

# 2016 University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University Combined Research and Extension Plan of Work Review

Status: Accepted

Date Accepted: 06/05/2015

2016 University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University Combined Research and Extension Plan of Work Review

**State:** Tennessee

**Institution(s):**

- University of Tennessee
- Tennessee State University

**Type of Report ( Check all that apply )**

- 1862 Research
- 1862 Extension
- 1890 Research
- 1890 Extension
- Tuskegee Research
- Tuskegee Extension

**NPL Reviewers:**

- Eric Norland

**Plan Overview Section (Required):**

Acceptable		
YES	NO	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Executive summary. (Suggested in Guidance)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Total FTEs are included for each appropriate institution of the plan

**Comments:**

The overview for the joint and integrated UT/TSU plan of work for FY 2016 conveys the accurate picture that both institutions and their research and extension programs are working together to provide the best value to the people of Tennessee and to most effectively utilize the federal funding that is provided. The economic value provided from the agriculture and natural resource sectors is significant and important to Tennessee and directly to employees (300,000 Tennesseans). An in-depth and far-reaching strategic planning effort that was conducted in 2010 continues to guide the work of these institutions.

**Merit/Program Review Process Section (Required):**

Acceptable		
YES	NO	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	At least one process has been checked (including other) (required)

**Comments:**

The institutions utilize internal and external university review panels and expert peer review processes. All Extension programs initiated in Tennessee and funded by Smith-Lever or NARETPA funds are required to undergo a peer review process. The institutions developed proposed criteria for a merit review and submitted them to an out-of-state review panel. The criteria were found to be fair, reliable, and consistent and were then used by UT and TSU for a coordinated merit review process for all programs. Planned programs are initiated by state Extension Specialists and are written as State Action Plans. These are reviewed by department heads, program leaders, and program coordinators. The review team accepts, rejects or accepts the plan pending changes. Single state Hatch-funded research projects undergo a rigorous review in the department of the project leader. Multi-state Hatch projects are drafted by a writing team and are subjected to a regional review team for comment.

**Evaluation of the Success of Multi and Joint Activities Section (Required):**

Acceptable		
YES	NO	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(1) How will the planned programs address the critical issues of strategic importance, including those identified by the stakeholders?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(2) How will the planned programs address the needs of under-served and under-represented populations of the State(s)?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(3) How will the planned programs describe the expected outcomes and impacts? and
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(4) How will the planned programs result in improved program effectiveness and/or efficiency?

**Comments:**

ADDRESSING CRITICAL ISSUES - UT and TSU Extension have continued to evolve programs to meet the emerging and future needs of Tennesseans. Examples include: women in agriculture, family economics, childhood obesity, and living with chronic conditions. No information is provided about joint or multi-state research efforts. This will need to be included in the next Plan of Work

**ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF UNDER-SERVED AND UNDER-REPRESENTED POPULATIONS** - New programs and initiatives will address the needs of small-scale fruit and vegetable producers, women in agriculture and business, and families dealing with childhood obesity and living with chronic conditions.

**PLANNED PROGRAMS AND DESCRIPTIONS OF EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS**

Examples of how the outcomes and impacts will be described include: increased revenue and savings and one-time capital improvements in agriculture extension programs. The UT/TSU research overview of how outcomes and impacts will be described is primarily a description of stakeholder input processes. For next year, could you explain how the expected outcomes and impacts from the multi- and joint research planned programs will be described. Refer to the extension description in this report as a good example.

**IMPROVED PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS AND/OR EFFICIENCIES** - UT and TSU Extension will implement a multi-step review process to assure that resources are allocated to high priority programs. If different institutions have different areas of expertise that compliment programs by doing joint programs, that would be useful to know about. This reviewer is seeking good examples of how 1890 and 1862 Extension build on each others strengths to serve clientele. If you have some good examples that you could include next year, that would be useful. Thanks. There is no information provided about how UT AgResearch and TSU Research improve program delivery or effectiveness through joint programs.

