

**Synopsis of Models for Improving Extension Program Delivery  
Comparison by Similarities and Differences<sup>1</sup>**

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<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Similarities</b>
<b>County presence</b>	All modeling groups called for a “county” presence for CES. The most common definition included identifiable physical space and at least two staff in that space, with flexibility in combinations of that staff (agents, program assistant, secretary, or other) to match local programs, needs and funding. Most models called for a full time presence, even if that was done by several part-time positions.
<b>Client First</b>	While this phrase appears in almost all of the recommendations from the modeling groups, it has slightly different, but not conflicting, interpretations. In the broadest sense, “client first” refers to developing programs and establishing the priority for resource allocations based upon clear identification of client need. Several of the groups reinforced this concept with organizational structures that showed clients at the top of the organizational structure.
<b>Advisory Boards</b>	All of the modeling groups highlighted the need to institute a statewide Extension advisory board that could be instrumental in setting direction and resource development. Most of the groups also saw the statewide advisory board as the capstone of a network of Extension advisory groups—both local and regional. Most of the groups saw a need for additional training and direction for agents in the best ways to set up and use these advisory groups. Some of the recommendations for improving advisory boards included: enhanced selection process with uniform guidelines, clearer expectations and job descriptions for advisory committee members, handbooks, training and development for advisory committee members, standardized issue identification or needs assessment process, and an “advisory committee website” to share ideas, information and records of meetings.
<b>County Funding</b>	All modeling groups called for some level of county funding, but there were slightly different, but not conflicting, views of the components of county funding. Included in these variations were: ability for counties to raise local funds to support new positions; positions shared across counties but paid in part by all counties using the position; and greater accountability to county government.
<b>Archway Counties</b>	Almost all of the modeling groups had some form of the “gateway” or “archway” concept in which one county or town or city would be the site for linking multiple UGA public service and outreach resources, including CES. This concept does not have to be restricted to all major cities in the state, but there could be a “gateway” county in a

<sup>1</sup> These similarities and differences are drawn from the work of four different modeling groups who worked for several months, including visits to other states and organizations, to envision improvements in Extension program delivery in Georgia. “Similarities” appeared in at least 3 out of the 4 models and “differences” were typically the areas with the greatest range of recommendations and conflicting ideas. This synopsis does not attempt to include all of the recommendations and ideas contained in the full reports. The full modeling reports can be found on the CES website at <http://extension.caes.uga.edu/delivery/modelreports.htm> .

	<p>cluster of very rural counties. An “archway” county would provide office space, video teleconferencing support, would receive funding from all counties in the region, be supported by the University through the vice president for public service and outreach, and help public service and outreach units connect to local communities. “Archway” programs would also provide access to programs and resources not currently available through the current three program areas. This area is also discussed in the differences below.</p>
<b>Accountability and Evaluation</b>	<p>While modeling groups used different terms such as “client satisfaction,” “accountability,” “reporting,” and “evaluation”, there seemed to be agreement among most of the modeling groups that there should be improved resources available to more clearly collect, synthesize and report the impact of CES. Modeling groups also recommended increased use of evaluation tools to measure the quality of programs and the degree of client or user satisfaction as both a tool for improvement and to develop new resources. This area was also tied in several modeling group reports to improved marketing efforts.</p>
<b>Marketing</b>	<p>Almost all of the modeling groups called for the implementation of an Extension marketing plan. In particular, the groups highlighted the need for a “united” or “unified” identity or image for Extension that would encompass variations based on county and community needs. The groups also called for a more formal, research-based and systematic market assessment of potential of new programs and activities that would include proven techniques of surveys, focus groups and mass media.</p>
<b>Technology</b>	<p>All of the modeling groups called for greater use of technology to support, but not replace, human-to-human interactions. Some of the groups identified a range of delivery techniques with certain areas—such as information or data bases more accessible to agents, volunteers and clients—being more strongly supported by technology than more in-depth educational activities which require the human presence. While there was agreement on the extremes—such as technology-based data and agent or specialist presence in large annual educational meetings, the groups thought more research and development was needed to identify types of education that could be as effective and yet more efficient if technology based. Recommendations also seemed to indicate a common theme for greater standardization of technology and advocacy to increase technology infrastructure or “tap into the technology pipeline” in more rural or less populated counties. Most of the groups also agreed that more staff training and development could be technology-based.</p>
<b>Diversify Funding</b>	<p>Almost all the modeling groups identified a more diversified base of funding as a key to the future of Extension program delivery. We have included it here in the synopsis because there was significant agreement on the need to diversify in a few key areas: increased user-fees; more local and regional funding; more grants and contracts; and specialized services to particular industries, organizations or populations. The modeling groups also agreed that this should be a planned, purposeful but slow process because of the long-history of CES providing most of its services without charge. The modeling groups also cautioned that the greatest needs of the state are often in areas or among populations least able to afford user fees. Most of the modeling groups also pointed to the need for improved centralized support for developing grants and contracts. Several aspects of the future of funding also appear below among the differences.</p>

