
Decision on Human Resources Administration

February 1, 2017

The Decision

The *nEXT Generation* project includes assessments of administrative operations, including human resources activities and services. Recently, consultants from Huron completed an assessment of Cooperative Extension human resources functions such as posting positions, hiring, performance reviews, leaves of absence and appointments.

Huron's recommendation, which was accepted by the Executive Sponsors and the Chancellor, is to reorganize the Cooperative Extension Human Resource Development (HRD) office within the [institutional Office of Human Resources \(OHR\)](#) led by [Assistant Vice Chancellor Jason Beier](#), which serves both UW Colleges and some divisions within UW-Extension.

Cooperative Extension human resources needs will be met by a team of managers, assistants and specialists within OHR once the new model is fully implemented in the coming months. OHR will initiate recruitment for these positions in the coming weeks. Current Cooperative Extension HRD staff will have the ability to compete for the new positions.

Rationale for the Decision

Past project work identified the need to improve administrative efficiencies:

- One of the two [main administrative goals](#) for the *nEXT Generation* project is to consolidate Cooperative Extension administrative functions with UW-Extension central administration where possible (e.g., information technology, human resources, business services, marketing), to leverage efficiency and flexibility while maintaining support of our mission;
- The Integration Work Group (IWG) recognizes administrative support as a fundamental component of Cooperative Extension's design in its [Guiding Principles](#), and one that needs to support the mission and purpose driven components of the organization through effective, efficient, and streamlined functions;
- A common finding from the [initial nine Work Group's Gap Analysis](#) is to clarify administrative roles and responsibilities and consistently evaluate and improve the effectiveness of administrative services, like human resources.

OHR has over 15 FTE responsible for managing human resources functions for the UW Colleges, the Business & Entrepreneurship Division of UW-Extension (B&E), and the central UW Colleges and UW-Extension administration, in addition to managing payroll and benefits for all UW Colleges and UW-Extension employees. The office currently has the capacity to manage human resources functions for the ~1,800 employees and ~1,200 student workers across UW Colleges, B&E, and central administration, and will add capacity to manage the roughly 800 employees and student workers from Cooperative Extension.

Reorganizing the human resources function from HRD into OHR will provide a number of benefits to Cooperative Extension including:

- **Capacity:** By moving the 5 FTE from HRD with the 15 FTE from OHR, Cooperative Extension will gain access to a larger pool of staff to support peak workloads and gain efficiencies from working with a larger office dedicated to human resources functions.
- **Specialization:** OHR has or will have specialists focusing on certain human resources functions like leaves of absence (e.g., Family or Medical Leave, Long-Term Disability), data entry into the UW Human Resource System (HRS), and organizational development that can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of human resources services for Cooperative Extension.
- **Standardization:** OHR has been working on digitizing its processes and forms for the three groups it currently services, and has staff dedicated to process improvements. Cooperative Extension will gain efficiency by leveraging these process and technology improvements.

Next steps

Effective January 31, 2017, the current HRD staff have transferred to the OHR for UW Colleges and UW-Extension during this transition period. Those of you who have recruitments, appointments or other human resources activities in process please continue to work with the former Cooperative Extension HRD contacts.

We thank our HRD colleagues for their professionalism and continued support as we move through this transition period.

Sincerely,

Executive Sponsors of the *nEXT Generation* project

Aaron Brower

Provost & Vice Chancellor
University of Wisconsin-Extension

Karl Martin

Dean & Director
Cooperative Extension, University of Wisconsin-Extension

Steve Wildeck

Vice Chancellor for Administrative & Financial Services
University of Wisconsin Colleges & University of Wisconsin-Extension