

Signature Program Guidelines for Extension Community Development

Introduction

The Extension Community Development (CD) program has developed a strong portfolio of Signature Programs across all five of our thematic areas. These Signature Programs are a critical element of our Program Area as they provide the ability for us to tell the story of the value and impact of the Purdue Extension CD program. Effectively deploying our Signature Program strategy depends on our willingness to embrace a core set of educational programs that align with the needs of Indiana communities. By doing so, we are able to build metrics that help showcase the impact of our work in various parts of the state.

As the value of our work is recognized, we garner the interest of other Extension colleagues and with a variety of external partners. So, we have more Extension colleagues serving as advocates for our program and more agencies and organizations that are willing to invest their own resources to partner with —and invest in the work of -- our Extension CD colleagues.

In an environment where the efficient and effective use of resources is critical to the operation of Purdue University and its Extension programs, we must be able to show that the Extension CD program matters and that continued investment in this program is vital to the well-being of Indiana communities. Signature Programs help demonstrate how we have helped move the needle on issues that are important to the long-term vitality of communities in the state.

The continued growth of the Extension CD program can only be realized if we can clearly articulate our thematic areas and have impactful Signature Programs that align with these thematic areas. Our Extension CD team must be effective in its ability to develop, adapt, deliver and evaluate Signature Programs that respond to the current and emerging needs of our stakeholders.

In 2020-2021, we can anticipate that our Community Development Extension programming is going to 'look different' from previous years, especially in terms of needs assessment and program delivery. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we must work together to modify how our programming is delivered. We must maintain programmatic effectiveness and impact while taking appropriate measures to ensure the health and safety of our staff and stakeholders. In terms of diversity, equity and inclusion, we must be more intentional as we cultivate our advisory board members, promote our programming, effectively partner with community organizations, conduct our needs assessments and implement our programs.

Key Elements of Signature Programs ¹

The following are the characteristics that designate an Extension CD program that elevate it to “Signature Program” status:

1. Aligns with the strategic blueprint and/or priority issues of Purdue University Extension.
2. Incorporates a conceptual framework that is rooted in sound research.
3. Includes processes and tools that directly promote diversity, equity and inclusion.
4. Follows the Purdue Extension peer review process for all related curriculum materials and should work with AgComm or an approved contractor to ensure materials are copy edited and designed in accordance with Purdue branding guidelines
5. Involves the delivery of multiple educational sessions that provide target audiences with a more in-depth information/training on a specific topic/subject.
6. Embraces a series of short, medium, and long-term outcomes that are designed to track the impact of the program on participants over time (i.e., individuals and/or communities) sourced from the core set of metrics that all CD educators use to report activities and outcomes associated with the program via Digital Measures
7. Represents a program that is implemented by CD educators in multiple counties in the state and activities associated with the Signature Program should be recorded via Digital Measures.
8. Developed and launched in partnership with campus-based administrators, faculty/specialists and/or regional CD educators.
9. Offers training to Extension educators wishing to implement the program in their counties.
10. Has Institutional Review Board approval (IRB) for the collection of quantitative and/or qualitative information from program participants.

General Expectations of CD Educators: Signature Program Work Plan

The expectation of how many Signature Programs a CD educator is to conduct annually is based upon the educator’s formal Community Development appointment. Additional responsibilities associated with an educator’s CD work at various FTE appointments are offered as guidelines. That is, the higher the person’s formal CD appointment, the greater number of signature,

¹ Adapted from the Purdue HHS Signature Program Guidelines

spotlight and other activities (statewide or regional) the individual is expected to successfully undertake. Spotlight programs represent in-depth educational programs conducted in one or two counties, but is not available for implementation on a statewide basis. Oftentimes, it represents a program that a CD educator has developed in response to a unique need of their stakeholders and/or is a specific area of expertise that the educator possesses that is relevant to our CD work. Please note that all educational programs that an educator proposed to carry out as part of their plan of work should be done with the knowledge and support of the educator’s District Director and County Extension Director. We urge you to have your proposed spotlight program reviewed by the CD Program Leader and/or Assistant Program Leader.

Some of the general expectations for any Extension Educator with a Community Development appointment is as follows:

- Participate in the CD team conference calls;
- Participate in the CD Update held annually;
- Develop and utilize the County Data Snapshot (<https://cdext.purdue.edu/snapshots/county>), both with your advisory committee and with key stakeholders;
- For Extension educators with a 50 percent CD appointment or higher, to develop and have an active Community Development Advisory Committee.
- For Extension educators with a CD appointment below 50 percent, appoint at least two Advisory Committee members that can provide a community development perspective

Aside from these general requirements, the following are the guidelines with respect to the development and/or delivery of Extension educational programs.

Table 1. Program Activities of Educators with Varying FTE Appointments in Community Development

CD Appointment	Signature Program	Other Recommended Activities
25 percent or less	One Signature Program	Short-term CD-related program activities (such as single sessions on specific CD topics)
26-49 percent	Two Signature Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Spotlight program • Short-term CD-related activities • Engaged in grant-related activities, as appropriate

50-74 percent	Three Signature Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Spotlight program • Short-term program activities • Partner with other CD educators on program delivery activities • Engagement in grant-related activities
75 percent and higher	Four Signature Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Spotlight programs • Involvement in short-term CD-related programming • Involved in program activities with other CD educators • Active in the development of funding-related proposals

Specific Expectations Associated with Signature Programs

There are a core number of Signature Programs that are now place in support of the Extension Community Development Program. These are listed below. Please note that there are specific expectations that are associated with each of these programs, so it is important to review these requirements prior to including them in your annual plan of work. The guidelines associated with each Signature Program will be accessed on the Extension Hub under Community Development.

Please note that new Signature Programs will be introduced in the future and as such, the CD team as a whole will decide on an annual basis if any existing Signature Program should discontinued in light of the changing needs of our stakeholders.

Table 2. List of Current Purdue Extension CD Signature Programs by Themes/Goals

Community Development Thematic Area/Goal	Current Signature Programs
<p>Leadership & Civic Engagement</p> <p>Goal: Equipping a new generation of leaders, organizations and stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Leadership Development • Facilitative Leadership • Navigating Difference

<p>Community and Organizational Development</p> <p>Goal: Increasing the capacity of local people to act on current and future opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginner’s Guide to Grant Writing • Digital Ready Community (<i>in process</i>)
<p>Economic & Business Development</p> <p>Goal: Helping communities create jobs, retain businesses and provide resources for business owners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Retention & Expansion • Community/Regional Entrepreneurial System • Digital Ready Businesses • INWork • Skills for Success
<p>Local Government</p> <p>Goal: Increasing the effectiveness of local governments, boards and committees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On Local Government • American Citizen Planner - Indiana
<p>Quality Places</p> <p>Goal: Enhancing communities’ quality of life and quality of life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces • EVPS: Creating Healthy Communities • Conservation through Community Leadership

Questions?

Please free to contact either Michael Wilcox (CD Program Leader) or Kara Salazar (Assistant Program Leader) if you have any questions regarding the expectations of a Community Development Extension Professional.

Prepared and Updated by: Michael Wilcox and Kara Salazar, July 2020