2025 Course Handbook

THANK YOU for participating in Achieving the Extension Mission through Volunteers!

*Volunteers are fundamental to many Extension programs, yet research indicates that nearly 1/3 of volunteers quit because of poor management practices. The North Central Region 4-H Volunteer Specialists developed the online course, **Achieving the Extension Mission through Volunteers**, for the novice and experienced Extension professional working with volunteers to enhance and deliver Extension programs. This course is designed to highlight best practices while building staff and organizational capacity in volunteer development and management in all Extension program areas with a cohort of peers.*

Overall course objectives:

Participants will:

- ❖ Increase volunteer management competencies

- ❖ Build knowledge and skills to identify, select, orient, train, utilize, recognize, and evaluate volunteers (ISOTURE Model)

- ❖ Learn current volunteer trends and how they may impact programming

- ❖ Understand the organization's philosophy related to volunteerism and develop their own philosophy

Course Site:

- To access the course site, participants will receive a confirmation email immediately after registration that includes sign-on information and the link to the course (please save). Participants will also receive an email from their cohort facilitators prior to the introductory week with more information.

Course Structure:

- During this 7-week course participates learn with a cohort of colleagues through pre-recorded presentations, readings, activities, 3 live webinars, 3 video conference calls, while interacting with a wide variety of resources and experts. It will take approximately 4-6 hours to complete designated material each week of the course.

Handbook Icon Glossary:

Learning Activity	Handout	Pre-recorded Presentation
Discussion Board	Course Zoom Presentation	
Cohort Connection	Put on your calendar	
Optional "Side Trip" for deeper learning		

Course Week	Activity	2025 Dates & Times in Central Time Zone (CT)	Calendar Notes
Week 1	Intro Week	January 27 – February 2	Block 30 min to 2-hour segments of "course work" on your calendar this week, adding up to 4-6 hours
	Cohort Connection	Thursday, January 30, 10:30am-12:00pm (CT)	Participate in a live, video call with your cohort. Link will be provided by facilitators
Week 2	Modules 1-2	February 3 - 9	Block 30 min to 2-hour segments of "course work" this week, adding up to 4-6 hours
	Course Zoom Presentation #1	Thursday, Feb. 6, 10:30 am - 12:00 pm (CT) **OR** Friday, Feb. 7, 10:30 am - 12:00 pm (CT)	Choose one time to participate in a live, interactive presentation. Link provided on course site.
Week 3	Module 3	February 10 - 16	Block 30 min to 2-hour segments of "course work" on your calendar this week, adding up to 4-6 hours
Week 4	Work Week	February 17 - 23	Work Week – Content Deep Dive, Block the time you need to complete coursework to this point
	Cohort Connection	Wednesday, February 19, 10:30am – 12:00pm (CT)	Participate in a live, video call with your cohort. Link will be provided by facilitators
Week 5	Module 4	February 24 - March 2	Block 30 min to 2-hour segments on your calendar of "course work" this week, adding up to 4-6 hours
Week 6	Module 5	March 3 - 9	Block 30 min to 2-hour segments of "course work" on your calendar this week, adding up to 4-6 hours
	Course Zoom Presentation #2	Thursday, March 6, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm (CT) **OR** Friday, March 7, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm (CT)	Choose one time to participate in a live, interactive presentation. Link provided on course site.

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Week 7	Module 6	March 10 - 14	Block 30 min to 2-hour segments of "course work" this week, adding up to 4-6 hours
	Cohort Connection	Tuesday, March 11, 10:30am – 12:00pm (CT)	Participate in a live, video call with your cohort. Link will be provided by facilitators
	Course Zoom Presentation #3	Thursday, March 13, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm (CT) **OR** Friday, March 14, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm (CT)	Choose one time to participate in a live, interactive presentation. Link provided on course site.
	Course Completion	Friday, March 14	Last day course is moderated by cohort facilitators. Course is open through March.

Week One: Introductory Week

Monday, January 27 – Sunday, February 2
The first week of the course is very important! Before we dig into the content – we work to develop our online learning community, ensure all participants are familiar with the course site, understand how to write & interact in Discussion Boards, and that everyone has the technology they need to be successful.

Explore the **Achieving the Extension Mission Through Volunteers** course site to become familiar with the course layout.