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Differences<sup>2</sup></b>		
<b>1. District or Region Structure</b>	Increase the CES presence through increased location of specialists, research, UGA programs, in district offices, similar to model of Tifton and Griffin.	Maintain the current four district (or increase slightly to 6 districts) configuration with limited district staff and specialists. (See Urban Extension issue below for discussion of an urban district.)	Abolish current districts and district leaders and replace with 12 extension regions, each headed by a regional Extension coordinator. Regional coordinators would interact more closely with county government and, except in counties with 15 or more staff, abolish county coordinator position and have regional coordinator provide management and coordination (For a more complete description of this model, see Model A1 on website.)
<b>2. Resource Allocation Centralized or Decentralized</b>	Focus on more resources “in the field”, primarily in the form of county agents and county educators and program assistants to maximize the resources available to meet local needs	Develop more “specialized” county agents to provide more multi-county, regional or area support to other county agents in specialized areas of traditional three programs and to support increased use of technology, marketing, communications and resource development.	Focus on more centralized resources in areas such as programming, marketing, evaluation, technology, communications, staff development and others to better support county staff.
<b>3. Urban Extension</b>	Focus on all program areas developing programs for urban areas without super-imposing an organizational structure that would classify urban counties differently.	Create an “urban initiative” with a state-level coordinator similar to the current program area coordinators and state staff from all the program areas focused on supporting agents and activities responding to urban issues and opportunities.	Organize all the urban and densely suburbanized counties into one or more “urban district”. If there is only one “urban district”, those counties which are not geographically co-located (for example, Chatham, Richmond and Fulton) could be in the same CES district

<sup>2</sup> The differences described here are presented as a range of options or differences upon which the modeling groups did not agree, either within a modeling group or among modeling groups.

<p><b>4. Relationship with UGA</b></p>	<p>Maintain current organizational ties, strengths and traditions of relationships primarily centered in CAES, FACS and Forest Resources.</p>	<p>Identify more specifically how an “archway” county would function, including types of individuals, UGA units and other organizations that should be housed there.</p>	<p>Dramatically broaden the interface of CES with many other schools and colleges at UGA. Strengthen ties of CES with teaching faculty using service learning principles.</p>
<p><b>5. Staffing</b></p>	<p>Is the present delivery model (subject matter delivered by specialists to agents to clientele) and the relationship of specialist to department and to county agent appropriate to meet the needs of a changing Georgia? What are the relative benefits and detriments to the current model for specialists and agents: issue identification versus contact with agents and clientele; more trainer the trainer, less clientele contact; tenure track versus public service faculty appointments?</p>	<p>Increase the use of county agents with multi-county appointments and the use of area county agent teams in program areas or to address specific area or regional issues.</p>	<p>Increase and standardized the degree requirements for county agents, both at entry level and throughout their career. Improve the public service promotion system and the opportunities for county agents to be more successful.</p>