

North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service State Advisory Council - Strategic Plan

Approved October 2012

1 The State Advisory Council (SAC) Operating Procedures, which provide the on-going, fundamental
2 direction of this volunteer organization, enumerate five overarching and perpetual GOALS of the State
3 Advisory Council.

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5 Specifically, it states that the State Advisory Council will:

- 6 1. Work with local Extension Centers to develop and strengthen Advisory groups.
- 7 2. Serve as a liaison body between local Advisory groups and state Extension administration and
8 Foundation Regional Directors.
- 9 3. Build relationships with federal, state and local government and community leaders to effectively
10 advocate for Cooperative Extension and private resource development.
- 11 4. Work with Cooperative Extension state program leaders and University departments to ensure that
12 programs are relevant and the resources are available at the county level for delivery of quality
13 programs.
- 14 5. Market Cooperative Extension as a leader in addressing the changing needs of rural and urban
15 North Carolina communities.

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17 This Strategic Plan is written in furtherance of the stated Goals of SAC to bring time-bound action to the
18 spirit of SAC's mission and vision.

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20 This Plan centers its strategies and assigns actions in four FOCUS AREAS:

- 21 1. County Council Development
- 22 2. Government Relations and Advocacy
- 23 3. Relationship Marketing/Brand Ambassadorship
- 24 4. Private Resource Development

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26 Within each Focus Area, PRIORITIES set out the ideals that SAC desires to achieve in each area.
27 STRATEGIES and ACTIONS give specific direction to reach the priorities, and are assigned to one or more
28 of four LEVELS of the total Advisory Leadership System:

- 29 • Executive Team Level, made up of NCCES Executive Team (the Director and three Associate
30 Directors; "L4") and the SAC Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer; "L3").
- 31 • SAC Standing Committee Level, corresponding to a named SAC committee for each FOCUS
32 AREA.
- 33 • District/Cluster Level, which includes the District Extension Directors (DEDs) and the respective
34 SAC members within each District.
- 35 • County Advisory Council (CAC) level, which includes the County Council Chairpersons and the
36 County Extension Directors (CEDs).

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COUNTY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT

Vision: Develop and enhance county extension advisory leaders' knowledge and skills to support Extension's mission and increase Extension's value and visibility to constituents and key stakeholders.

Priority 1

Build a stronger, more integrated Extension Advisory Leadership System of County and State Advisory Councils.

Strategy 1

Create an annual plan of work aligned with the SAC Operating Procedures goals that builds skills and knowledge and sets common priorities across districts.

Actions to Achieve

L4/L3 will ensure the development of yearly goals in each SAC standing committee area.

Strategy 2

Build a comprehensive education initiative focused on Advisory Council development.

Actions to Achieve

L4/L3 Actions

- i. At least annually, L4 will communicate Extension initiatives, success stories, and impacts to SAC and CAC members.
- ii. Set and communicate L4's expectations related to Advisory Leadership System to DEDs and CEDs.
- iii. In collaboration with DEDs, L4 will assess current status of individual County CACs and bring resources to recognize and encourage good local councils.
- iv. Change current SAC Operating Procedures to create a Council Development Standing Committee, whose charge will be to identify and meet current and future needs around the topic of County Council Development. Recommend DED, L3, and L4 representatives in addition to SAC Members.

SAC Standing Committee on Council Development Actions

- i. Review the standardized roles and responsibilities ("job description") of CAC members. Create checklist that covers these roles and responsibilities that can be used to facilitate development of skilled Council members at the County and District levels. Update as appropriate, with review by L3/L4.
- ii. Develop mentoring program for new SAC members to support their successful transition to SAC membership.

District/Cluster Actions

- i. SAC Members will annually review the SAC Strategic Plan with CAC leaders in their clusters to familiarize them with the State Advisory Council's function and purpose and to review progress towards achievement of the Strategic Plan priorities.

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- 1 ii. Develop a district-wide database of CAC membership to facilitate more efficient
2 communications. Update yearly.
- 3 iii. Coordinate delivery of at least one SEAL training module at Cluster meetings at least
4 once per year.

