, and updates through video webinars, statewide personnel events, advisory discussions, and administrative meetings. Project web pages were established to support transparency.

<https://extension.osu.edu/strategic-initiatives/ohio-family-and-consumer-sciences-fcs-program-review>

External Committee Visits and Final Report

Virtual visits were held September 22-24 via Zoom. Committee members represented diverse perspectives of FCS programs varying in size, scope, and geographic location.

The role of the committee members was to learn about the OSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences program by reviewing three documents (*The State of Family and Consumer Sciences in Ohio*, *Ohio State University Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Internal Self-Study*, and *Ohio State University Extension Crowdsourcing Insight Summary: Family and Consumer Sciences*), and then visiting with external and internal stakeholders; and sharing their observations and recommendations through this final report.

Committee members included:

- Cindy Fitch, associate dean for Research, West Virginia University Extension;
- Trish Olson, associate dean and state director, University of Minnesota Extension Center for Family Development;
- Jennifer McCaffrey, assistant dean for Family and Consumer Sciences, University of Illinois; and
- Mike Gutter, associate dean for Extension – state program leader, 4-H Youth Development, Families and Communities for the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida.

Interviewed groups included: state faculty and staff, county personnel (new and experienced); dean's cabinet, external partners, and internal partners/faculty.

Word Clouds



Figure 1. County Staff Greater than 10 Years

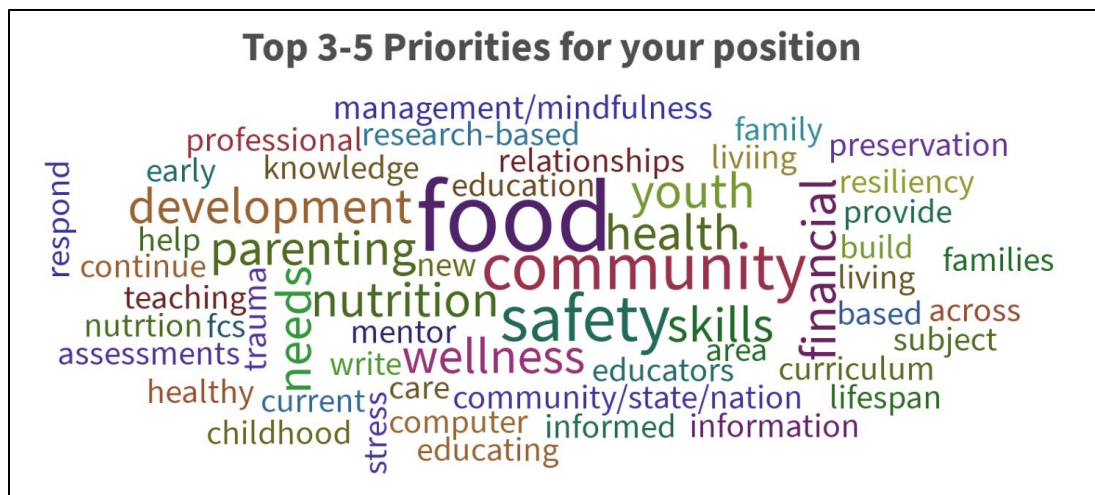


Figure 2. FCS Greater than 10 Years

