NCERA 223 Building Capacity in Issues Management in the Land Grant System
Annual Meeting
7-9 p.m. Jan. 31 and 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Feb. 1, 2014
Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Dallas, Texas
Year 3: Oct. 1, 2013 - Sept. 30, 2014

Attending:
Elaine Edwards, chair, Kansas State University
Ruth Borger, Florida State University
Abigail Borron, Purdue University
Martha Filipic, Ohio State University
Frankie Gould, Louisiana State University
Virginia White, Auburn University
Kris Boone, Academic Advisor, Kansas State University

Not attending:
Linda Benedict, Louisiana State University
Jason Ellis, Kansas State University
Beth Forbes, Purdue University
Mark Tucker, Purdue University

I. Review of *Strategies to Achieve All Objectives* from our project description.

Discussion centered on:

Strategy 1) Monthly communication via conference call:

- We need to find a new time to meet, perhaps on Fridays, when most members' schedules tend to be lighter. **Martha Filipic** will coordinate.

- The group expressed dissatisfaction with level of discussion during conference calls. Perhaps another meeting method would work better. **Elaine Edwards** will make some inquiries (possibly with Beth Raney, Ann Adrian or Terry Meisenbach) about possibility of using Google Hangouts. Other possibilities include Scopia and Zoom. Also, we discussed sharing more about issues occurring in our states and how we are using IM techniques to handle them. Distributing bulleted lists/notes a few days before the meeting could spur discussion.

- We should consider sharing ideas from our meetings with the LinkedIn group.

- The group expressed the desire to meet in person more than once a year. The consensus was that **those of us who will be at the Association of Communication Excellence conference in Portland will have dinner together Wednesday evening, June 25, for an IM discussion.**

Strategy 2) Inviting more members to join our group.

- We would like to leverage our ACE connections particularly through the Leadership and Management, Media Relations and Research special interest groups. **Abigail Borron and Kris Boone** will move forward with Research SIG. Other possibilities include participants in the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists ag communications section, as well as Tracy Irani's group from the University of Florida's Center for Public Issues Education (PIE Center). We also would like to attract those interested and active in issues management who may not be in communications. **Faith Peppers** will invite those who are engaged in issues management at the University of Georgia to join our group, particularly the assistant director of natural resources who is a strong partner in issues management there. Anyone who is engaged in issues management should be invited to join our LinkedIn group. *See below (under Other Business) for more ideas.*

- **Ruth Borger** will explore possibilities with the PIE Center in Florida, the Kellogg Foundation and the Kettering Foundation for possible funding of research to explore national issues affecting communities that the land-grant system serves. If we find funding for particular research, we can attract more researchers.

- Sonny Ramaswamy, director of NIFA, has said in the past that he will fund an 1890s member to join this group. **Peppers** will ask him if this offer is still on the table. (It's a challenge for 1890s members to officially join group because their line of funding is strictly Extension; they don't have access to research director funding.)

- We need to make our FAQ and proceedings more readily available to new members and potential new members. They are on our Google Drive; **Kris Boone** will load them onto our NCERA 223 site on NIMSS, as that's where researchers will look for such documents.

3) Miscellaneous

- Our project description includes an item, "Graphic Illustration of Matrix," that we decided to delete. **Filipic**

- Our project description includes an item, "Bringing people who are not here to be actively engaged in the process," followed by a list of ideas on how to do that. We should delete those ideas; those are raw notes. **Filipic**

II. Review of Objectives and Milestones

Objective 1: *Increase the capacity of land-grant institutions to successfully implement a strategic issue management approach to relationship management and communications programming.*

Year 2

> **Objective 1 Milestone**: *"FAQ on language."* We completed the FAQ on Issues Management.

Year 3

> **Objective 1 Milestone 1**: *"Publish white paper on current state of issues management and how it will benefit land-grant institutions."* **Abigail Borron, Jason Ellis and Mark Tucker** will add to the unpublished data presented at last year's meeting with new information we are gathering this year to form a complete white paper.

> **Objective 1 Milestone 2:** *"Determine whether additional white papers will be needed in years 4 and 5."* This will likely have to wait until the beginning of Year 4 (after Oct. 1, 2014). **Entire team to discuss during our dinner meeting at ACE in Portland, June 2014.**

> **Objective 1 Miscellaneous**: Under "Procedures and activities involved in achieving this objective," we should delete the final seven bullet points; these are the steps of Issues Management and do not belong under this objective. **Filipic**

Objective 2: *Increase the number of land-grant institutions implementing research-based issues management programs and creating best practices for issues management.*

Year 2

> **Objective 2 Milestone 1**: *"Update literature review."* This is completed.

