

November 2005

CNR Statement on NC State “Gateway” Projects and Related Activities

What are “Gateway” projects and how do they relate to Cooperative Extension?

How can teaching, research and extension faculty become more engaged and collaborative/supportive?

What are some NC State funding opportunities for these kinds of efforts?

The Gateway Concept...

Through the office of the Vice Chancellor for Extension, Engagement and Economic Development (EEED), Cooperative Extension and the University Extension Operations Council, NC State has for several years pioneered something called the "Gateway project." This is more of a model or a conceptual approach to having the university engage with communities around the state, than it is a set of specific projects. The fundamental idea this approach gives dimension to, is that communities around the state have issues which many aspects of NC State might be brought to bear on to help formulate and implement positive change. This is analogous in some ways to the Change Management strategy that NC Cooperative Extension Service (CES) has initiated. In both cases the concept is to consider the totality or integrated nature of community issues, and as best as possible work, not only on symptoms, but also on underlying and related needs. The Gateway projects are generally run through the county Extension Centers, such that these offices are the "gateway" to the university. The natural linkages between CES and anyone involved in a Gateway effort should be seamless. The Gateway concept continues the longstanding practice of Extension field faculty collaborating with campus faculty engaged in teaching, research and service. The message here is that every aspect of the university has something to offer local communities and stakeholder groups, and the Gateway concept is a model program that can help us activate this idea.

Refer to: <http://www.ncsu.edu/extension/gateway.htm> for a broad array of Gateway and related links,

The gateway program has been active in 12 to 15 counties for a few years, has met with some success, and has provided a means of assessing our institutional strengths and challenges in responding to local needs. Functionally, the projects that fit this model should be win-win projects where NC State gains benefit as well as the local community. In many projects there will surely be a need for NC State to provide the kind of no-fee service that CES and many others from the university have traditionally brought to the table. But there may also be expanded collaborations where local communities could benefit more if a project were designed to more fully integrate the broader capabilities of NC State. For example, working with local municipal or county governments on a series of planning issues might be well advanced if the partner would contribute funds towards support of a graduate student. The graduate student would focus their energy on the specific issue, and bring along their academic committee to provide further input. This level of activity, in conjunction with a more traditional EEED approach, would provide much more service to the local partner than a traditional link alone.

In truth there is no real need to designate Gateway and non-gateway counties. However, having this as a "brand" seems to have proven useful in piloting this more intentional effort to fully engage the University in a collaborative association with communities. The Gateway brand has become recognizable and valued by the university and in those counties where it is active. It is a brand which resides within the context of the NC State and CES brands, not outside of them. And while any outreach effort of the university (Gateway or not) does not necessarily have to link with CES - it is arguably always best when it does.

Some existing Gateway classified and related projects are - -

Transylvania County – Science House / 4-H teacher training

Wake County – Sustainable development project with regional developer

Lenior County – Farmers Market development

Haywood County – Co-location activity for CES and Industrial Extension Service (IES)

Martin County – Youth research on community sustainability; Opportunities associated with a new horse complex

Johnston County – Clayton Workforce Skills center

A full list of the Gateway projects is available from the EEED office, and each Department Extension Leader (DEL) will know about CNR led efforts that have Gateway type aspects (or be able to refer you as appropriate). Please feel free to contact these people/offices (see below) to learn more about these possibilities. Further, if you will let the DELs and/or CES and EEED office staff know what counties you are working in, and/or your work and county location interests – then when they know of emerging opportunities they can contact you.

Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources, DEL,
Rick Hamilton (rick_hamilton@ncsu.edu)

Department of Wood and Paper Science, DEL,
Joe Denig (joe_denig@ncsu.edu)

Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management, DEL,
Doug Wellman (doug_wellman@ncsu.edu)

Office of Extension, Engagement, and Economic Development - Gateway Coordinators,
Wanda Sykes (wanda_sykes@ncsu.edu) and Jim Clark (jim_clark@ncsu.edu)

Cooperative Extension Service at NC State, Associate Director,
Ed Jones (edwin_jones@ncsu.edu)

CNR Faculty Engagement...

Each NC State faculty member is fundamentally a public servant and available to assist the public. Therefore, every faculty member should consider an outreach/engagement effort (broadly defined) as part of their mission. Each faculty member should discuss with their Department Head the possibility of incorporating EEED into their Statement of Mutual Expectations, if it is not already part of it. This is in keeping with the recognition of this kind of scholarly work in the RPT process across campus. The RPT process includes extension/engagement/service possibilities for every faculty member regardless of their formal appointment status.

Whenever a CNR faculty member has a project off-campus, they should consider how that project might be linked to traditional extension and other types of EEED activities, and then also if their project might lend itself to help develop or support a Gateway type effort. Whatever department you are in, when you plan a project off-campus, please be in touch with your DEL to see if there is some way to link and synergize efforts - even in a small way. Also, for each project off-campus, ask the DEL and send a note to the Gateway coordinator in the EEED office, and to the University CES office, to discover if there might be a fit. The connection with county CES field faculty is particularly important as it contributes to a reciprocal relationship and adds value to the project.

Some of these contacts may result in activities that can benefit the research faculty as well as the local communities and extension personnel. It simply cannot hurt to ask if there is an "engagement" fit possible, and if so if any of the local partners would be interested in helping to support some added level of activity. Such an approach must be done with full consultation with your DEL and through them the local CES office. There are surely many ways to involve graduate students in such work, service learning for undergraduates, outlets for faculty findings, and generation of new ideas for extension, research and teaching.

Some Funding Possibilities...

Through a funds matching program with the Office of the Vice Chancellor for EEED, it is possible to develop faculty and graduate student projects that meet the Gateway concept. Access to these funds requires the development of a joint project with a partner in a local community. The local partner would provide about one-third of the funds, the faculty member/department or college about one-third, and the EEED office one-third. Generally these are modest funding opportunities. For example, each partner contributing a few thousand dollars for a summer field effort. These funds could be used to leverage other work already funded. All faculty can apply for these funds and there is no timetable associated with this program. If you have an idea, contact your DEL and the EEED office to discuss the individual case. It will also be necessary to work closely with your Department Head and Dean to discover if a one-third cost match is feasible at any given time, and what the process is to be considered for the match.

There is also an opportunity for undergraduates in the Honors Program (HON 397) to conduct an engagement project with some funding through the EEED office. A simple application for this funding is required. Please advise your best honors students about this opportunity. This will be a terrific mechanism to begin the training of our next generation of extension and engagement professionals - and to get some excellent work done. Refer to: www.ncsu.edu/honors/pdf/397/397guidelines.pdf for information on this possibility.

If funding from local partners or other organizations seems a possibility for the EEED component of any project, and if CES is involved, then any fee-for service activity must be carefully evaluated in the context of Extension protocols. The NC State Fee-For-Service Task Force Report, January 2005; and recent training on campus (October 7, 2005), provide the basis for understanding this issue (links at www.ncsu.edu/extension/gateway/). Contact the office of EEED for further assistance (Jim Clark, jim_clark@ncsu.edu).

Finally, each year there is also a request for proposals from CNR for the Extension Mini-Grants Program, which is supported through a match from the EEED office. There is a specific request for proposals each year for this program (www.ncsu.edu/sparcs/funding/frpd/frpd.htm).

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