- **Go to "Start Here"** on the Course Site.

  o Review all the resources under: *Tips for being successful in an online course*

    □ Print: Create your course binder (optional)

    - For your convenience, we have provided all the handouts used in the course, as well as module divider pages, to help you organize a course binder to reference during and after the course is completed. (Binder not included in course)

    □ Complete: Create your Profile on the course site (Canvas)

    □ Read: Tips for Discussion Board Contributions

    □ Reach out: Post to the HELP Discussion Board, if need

- o 📢 Complete the Pre-course Volunteerism Self-Assessment

- o 💬 *Actively engage* in the Discussion Board, "Introductions". Post your own response and comment on *at least* two others! **Check back regularly** through the week to get-to-know other participants and build our learning community

- o 📹 *Participate in the Introductory Week live Cohort Connection* with your cohort (see schedule for date and time). You will receive an email from your cohort facilitators with log-on information.

- o 📅 Designate time on your calendar to work on course materials. It is recommended that you block increments of 30 min to 2-hours throughout the week. The table on page 3 provides an outline of course activities to add to your calendar.

Week Two: Modules 1 and 2

Monday, February 3 – Sunday, February 9

Module 1: Volunteerism in Extension

After this Module you will be able to:

- ❖ Define volunteerism and how critical volunteers are to Extension programs.

- ❖ Recognize the elements of an effective volunteer delivery system and the role of the volunteer program manager within the context of local Extension programming.

- ❖ Assess current volunteer delivery systems including specific elements of volunteer development, volunteer system management and personal readiness.

- ❖ Identify your personal approach to volunteerism as it relates to your volunteer program manager role.

📦 **Chapter 1: What is Volunteerism?**
- ● This chapter gives an overview of volunteerism across Extension including insights from Retired Dean and Director Rick Klemme of Wisconsin and Associate Dean and Retired Director Dorothy Freeman of Minnesota.

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Chapter 2: The Volunteer System and Manager Role

- Consider the distinction between leading and developing people and managing systems.

Chapter 3: Extension Professional Development Model

- Jim Rutledge, Adjunct Professor and Executive Director 4-H Foundation, Inc. 4-H Foundation Development Manager at Oklahoma State University helps you think about how your own professional development stages influence the capacity to reach larger audiences with more valuable educational programs.

Chapter 4: Personal Approach to Volunteerism

- ❖ Identify your personal approach to volunteerism and how it relates to your professional role.

Discussion Board: Module 1

Optional Side-Trip: Conducting a Stakeholder Interview (5 minutes)

- This optional activity will be referenced at the end of the course during the module on public, organizational and private value. This presentation is offered here so you have a chance in the next couple weeks to make appointments and conduct your interview.

Module 2: Trends and Motivations

After this Module you will be able to:

❖ Articulate trends in volunteerism, including identifying generational differences in volunteers, differentiating between traditional volunteers and potential new volunteer types

Chapter 1: Trends and Motivations

- Consider the shifts in volunteering and how Extension programs can capitalize on these changes.

Discussion Board: Module 2 (optional)

Chapter 2: Course Zoom Presentation #1
Volunteerism in Extension and Course Introduction

Participate in one live, interactive presentation:

- Thursday, Feb. 6, 10:30 am - 12:00 pm (CT) **_OR_**

- Friday, Feb. 7, 10:30 am - 12:00 pm (CT)

Week Three: Module 3

Monday, February 10 – Sunday, February 16

Module 3: Identifying and Recruiting Volunteers

After this Module you will be able to:

❖ Conduct a community assessment of volunteer capacity

❖ Create a volunteer role description to match identified needs

❖ Develop a volunteer recruitment plan

Chapter 1: Community Assessment of Volunteer Capacity
- Explore assessment tools for identifying new volunteers

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Chapter 2: Developing and Analyzing Role Descriptions
- Consider role descriptions and the volunteers who would be attracted to them.

Chapter 3: Developing a Recruitment Plan
- Consider what should be included in a recruitment plan.
- Create a "sales pitch" for recruiting a specific volunteer.

Discussion Board: Module 3

Optional Side-Trip:
- Explore VEAR - Volunteer Engagement and Activation Resources

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➡️ Week Four: Work Week ⬅️

Monday, February 17 – Sunday, February 23

Is there a side trip you wanted to complete but haven't had time?
Is there a Chapter you haven't been able to watch?
Would you like more time to engage in the Discussion Board conversation?

Content Deep Dive
- This week is designed to provide an opportunity to dive deeper into the first few weeks of content and to catch up with any incomplete course activities to ensure you are prepared to participate in Modules 4-6.

📹 Participate in Cohort Connection #2

Cohort facilitators will guide a conversation, with time for questions and comments.
- **Wednesday, February 19 10:30 am – 12:00 pm (CT**)
    - Look for an email from your Cohort Leaders with a link and information on how to participate

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Week Five: Module 4

Monday, February 24 – Sunday, March 2

Module 4: Selecting and Matching Volunteers

After this Module you will be able to:

❖ Identify best practices of selecting volunteers

❖ Locate local policies and procedures related to your program area

❖ Explain components of a volunteer orientation

Chapter 1: Purpose of the Volunteer Selection Process
- Consider the integrity of the volunteer selection process.

