

# UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

## **Extension Advisory Committee Member Responsibilities**

Extension Advisory Committee (EAC) members inform program development, outreach efforts, and identify community needs to assist University of Maryland Extension (UME) faculty with overall advisory services to support program determination. Committee members should have a personal interest in holistic community development, the ability to see and reflect the needs of audiences that can be addressed by UME, and the ability to maintain a long-term focus towards addressing these needs.

### **Responsibilities include:**

- Serving in an advisory capacity to UME faculty and staff:
  - Staying updated on UME's current programs that are based on the needs of local citizens and communities, current research and technical information, statewide needs and priorities, and national initiatives.
  - Assisting in identifying program priorities based on local community needs.
  - Providing suggested strategies for meeting the identified needs.
  - Providing feedback on UME educational programs and outreach efforts with the goal of improving the programs and efforts.
  - Acquainting new faculty in the community with key organizations and officials.
  - Reviewing local data, public policy, and other information to ensure the mission and vision of UME and the interests and needs of clientele are represented in UME programming on a nondiscriminatory basis.
  - Participating in the necessary University sponsored training as appropriate to committee membership and adhere to the organization's Federal, state, local and universities policies and procedures as program beneficiaries.
  
- Assisting with UME's public relations efforts:
  - Providing suggestions for UME to market itself to local citizens as an indispensable community asset.
  - Marketing UME's mission and vision, purpose, organization, educational programs, and needs to potential audiences, stakeholders, and funders.

*University programs, activities, and facilities are available to all without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, religion, protected veteran status, genetic information, personal appearance, or any other legally protected class.*

- Educating local, state, and federal funders on UME's impacts.
- Identifying and building additional support for UME programs:
  - Helping build and maintain cooperation and involvement of appropriate agencies, organizations, groups, and individuals with UME.
  - Identifying human and financial resources to implement local educational programs.
  - Educating local, state, and federal funders on UME's impacts and advocating for adequate funding and resources.

### **EAC Committee Terms**

The committee should consist of 8 to 12 members.

Length of commitment is a two or three-year term (depending on your respective county/city) with the option to renew one time. After renewing, returning EAC members must wait one term before serving in this capacity again. Provisions should be made to replace membership on a rotational basis.

### **EAC Meetings**

The Extension Advisory Committee will meet a minimum of three times per year with additional meetings as needed; both in-person and virtual meetings are acceptable.

**The EAC serves in an advisory capacity and has no legal authority or responsibilities and assumes no liability for the actions of UME.**

### **Being an Effective EAC Member**

The residents of your county/city look to you to represent their ideas in your work as an EAC member. The success of the County/City Advisory Committee will depend on your engagement as a committee member, working together with faculty and staff to identify community needs and exchanging ideas to meet these needs.

UME faculty and staff in your county/city are responsible for conducting needs assessments, planning, implementing and evaluating their UME program. UME professionals work closely with volunteers and community stakeholder agencies and leaders.

EAC members should work to understand the different UME program areas and the ways these programs manifest in the community, serving youth, adults, and families. The EAC is an important aspect of each UME Office that is able to identify and respond to the changing needs of the community. UME facilitates training, teaching, and learning in four major program areas: Agriculture and Food Systems, Family and Consumer Science, Environment and Natural

Resources, and 4-H Youth Development Program. Members of the EAC provide insights and unique perspectives to inform program development in response to community needs.

Operationally, the Area/City Extension Director may schedule and develop the agenda for meetings, and EAC members may also request for a meeting to be facilitated as timely topics arise. This partnership encourages the spirit of unity and mutual respect for the good of our communities. While the EAC may bring recommendations, implementation of recommendations may or may not be appropriate, given UME funding parameters, University policies, the respective educators' discretion regarding their programming, and State and Federal Guidance.

Effective EAC members attend and actively participate in EAC meetings and UME functions, and attend meetings prepared to share their thoughts and ideas, and to purposefully review current UME programming. If you cannot attend a meeting, contact the point person, meeting convenor, and/or the local UME Office.

EAC members should ideally serve as community connectors who:

- Communicate with individuals within those respective communities.
- Take time to find out what residents consider to be important educational needs and issues, and be prepared to share these ideas, along with suggestions for a course of action to consider.
- Seek opportunities to promote UME's mission in the community by highlighting youth and adult programs and activities.
- Inform elected officials and community stakeholders of UME's reach and positive impacts.
- Encourage programming to reach all audiences.

UME programs and their participants should reflect the population of your community. As Maryland continues to change, so do the needs and priorities of its citizens. The University of Maryland Extension's priorities must change to remain a relevant, effective organization. EAC members commit to be a catalyst for positive community transformation.

### **Marketing, Promotion, and Outreach of UME Mission, Vision, and Programs**

1. **Organizational Level:** Marketing efforts must be holistic in promoting University of Maryland Extension, the College of Agriculture & Natural Resources, and the University of Maryland. Effective marketing of the organization will create an awareness of UME's mission, vision, and the positive impacts of its programs.
2. **Program Level:** The organization's most powerful marketing tools are successful programs. Programs must be consistent with the missions of the organization and with the College. Impacts and outcomes must be measurable and communicated to elected officials and community stakeholders.

3. **Relationship Level:** Put the relationships you have built to work! While many marketing efforts promote visibility with new audiences through media exposure, don't overlook "people power." Transforming individuals and organizations from a state of indifference to understanding, partnership, and action increases the likelihood of sustainable positive change.

### **How can EAC Members Support Marketing Efforts?**

- Communicate the mission, program impacts and results of UME to elected officials and other stakeholders.
- Serve as an ambassador for UME by articulating the importance, benefits, and impact of our community-based educational programming.
- When speaking to individuals or groups about UME programs, use the first few minutes to speak about the local connection to the University of Maryland and the College of Agriculture & Natural Resources.
- Assist UME faculty and staff in developing and facilitating marketing, promotion, and outreach for major program areas.
- Use promotional materials provided by UME to increase visibility and credibility for the University of Maryland, the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and University of Maryland Extension at the community level.
- Assist UME faculty and staff in recruiting new volunteers for the various UME programs and to serve on the EAC.
- Serve as mentors for new EAC members and program volunteers.