

Understanding Specialization in RiV Jacqueline Kirby Wilkins (2015)

We use the term specialization in a few ways in Extension and it can sometimes become confusing to individuals.

In RiV, for the **annual report function (non-dossier section of RiV)**, you will choose a specialization that was predetermined by program area. It is included in a drop down menu under the link for specialization. Examples might include the following:

- ANR (Entomology, Agronomic Crops, Farm Management and Farm Marketing)
- 4-H (4-H Club Management, CARTEENS, Livestock)
- CD (Community Planning, Economic Development)
- FCS (Family Wellness, Housing Decisions, Food Security and Community Nutrition)

These forced choices are often defined by the Assistant Directors. They help ensure programmatic coverage across key topics in the program area and they assist in the collection of information around programming for the annual federal report.

In the **dossier section of RiV**, you will identify your specialization a variety of times (parallel construction), the first of which will be in your BIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVE (located in the Narrative link in the dossier section of RiV).

This specialization title may or may not match the specialization you chose from the drop down boxes in the non-dossier section of RiV. It should be very personalized to the area of specialization that you, together with your AD and supervisor, have identified for your 25% specialization. Sometimes the drop down titles from RiV in the Non-Dossier section are perfectly aligned... sometimes they are not. YOU need to choose a specialization title that best reflects the work that you do and your expertise.

An example of when these terms will not be a perfect match is when a 4-H educator chooses CARTEENS as their specialization area. Many of the forced choices for specialization in 4-H are correlated with design teams. This same specialization may not make as much sense to include as the educator's specialization area in the **dossier section**, as CARTEENS will not often be where an educator spends 25% of their time. Instead, they might choose the specialization term of Adolescent Risk-Taking as a specialization in their dossier. These specialization titles in the dossier may undergo some transitions (name changes) as new educators begin to define their body of work over time.

If you have questions about how to best determine your specialization in either of these contexts, please talk with your supervisor.