> **Objective 2 Milestone 2**: *"Establish a research agenda."* Our research agenda is trickling down from the data we have collected. Our future research will be determined. **Borron, Ellis and Tucker** have discussed opportunities.

> **Objective 2 Milestone 3**: *"Continue to collect case studies."* We have collected some and the training team is continuing to collect them. Former member Katie Abrams submitted a case study on Nutrient Loading in Florida (water quality issue) and on Fracking in Tennessee. Other case studies, presented in training sessions, include Arsenic in Rice in Louisiana and Budget Cuts in Georgia. The training team is continuing to collect case studies. This will continue through Year 3. **Peppers and Gould**

> **Objective 2 Milestone 4**: *"Conduct qualitative interviews."* This is in process. **Borron, Ellis and Tucker**

Objective 2 Milestone 5: *"Conduct Meta analysis of case studies."* This milestone was not discussed; it should be shifted to Year 4.

Year 3

Objective 2 Milestone 1: *"Disseminate qualitative research."* Qualitative research still needs to be conducted. Will disseminate after data is collected. This might go into Year 4. The goal is to make more land-grants aware of Issues Management. **Borron, Ellis and Tucker**

Objective 2 Milestone 2: *"Review and update recommendations for best practices."* **Peppers and Gould** will update these by September.

Objective 2 Milestone 3: *"Review and possibly update research needs."* This is ongoing. **Borron, Ellis and Tucker**

Objective 2 Miscellaneous, Year 3:

We had identified research needs in 2011 at the Issues Management symposium in Denver. We will review last year's research paper and our current data collection to add to these research agenda items. The needs outlined in the proceedings from the symposium are:

From Ponce de Leon and Tucker:

- Can land-grant administrators, faculty, and communication staff agree as to the basic premise of responsible issues management?

- Can a vision for responsible issues management be adopted and sound practices employed *consistently* by various stakeholders within the academy whose participation is essential for its success?

- Can responsible issues management be institutionalized not only as a key element of administrative decision-making, but as an area of critical institution-wide discussion and multidisciplinary scholarship?

From Lindsey:

- Further research is needed to study more closely the difference in reporting such complex issues in the national and state media.

- Further research regarding the difference of frames associated with each story type (editorials, features, columns and news) articles would assist practitioners in determining how best to communicate with media when preparing for a story on a complex issue.

- In addition, looking specifically at how individual reporters framed stories could be beneficial for practitioners in understanding media and developing key messages.

- Further research needs to be done to determine if the frames in the state and national newspaper are the same frames that are adopted by the public.

- In addition, it would be of interest to determine if the public is more apt to adopt frames from the national newspapers or the state newspapers.

- Lastly, further research should be done on sources cited. More specifically, conducting an in-depth analysis to determine if the media spokespersons' position and their prior relationship with the media had an impact on the framing of the article.

From Meyers:

- What needs to be done to reach agricultural self-sufficiency in order to eliminate world hunger and poverty?

- How can public and land-grant institutions help encourage agricultural self-sufficiency?

- How can public and land-grant institutions work in collaboration with developmental agencies to achieve these goals?

From Allen:

- What beliefs or perceptions do U.S. consumers have about animal welfare in agriculture?

- How is the media portraying animal welfare issues in U.S. agriculture?

- What informational or educational efforts are necessary for both U.S. consumers and the agricultural industry to address animal welfare issues?

Objective 3: *Enhance institutional communication capacity and the capacity to address problems/potential problems through an issues management approach at land grant institutions.*

Year 2
> **Objective 3 Milestone 1:** "*Continue trainings/workshops.*" We offered trainings at a post-ACE session in June 2013 and at the Southern Region's Program Leaders Network (PLN). We offered other trainings, too. **Peppers, Gould, Edwards and Borger** will send information to Filipic on the training sessions

they've conducted (with locations, dates and evaluation information), including local offerings, so we can keep an up-to-date listing.

Objective 3 Milestone 2: *"Design an issue management professional development curriculum for administrators, communicators, and others as identified by institution."* This is complete; the curriculum is composed of the training materials used at the post-ACE session in June 2013.

