The following competencies guide staff employment, development and performance. The ISU Extension and Outreach Professional Development Team suggests updating this list every five years to address contextual changes. All Extension staff regardless of their title and classification are expected to be competent in most or all of the items listed under each competency. The depth, scope and weight of each competence will vary due to differences across job descriptions, classifications and unit expectations.

Core Competencies for All Staff

Communication and Interpersonal Relations

Successfully interact with individuals and groups in a professional manner.

Assess emotions and participants in a situation and adapt accordingly

Be open, flexible and willing to adapt to change

Be trustworthy, dependable and diplomatic

Clearly communicate personal and team needs

Communicate in a timely fashion

Effectively use distance communication with coworkers, clients and collaborators

Filer and focus information to prevent overload

Help create positive interpersonal and professional relationships

Learn and use problem solving skills

Manage conflicts and dilemmas between self, colleagues and clients

Use effective group process, facilitation and management techniques

Use effective written and oral communication, including use of technology

Work effectively as a team member and participate in interdisciplinary projects.

Depth and Scope of ISU Extension and Outreach

Promote the scope and depth of Extension and Outreach carried out on campus and in the field.

Aware of ISU Extension and Outreach program offerings and their impact

Connect clients with specific campus and county programs and experiences

Remain up to date on priority issues and program offerings throughout the organization

Understand and comply with program, ISU and ISU Extension and Outreach mandates, requirement, policies and procedures; including visual identity, safety and communication

Understand differences and similarities between program and administrative units

Understand the alignment, culture and norms of ISU Extension and Outreach as an organization

Understand the history, mission and philosophy of Extension and Land Grant Universities

Work towards organization-wide unity

Equity and Diversity

Understand and respect the needs and benefits of a diverse community of people of all genders, ages, cultures, races, religions, sexual orientations, socio-economic backgrounds and abilities.

Support programs are sensitive to human differences

Support best practices for working with under-represented groups

Work with people and organizations representing diverse groups

Partnership Development

Develop partnerships with organizations, government, businesses and other entities to identify and prioritize needs to enhance life in Iowa communities.

Build and sustain strong internal relationships at all levels of the organization to enhance external partnerships

Contribute to organizational learning through reciprocal relationships with clients and collaborators

Develop and use skills and tools to engage with communities and groups

Develop and maintain organizational and business alliances and networks to reach common goals

Identify and bring resources to communities

Monitor issues and trends important to partners and communities

Recognize, understand and facilitate opportunities to serve stakeholders through programs

Understand how stakeholder, community and government power structures improve local conditions

Professionalism and Leadership

Create positive, professional and productive work ethically and with integrity.

Contribute to organizational learning through reciprocal relationships with clients

Develop leadership skills to enhance personal, team, program and organizational environments

Engage in continuous improvement through intentional targeted professional development

Exhibit professional ethics and reflect professionalism in all manners-of-speech, dress, office appearance and behaviors

Operate effectively with minimal guidance

Positively navigate change and unanticipated or ambiguous situations by remaining diplomatic, flexible and adaptable

Respect deadlines, deliverables and policies

Project Management

Establish structure, organize processes, generate and monitor resources and lead change to reach program and project outcomes effectively and efficiently.

Adopt human and system capacity building and volunteer engagement techniques

Anticipate deadlines including reporting program and project impact and quality and develop contingency plans

Apply diverse and effective communication and marketing strategies to reach clients

Generate resources through grants, contracts, gifts and/or fees

Help create and monitor budgets and projects

Help report program and project impact and quality in a timely fashion

Analyze and interpret data to enhance project development, implementation and evaluation

Manage time and resources, including budget management

Support project resources and people effectively

Use continuous process improvement tools that build on past and current processes

Work with and use available staff skill sets

Additional Core Competencies for Program Staff

Development of Programs

Prioritize, plan, implement, evaluate and report programs that achieve expected outcomes and address issues and trends important to partners and communities.

Apply program quality standards to program design and delivery

Conduct client and stakeholder environmental scans and needs assessment with appropriate tools

Evaluate program quality and impact using multiple approaches

Facilitate program priority setting processes/strategic planning

Incorporate demographic, economic, social and/or environmental data into client stakeholder programs and projects

Produce and disseminate high level Extension scholarship (original intellectual work communicated and validated by peers) to transfer knowledge to clients and colleagues

Select, design and resource appropriate curriculum and educational opportunities

Understand and use data about clientele, communities and Iowa

Delivery of Programs and Educational Opportunities

Deliver effective research-based programs and educational opportunities

Apply appropriate research-based learning approaches and technology for educating target audiences

Keep abreast of use of technology and other innovative tools for program needs assessment, development, delivery and evaluation

Reflect on evaluation and educational material

Teach a variety of topics and audiences in a variety of venues effectively

Use technology to enhance learning

Use approaches that integrate multiple disciplines/subject matter to address issues

Discipline-focused Content

Keep up to date on subject matter expertise

Adeptly translate research into direct application for clients

Keep up to date on Land Grant University and other research

Participate in professional associations and organizations

Participate in subject matter professional development

Use new and unique thinking to respond to unique circumstances