

Sumy National University

Project under FARM Responsive Mechanism

**Project: Development of an Extension Course at the
Sumy National University**

Project Partners: University of Saskatchewan

Final Project Summary Report

December 2005 – June 2006

Executive Summary

Sumy National University (SNU) is a young, progressive national university located in the north-eastern region of Ukraine. The university recognizes the importance of responding to the needs of the local farmers and agricultural producers if they are to compete in the expanding area of agricultural extension. Developing and delivering responsive extension programs will give them the competitive edge, therefore the university initiated this project with the goal of further developing the faculty's knowledge of extension systems, processes and practices. To further establish their sense of place in the academic community, the university set out to develop an undergraduate course in program planning for upper year students. This course will help prepare students for a career in the field of agricultural extension. The two objectives of this program were the delivery of a program to faculty and the initiation of the development of an undergraduate extension course to be offered at SNU.

A training program on extension program planning models was delivered to faculty at SNU. A program planning model was used in the process of developing and delivering this program. Responses from the participants completed evaluations were mostly positive and very helpful in offering future steps for this project. Several challenges were encountered during this program, but none that could not be overcome.

Background and Rationale for the Project

The idea of delivering an extension program design and development course in the Sumy National Agrarian University was based on the need of the faculty to further develop their knowledge of extension systems, processes and practices in order to develop an undergraduate course in program planning for upper year students at SNU. Faculty members also needed to further develop their program planning skills to enhance their ability to develop and deliver effective extension programs for private farmers. SNU faculty also needed to gain further knowledge about program delivery methodologies, plus evaluation of extension programs.

Achieved Project Goal and Objectives

The main project objective was to create and deliver a professional development program on extension program design and development to a select group of faculty at SNU. Faculty would use this knowledge to begin development of a work plan to develop and deliver an upper year undergraduate course on extension program planning as well as other potential electives which develop the capacity of SNU graduates to develop and operate effective extension strategies in their subject specialties. Faculty will also share this information with fellow faculty that may ultimately result in enhanced revision and delivery of existing extension curriculum at SNU where it exists.

A second objective was to support the initiation of the development of an undergraduate extension course to be offered at SNU. Processes learned in this course could be used to initiate development of the undergraduate course. Development of any future SNAU curriculum would be outside the scope of this initial project and would be following the learning program in Ukraine.

Outcomes and Results

The topic of the professional development program was the design and development of extension programs. It was intended that participating faculty would use this training to develop a work plan strategy to develop:

- a) activity = delivery of a two-week training program to a select group of faculty at SNU
- b) deliverable = a training program delivered to a select group of SNU faculty

In the development of this training program, the coordinators took great care to ensure they followed a program planning model, and used their actions as a teaching tool. The model adopted for this program was that developed by Tom Sork. The course took some modelling from the Program Planning in Adult Education core course from Western Canada's Certificate in Adult and Continuing Education program operated by a consortium of universities from the Victoria, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The limited budget resources supported the provision of some learning resource materials (English language) in extension programming, adult education and training adults. The course provided approximately 50 hours of classroom instruction and facilitation. Materials provided to the participants included:

- Planning Programs for Adult Learners, Rosemary Caffarella, Second Edition
- Teaching Adults, Peter Renner
- Copies of 10 PowerPoint presentations
- All program documents including worksheets, assignment templates & planning guides

A blended learning approach was used which included a combination of face-to-face intensive sessions, lectures, discussions, case studies, web-based searching, problem-based learning and reflective practice. There was a focus on building capacity to apply new skills and knowledge through hands on activities.