**Stakeholder Input Process Section (Required):**

Acceptable		
YES	NO	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(a) Actions taken to seek stakeholder input that encourages their participation (Required)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(b) Method used to identify groups and individuals (Required)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(c) Method used for collecting stakeholder input (Required)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(d) A statement of how collected input will be considered (Required)

**Comments:**

**ACTIONS TO SEEK STAKEHOLDER INPUT** - UT and TSU use several methods to seek stakeholder inputs, particularly targeted invitations and surveys to traditional and non-traditional groups, survey of members of the public and local and state advisory boards and councils. In FY 2014 UT and TSU made more than 29,000 contacts for needs assessment purposes - a strong demonstration of their commitment to getting input to ensure that their programs are meeting the needs of their stakeholders.

**METHODS USED TO IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS** - These stakeholders are identified by their participation as advisory committee members for research and extension programs. Commodity groups are very active and interested in the work of UT and TSU research and extension and serve as large pools from which stakeholders are identified. Intentional efforts are undertaken to ensure that diversity, by all measures, is represented and that diverse members have every opportunity to provide inputs.

**METHODS USED FOR COLLECTING INPUT** - UT and TSU make good use of existing processes to receive input. Through advisory committee meetings, focus groups, and interviews with key individuals, both institutions solicit, receive, and welcome input from their stakeholders in a variety of ways to ensure that there is equal access to opportunities to provide input.

**HOW COLLECTED INPUT IS USED** - The most important part of stakeholder input processes is how will the information will be utilized to adjust programs. In all manners and ways that affect programs, the input is utilized to make decisions: budget processes, prioritize programs based on emergent issues, staff hiring processes, and in the development and merit review of state action plans. Several examples demonstrate how the input is used: 1) Nursery, Fruit and Production programs will place more emphasis on plant, pest, and soil diagnostic services; 2) the Center for Profitable Agriculture will include programs on marketing, optimizing farm markets, and grants for local food initiatives, and 3) the Childhood Obesity Program has created special advisory committees to specifically address obesity prevention programs in West Tennessee. UT AgResearch will use stakeholder input extensively in setting budget priorities.

In total, the stakeholder processes used by UT and TSU will yield important information to guide program priorities into the future. The processes are inclusive and equally accessible to all, and overall, they meet the intent for which they are established.

**Planned Programs Section (Required):**

Acceptable		
YES	NO	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uses Appropriate Logic Model Elements
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate Knowledge Areas
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate Outputs for each Program
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate Outcomes for each Program

**Comments:**

Each of the 10 planned programs are planned and built on a program logic model that presents appropriate outputs, outcomes, unexpected consequences that could interfere with successful execution. The planned activities will meet the needs of their target audiences, be they researchers, educators, or practitioners. There is clear evidence that the programs are thoughtfully developed with the necessary stakeholder input. The information presented in the Planned Programs section is fully satisfactory and acceptable.

**General Recommendations:**

The Combined UT/TSU POW Update consists of 13 planned programs. The majority of them are integrated research and extension programs; four programs are extension only programs. Most of the programs described in the plan are mature, long-standing programs that are expanded, modified, or redirected as needed and with considerable stakeholder input processes that enable good program decisions. The logic models are well-constructed and reflect programs that meet the needs of stakeholders. The situation statements that explain the need for the program are supported by published data and reports from public and private sources and are clear and concise. This POW will effectively serve as the guide for program development, delivery, and evaluation for FY 2016. There are no deficiencies in the POW. The Reviewer appreciated and enjoyed reading a POW that was as clear and succinct as this one. Thanks to all who were involved in pulling it together, and thanks to all who will successfully deliver it.

**We hereby recommend NIFA acceptance of this Plan of Work.**

Eric Norland /s/ \_\_\_\_\_

NPL Signature

05/22/2015 \_\_\_\_\_

Date