5 6 Strategy 3

7 Cultivate a pipeline of high performing CAC leaders to become members of SAC.
8

9 Actions to Achieve

10 District/Cluster Actions

- 11 i. Suggest/invite local CAC members to attend all or part of SAC meetings to help
12 generate interest in serving on SAC.
- 13 ii. Assist DEDs with ensuring diversification and rotation of CAC membership via yearly
14 review of current membership and identification of potential participants.
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16 Emphasize desire for broad representation, including from business/private sector; local governments;
17 demographic diversity; and non-traditional Extension audiences etc., in addition to those already directly
18 involved with or beneficiaries of Extension programs.
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23 **GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND ADVOCACY**

24 Vision: To enhance ALS knowledge and initiatives to build on-going positive government relationships to
25 support continuous effective advocacy for NCCES.
26

27 Priority 1

28 Ensure ALS members have the knowledge and skills to establish relationships with local, state, and
29 federal government leaders, and non-governmental community leaders to advocate for NCCES.
30

31 Actions to Achieve

32 L4 /L3 Actions

- 33 i. At least annually, L4 will communicate Extension initiatives, success stories, and impacts
34 to SAC and CAC members.
- 35 ii. L4 and L3 will ensure regular training and continuing education on government relations
36 and advocacy skills at SAC meetings.
- 37 iii. L3 will ensure SAC members leave each SAC meeting with specific advocacy messages
38 to be cascaded to CACs.
- 39 iv. L4/L3 will facilitate securing nametags and business cards that identify all ALS members
40 as "Volunteer."
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SAC Standing Committee on Government Relations & Advocacy Actions

- i. Deploy specific training (e.g SEAL modules) to CACs on a regular schedule to best prepare ALS members on NCCES advocacy, including how to develop clear, concise, and uniform messaging and knowing the role of members when "calls to action" occur.
- ii. Utilize SAC meetings to create advocacy messages that can be cascaded to local Advisory Councils following SAC meetings. Dedicate a portion of each SAC meeting to this action.
- iii. In collaboration with L4/L3, create and distribute guidelines/procedures for hosting legislative representatives in home counties/districts.
- iv. Create a state-wide advocacy/"influencer" list by identifying people of influence within SAC's and CAC's membership itself and within their county/cluster/district.

District/CAC Actions

- i. Regularly utilize advocacy training (e.g. SEAL) within the local CAC to better prepare and train CAC members to share Extension's story with others.
- ii. Create an advocacy/"influencer" list by identifying centers/people of influence within the Council's membership itself and within their county/cluster.
- iii. Develop "profiles" of each County Commissioner and other local elected officials. Following elections collect information on newly-elected policymakers.

RELATIONSHIP MARKETING/BRAND AMBASSADORSHIP

Vision: To develop and implement strategies that raise Extension's visibility in communities across the state and increase citizens' value and support of Extension. To effectively develop the "NCCES Brand Ambassador: identity for all SAC and CAC members.

Priority 1

Identify high-priority "relationship marketing strategies" for NCCES.

Actions to Achieve

SAC Standing Committee on Relationship Marketing Actions

- i. Create information sheet and/or training to educate ALS members about NCCES, how NCCES fits within CALS, within NCSU, and within Land-grant universities.

District/Cluster Level Actions

- i. Conduct county- or cluster-based evaluations to assess current brand recognition of NCCES utilizing SEAL or other appropriate materials.
- ii. Lead clusters in creating and executing strategies to increase the community's awareness of NCCES
- iii. Advisory Council development that mirrors SAC committees.

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COMMUNICATIONS

The original committee assignments for this Strategic Planning initiative included a focus on "Communications," including a review of the current "Link" publication. Based on the work of that committee, it was determined that "Communications," rather than being a stand-alone item, is an essential and fundamental part of the work of each Standing Committee and to SAC overall. This shift came to the forefront only through the planning process itself, and brought new light and a significant change to the work of the Committee.

Priority 1

Develop effective internal communication strategies to support the work of SAC and the Standing Committees.

Action to Achieve

L3/L4 Actions

- i. Assign a Task Force to review all current forms of communications and make recommendations.

PRIVATE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Priority

To ensure SAC members are familiar with on-going CALS Advancement initiatives related to NCCES initiatives.

Actions to Achieve

L4/L3 Actions

- i. Coordinate attendance of CALS Advancement professionals at SAC meetings to present annually (or as needed) about on-going and new development initiatives to SAC membership.
- ii. Utilize CALS Advancement professionals to deliver specific training to all SAC members to become "eyes and ears" for NCCES Foundation opportunities.
- iii. As needed, identify SAC members to participate in special development efforts.