Course Outline

Introduction & Preparing for the Course

Module 1. Introduction to Planning Programs for Adults

- a. What Programs for Adults look like
Canadian examples: - provincial and federal government - business - education institution extension
Examination of local, regional and national extension programs in Ukraine
- b. the underlying assumptions about planning relative to the model we will be developing
- c. key terminology used in program planning
- d. the characteristics of adult learners
- e. change – the nature of change and change management in program planning
- f. restraints to change

Module 2. Models Of Approach To Program Planning

- a. review of different protocols and styles of program planning
- b. Caffarella Interactive Model
- c. developing a personal planning strategy of one's own

Module 3. Determining Needs – Conducting Needs Assessment, Developing Ideas/Options And Developing Goals

- a. understanding the phenomenon of context in program planning
- b. review of options to determine the nature of context – obstacles, challenges, restraints, etc.
- c. identifying the target audience and its effect on program planning
- d. the concept of Context

Power:

- The concept of power and its role and management in program planning
- Use of Focus Groups
- Environmental Scans - Doing a SWOT & STEEP
- Designing questionnaires

Presentation by FARM staff from FARM Sumy Extension Office

Mykhailo Martynenko, Director/Crop Specialist

- overview of the Needs Assessment Report\
- examples of programs and extension activities
- needs assessments experiences and strategies
- program determination – how did they come to the plan they delivered

Module 4. Working With Advisory Committees

- a. establishment, role and management, communication
- b. expectations of roles and responsibilities - resources required

Module 5. Developing Program Objectives and Learning Outcomes

- a. outputs and outcomes
- b. competency based program components
- c. writing outcomes based curriculums
- d. working with subject matter experts to draft learning objectives

Module 6. Developing Learning / Instructional Plans

- a. knowledge of different learning styles in adults
- b. time and resource management in program planning
- c. developing budgets, determining resources, sourcing, sponsorships

Module 7. Designing Program Evaluations

- a. overview of options and alternatives for evaluation
- b. development of evaluation instruments
- c. the assessment and analysis of evaluation results

Module 8. Developing Communications & Marketing Plans for Programs

- a. needs, environment, resources, options and opportunities

Module 9. Designing and Drafting a Program Plan

- b. putting course learning into practice – review and further work planning

Canadian Partner Contribution

Mr. Grant Wood, University of Saskatchewan and Doug Taylor (professional agrologist) worked together to prepare materials for the training and jointly created the instructional plan for the project. Doug has many years of experience in developing and delivering extension programs. His experience and knowledge was extremely helpful in the development of the instructional plan. The Canadian partner was responsible for the following;

- Plan the program and design course for delivery in Ukraine
- Planning of the extension programs
- Delivery of the phase I course at SNU
- Facilitating the orientation and preparation of the participant to come to Canada

The partnership between the Sumy National University and Mr. Grant Wood, University of Saskatchewan is expected to continue long after this project is complete. It is the intent of SNU and Mr. Wood through the University of Saskatchewan to develop a long-term, self-sustaining partnership that will see continued joint applied research projects and professional development opportunities in the field of agriculture extension and adult education. The U of S offers a graduate program in continuing education (McEd), plus a certificate program in adult and continuing education (CACE). Both these programs would serve as excellent professional development opportunities for staff at SNU. Both programs are offered via distance or face-to-face.

With the extensive curriculum and program resources of the University of Saskatchewan at Saskatoon there may be opportunities for SNU faculty to move on to the proposed phase two and three of the project outline and continue their learning of adult education process skills through participation in the Western Canadian Certificate in Adult and Continuing Education (CACE). These subsequent phases are understood to be subject to further negotiations. Mr. Grant Wood of the Extension Division will provide liason with the resources of U of S in regards to that program and continue to provide limited liason with this project.

Conclusion

A training program on extension program planning models was delivered to faculty at SNU. A program planning model was used in the process of developing and delivering this program.

Responses from the participants completed evaluations were mostly positive and very helpful in offering future steps for this project. Several challenges were encountered during this program, but none that could not be overcome. The most major challenge was the need for faculty to respond to other duties instead of devoting the entire time to participating in the program.

Program planning is only one area of study within the field of adult education. It is recommended that some faculty from SNU become more familiar with other studies within adult education before establishing a series of courses for undergraduate students. It is also recommended that the Canadian project coordinators be further involved with the project participants to ensure they have a full understanding of the program planning process before they develop and deliver an undergraduate degree course in extension program planning.