Chapter 2: Components of the Volunteer Selection Process
- Learn about the components necessary in the selection process.

Chapter 3: Interview Process
- Discover the resources your state provides to help in interviewing volunteers.

Chapter 4: Placement of Volunteers
- Consider the most appropriate placement of volunteers for both the program and the volunteer.

Chapter 5: Orienting Volunteers
- Learn what to include in orientation to help make volunteers great ambassadors of your program.

Discussion Board: Module 4

Optional Side-Trip:
- Practice Interview: Using the resources from your state and program area (*or the ones that you found in the previous activity*) and the information in this module, plan and conduct a practice interview (15-20 minutes) with a co-worker, friend, family member, or other semi-willing subject.

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Week Six: Module 5

Monday, March 3 – Sunday, March 9

Module 5: Supporting Volunteers

After this Module you will be able to:

❖ Determine appropriate training for volunteers using role description.

❖ Apply formal and informal methods of recognizing volunteers according to their individual motivation.

❖ Build rapport with volunteers that reflect professional boundaries and communication.

❖ Apply appropriate coaching methods to volunteer systems management.

❖ Implement a comprehensive volunteer support system that includes training, coaching, and recognition.

📦 **Chapter 1: Training**
- Determine training needs based on volunteer roles.
- Determine what training is required, necessary, and recommended.
- Consider adult learning theory and why is it important in volunteer training.
- Consider delivery methods for offering volunteer training.

📦 **Chapter 2: Recognition**
- Explain volunteer motivation.
- Describe a culture of appreciation.

📦 **Chapter 3: Building Professional Relationships with Volunteers**
- Build professional relationships with volunteers.
- Consider professional ethics and setting boundaries.

📦 **Chapter 4: Coaching, Part One**
- Understand the skills needed for effective coaching.
- Learn ways of providing feedback.

📦 **Chapter 5: Coaching, Part Two**
- Consider how to discipline and dismiss volunteers.

💬 **Discussion Board: Module 5**

Chapter 6: Course Zoom Presentation #2
Handling Volunteer Dilemmas and Practicing Feedback
Participate in one live, interactive presentation:

- Thursday, March 6, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm (CT) <u>*OR*</u>

- Friday, March 7, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm (CT)

Week Seven: Module 6

Monday, March 10 – Tuesday, March 14

Module 6: Communicating Public Value

After this Module you will:

❖ Understand the impact of volunteers to Extension and how they extend the university's   reach.

❖ Distinguish the difference between individual, organizational and public value.

❖ Understand methods to assess stakeholder perspectives.

❖ Demonstrate how communicating value can be integrated into programming.

❖ Articulate the impact of volunteer involvement in your local program.

Chapter 1: Communicating the Public Value of Volunteers
- Understand the impact volunteers to Extension and how volunteers extend the resources of the university.
- Review the importance of communicating the value of volunteers.
- Consider how to help volunteers communicate public value.

Chapter 2: Course Summary
In Chapter 2, Wendy walks us through the key concepts we've covered throughout the course, including:
- Recruitment and the importance of developing relationships with volunteers (McKee)
- Extension Professional Development Model (Rutledge)
- ISOTURE Model as a foundational base for working with volunteers
- Calculating and communicating the community and public value of volunteers

Participate in Cohort Connection #3
Cohort facilitators will guide a conversation.
- **Tuesday, March 11, 10:30 am – 12:00pm (CT**)
Look for an email from your Cohort Leaders with a
link and information on how to participate

Chapter 3: Course Zoom Presentation #3
Communicating Public Value and Applying ISOTURE to your work
Participate in one live, interactive presentation:
- Thursday, March 13, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm (CT) _**OR**_
- Friday, March 14, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm (CT)

Optional Side-Trips:

The following Chapters will deepen your understanding about communicating Public Value and building relationships with stakeholders. They are *optional side-trips* to accommodate the time needed to complete the course, however participants are encouraged to take the extra time to engage in this material.

- **Module: Communicating Personal, Organizational and Public Value**
  - Nancy Franz, Professor Emeritus, School of Education, Iowa State University discusses the importance of communicating public value as it relates to volunteers.
- **Module: Crafting an Elevator Speech**
  - Describe your volunteer program in sixty seconds. In this chapter you will learn the elements of an elevator speech and begin to craft your message.

End Here: Course Completion Activities
- Complete: Post Course Self-Assessment
- Complete: Final Course Evaluation
- Download/Print your Course Certificate

The Course site will remain open through March to allow for participant review and catch-up.

Copyright note: You may apply what you have learned from this course, but you do not have permission to teach with the materials.

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