Objective 3 Milestone 3: "*Make proposals to SAAS and ACE to offer professional development on Issue Management."* This was completed.

Year 3

Objective 3 Milestone 1: "*Continue to offer professional development trainings face-to-face as needed."* We conducted a session at SAAS in February 2014 and made a proposal for ACE in June 2014. We will discuss offering trainings in our own home states this year.

Objective 3 Milestone 2: "*Offer trainings specifically for 1890 and 1994 institutions or otherwise involve those institutions."* We offered training at PLN in Year 2; this included 1890s institutions in the Southern Region. We will look at PLN agenda for 2014 and if there's an appropriate category, we will make another proposal.

Objective 3 Milestone 3: "*Develop a strategy for delivering training via distance education."* Our sessions at the Iowa ACE meeting (2009) were recorded. **Edwards** will inquire to see if we can get the files so we can post them on Youtube; we plan to create our own Youtube channel. Those sessions are 45 minutes each, though, and we want to keep our distance ed sessions to about 20 minutes.

Our plans for distance ed training include:

- Offer quarterly webinars for communicators. We will inquire whether we can host these through eXtension. We will use Moodle. Sessions will be offered live and then archived for future viewing. Need to determine IM skill level of our target audience.

- **White** will identify an instructional designer before our next phone conference to work with **Peppers** to develop content. Goal is to have something in development (or developed) by the end of September 2014. **Peppers and Gould** will take charge of delivering the content.

- **Borger and Edwards** will work on promotion/marketing of webinars through ACE and through Southern Region PLN. They will create a strategic plan for this by the end of June.

- **Filipic and Borron** will investigate using "Digital Badges" to encourage participation and allow participants to show progression in their knowledge of Issues Management. Will report initial findings at the March phone conference.

  Topics include:

- Issues Management 101 (already have content; need to prepare for webinar)

- Best Practices of Issues Management (already have content; need to prepare for webinar)

- Working with Teams (already have content; need to prepare for webinar)

- Case Studies of Issues Management (already have content; need to prepare for webinar)

- What is the difference between impact reporting and Issues Management?

- How to use impact data to inform Issue Management decisions.

- How to do issues scanning and identification? (broken out from Issues Management 101) (identified as a need from initial survey of communication heads)

- How to do messaging of salient points (identified as a need from initial survey of communication heads)

- Lists of land-grant priorities (identified as a need from initial survey of communication heads)

- An Issues Management plan template (identified as a need from initial survey of communication heads)

- Checklist of necessary IM activities (identified as a need from initial survey of communication heads)

- Ubiquitous issues vs. episodic issues (youth, budget woes, fracking, zoonotics)

  Objective 3 Milestone 4: "*Possibly identify professionals to provide instructional design assistance.*" See Milestone 3, above.

  Milestone 5: "*Design the Critique and Awards (C&A) category in Issue Management for ACE.*" Borger submitted a draft to the group in December. **Boone** will wordsmith and include work on the issue must have been done in

previous year, but not started/ended in previous year (because issues can be worked on over several years); also will add if work on same issue was entered in a previous year, entry must demonstrate significant change in strategy or implementation.

In addition, **Borger** will work on a new C&A category for crisis management, with help from **Filipic**. They will submit a draft by our next phone conference.

Objective 3 Miscellaneous: Peppers reported that the National 4-H Council is working with the CDC, FFA and Young Farmers on a curriculum on zoonotics. It is being piloted this spring and will probably launch in the fall. **Peppers** will check with her contact on the zoonotics task force to see if our IM group can link into this program (help spread the word; use it as Issues Management information).

Objective 4: *Increase the speed and effectiveness of land grant communicators when reacting to national issues impacting land grant institutions.*

Year 2:

Objective 4 Milestone 1: "*Continue trainings/workshops*" See above.

Objective 4 Milestone 2: *"Continue to involve 1890 and 1994 institutions"* See above.

Objective 4 Milestone 3: *"Design an issue management professional development curriculum for administrators, communicators, and others as identified by institution"* See above.

Objective 4 Milestone 4: *"Make proposals to SAAS and ACE to offer professional development on Issue Management"* See above.

Objective 4 Milestone 5: *"Establish a network for land-grant IM by forming a LinkedIn group."* We set up the LinkedIn group; it currently has 26 members.

Objective 4 Milestone 6: "*Disseminate IM information to newly re-formed North Central Administrative Committee in agricultural communications.*" **Boone has done/is doing this.**

Year 3:

Objective 4 Milestone 1: *"Continue network building and rapid response system."* Not all members of our own group are in the LinkedIn group. **Filipic** will follow up with those who have not yet joined. Filipic will also remind **Peppers** to invite (or ask Filipic to invite) others in Georgia, including non-communicators, to join the LinkedIn group. Also, all members of LinkedIn group will be encouraged to invite others with an interest in land-grant issues management.

We will also make a point to invite others from groups we are associated with: ACE, PLN, SAAS, and possibly county agents associations (any group associated with JCEP, the Joint Committee of Extension Professionals). Possibly members of EDEN (Extension Disaster Education Network)? Possibly PILD? Possibly CARET (Council on Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching)? **Borger** will approach CARET national leader Madeline Mellinger about possibly getting on CARET agenda.

Filipic will investigate why LinkedIn messages take so long (a day or longer) to appear in our email in-boxes, and will let others in the LinkedIn group know how to fix.

Note: "Rapid response system" is the wrong terminology. We want to change this milestone to: *"Continue network building among communicators and land-grants and provide tools, potential messages, and lessons learned between institutions."* **Filipic**

Objective 4 Milestone 2: *"Continue to offer training to 1890s and 1994 institutions."* **Gould** will approach L. Washington Lyons at NC A&T and executive director of 1890s land-grants about getting on agenda of Association of Extension Administrators conference in June. Possibly work with an 1890s communicator in offering the training (possibly Deb Archer, Pine Bluff; Matt Browning, W. Va.; Lalette Rainey, NC A&T; or Chanay Bradley, Fort Valley). They're probably all overbooked; we determined that the best strategy might be to make Issue Management a priority among administrators, thus making it a higher priority for staff.

Objective 4 Milestone 3: *"Develop marketing strategy for training materials."* See above. **Borger** and **Edwards** are the marketing team.

III. Planning for Years 4 and 5: Changes/updates needed for milestones:

Objective 2: For Year 4 milestone, *"Showcase best practices through presentations, publications,"* add: Write best practices of issues management articles for the Journal of Extension and/or the Journal of Applied Communications. Also create a best practices presentation and webinar; this is something that any of us should be able to present.

Objective 3: For Year 4 milestone, *"Continue to offer professional development trainings face-to-face as needed,"* add distance ed component. For milestone "Assess demand for an IM Certification Program," change this to the Digital Badges program.

For Year 5, combine first two milestones: *"Continue to offer professional development trainings face-to-face as needed" and "Implement the Distance Education strategy."* Also, change the third milestone to reflect Digital Badges program, not IM Certification Program.

Objective 4: For Year 5, change wording in first milestone from "rapid response system" to the wording used above. Also change wording in second milestone to indicate we will continue to offer training not "to 1890s and 1994s" but "including 1890s and 1994s."

IV. Other Business

- We need a new chair to begin in October 2014 to see us through the end of the five-year project at the end of September 2016. Will discuss/decide at ACE meeting in June.

- We need to determine (at some point) if we will apply to extend our project beyond 2016.

- We would like to add more official members to our group. Before our next conference call: **Borger** will talk to Public Issues Education Center (PIE) in Florida to have one of their members (faculty, staff or grad student) to join us. **Borger** will ask Beth Steuver from Michigan State. **Gould** will talk with Tracy Naile in Oklahoma to see if there's someone there she would recommend. We can ask Karen Cannon to join. **Boone** will talk with ACE Research SIG about joining. **White** has already invited Emery Tschetter, new communications head at Auburn; will talk with him again. **Borger** will talk with Mary Wirth about recommending someone from Penn State. Other possibilities: Bob Sams and/or Pam Kan-Rice in California. Dave Edlund in Tennesee (**Peppers or Gould** will ask). Peg Hering in Oregon. The participants in our ACE workshop from Alaska and New Mexico.

- We will investigate changing the timing/location of our annual meeting. **Filipic** and **Borger** will investigate possibilities; ask current members of the group what airports are preferred and what airports (e.g., Atlanta) to avoid. Will prepare information before we meet at ACE. We will look at possibly meeting for one long day instead of an evening session/daylong session.