University of Missouri Mission

- Research
- Teaching
- Outreach and Extension
- Economic Development
Linking Graduate Student Survey Research Training with Locality-Based Economic Development: The University of Missouri Program

SHARON GULICK, PCED – DIRECTOR, EXCEED
DAVID J. O’BRIEN, PH.D. – DIVISION OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES
RENEE REED-MILLER – GSA, RURAL SOCIOLOGY
Extension Community Economic and Entrepreneurial Development (ExCEED) Program

• Builds awareness among rural communities of entrepreneurship and place-based economic development strategies.

• Assists communities in supporting, encouraging and facilitating entrepreneurship.

• Facilitates collaborations between the University of Missouri and communities throughout the state.
ExCEED partners with regions to…

- Enhance community’s economic base and quality of life.
- Develop vibrant rural economies.
- Build awareness of and support for place-based economic development strategy.
- Facilitate collaboration with University of Missouri faculty – Extension and teaching.
Origins of the Program

Three Convergent Interests

• Practical experience for students taking survey research training and will be working in locality-based economic development programs, typically in rural regions

• The need for locality-based economic development organizations to obtain scientific data on what goals community members’ – stakeholders, different sub-groups, etc. – would like to accomplish

• The need to operate within a very limited budget
• ExCEED’s graduate students shared their experiences with fellow students.

• Desire of Rural Sociology graduate students to have opportunity to expand learning beyond the classroom.

• Seeking opportunity to gain “real world” experience that tests what they hear in the classroom with what they experience in the community.
Key Elements in the Program

• Identifying a locality-based economic development organization that has some general idea of an economic goal they would like to pursue and/or a problem they have in member participation and goal setting.

• The organization must demonstrate a willingness to work with the survey class in developing specific research questions, framing hypotheses, sampling strategy and survey instrument design.
• During the 15-week course, students meet with community to discuss their data needs and determine how the survey will be conducted. The students then design, conduct collect survey, analyze responses and present findings to the community.

• Students learn to communicate with locality-based people rather than their professors. This is an important skill that they can take with them into the job market and accounts for the high placement rate of students in local and regional economic development programs.
Examples of Locality-Based Survey Development
Bethany, Missouri

• A small agriculturally-dependent town with significant agricultural-based wealth; but an aging and increasingly dependent population.

• Local Chamber Director approached ExCEED requesting assistance with surveying community on economic development goals.

• Key Survey Question: What kinds of development goals will be supported by the local community?
Importance of Community Development Goals by Different Segments of the Bethany Community - 5 point scale; all items in which F-Test of Mean Differences p<.05.
Missouri River Bluffs Association

• Membership association of small producers, tourism-related business, B&Bs, etc.

• Survey question: Why are we having trouble retaining members and attracting new members?
What is your economic activity?

N = 46 (respondents could answer more than one option)
Does the MRBA website provide relevant information for my business?

- Very important: 37%
- Not important: 32%
- Indifferent: 31%

N = 35 respondents
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Non-Members</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meetings invite everyone to define organizational goals</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders ensure board’s actions are communicated with its members</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings are run in a timely manner</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages members to introduce new ideas</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcoming place for people of all ages</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcoming place for men and women</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcoming place for all ethnic and racial groups</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Five-point Scale ANOVA Mean Differences between Members and Non-Members, p<.05*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Non-Members</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meetings tend to be more social than</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>informative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association does not provide me with</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>much useful information to help my business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association members work well together</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association leaders make important decisions</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outside of the board and general meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association meetings are convenient for</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my schedule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Five-point Scale ANOVA Mean Differences between Members and Non-Members, p<.05
Marceline Community Arts and Economic Development Survey

- Small town in north central Missouri with strong focus on tourism related to being the boyhood home of Walt Disney and model for Main Street USA at Disneyland.
- Wanted to explore community support for expansion of tourism efforts and adding a focus on the arts.
Increasing tourists will help local businesses to expand

More tourists from other states

More tourists from Missouri

More tourists from other countries

Increasing tourists will attract new businesses

Tourism will help keep young people from leaving the community

Tourism only helps a small number of people

Concerned that tourists from other places may not share Marceline

Have no desire to see any changes

Agree & Strongly Agree (%)
The Art Camp for Youth and Adults is not pictured here. Less than 10% combined were interested in attending, volunteering or donating for those particular items.
Levels of Involvement in Art-Related Activities

Other Art includes: Metal Sculpture, Ceramics/Pottery, Media Art, Design Arts, Quilting, Jewelry Making

**Music includes: Live Country Music, Live Blue Grass, Live Square Dancing, Live Blues, Classic Rock, Live Jazz
What will attract more tourists to Marceline?

- Free internet: 55%
- Music bar: 58%
- Disney: 59%
- Combine art with sale of local food: 71%
- Investment in ad.: 75%
- Advertising: 81%
- Involvement of local schools in arts: 82%
- Dining options: 88%
- Hotels: 91%
- Eliminate empty buildings: 96%
Ashland Area Survey

• Small bedroom community located between two larger communities with significant outmigration of employment – Columbia (University of Missouri) and Jefferson City (State Capitol).

• Wanted help in determining community support for expanded efforts on economic development, buy local campaign and downtown enhancements.

• Repeating survey in 2016
Q. 7 - Where do you feel the greatest sense of belonging?

- City of Ashland: 124 (45%)
- So. Boone County: 87 (32%)
- City of Columbia: 27 (10%)
- Jefferson City: 15 (5%)
- Other: 23 (8%)
Q. 23 & 24 - In what location do you and other members of your household work?
Tax Support for Maintaining Current Service Levels

People support *specific* services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Support*</th>
<th>Don't Support**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police services</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Maintenance &amp; Cleaning</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storm Water Management</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Recreation</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration and Planning</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(19% undecided)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Support for a Commercial Development Tax

Overall, respondents DO SUPPORT, with the exception of the area near the airport.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Support*</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Don't Support**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near Airport</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Areas in Ashland</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Industrial</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Businesses</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial Activities</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages are rounded so may not add to exact total.
*Includes those that "somewhat support" and "strongly support." **Includes those that "strongly oppose" and "oppose."
Challenges and Considerations

- Convincing faculty that this type of collaboration will benefit them and as well as their students.
- Getting students off campus and into communities
  - Costs of travel/lodging
- Supervising the students – they need to experience working in a community, but also should “do no harm”
  - Encouraging learning while keeping things real
- Dealing with conflict of classroom theory with community reality
Our Goals for the Future

• Seeking grant funding to support the development of our “Resilient Communities” engagement product

• How this fits in with larger objectives of ExCEED and Div. of Applied Social Sciences

• Service Learning Course

• Collaborative possibilities with SRUC, University of Edinburgh
Student Comments
“My time with ExCEED and the subsequent participation in the survey research class was invaluable to my professional development. I pull from the experiences and skills I garnered on a daily basis in my current position. I will be forever grateful for the opportunity I was given.”

Jana Porter, MS
Associate Director, MU AHEC
University of Missouri School of Medicine
Rural Track Pipeline Program
“ExCEED gave me a great opportunity to tailor and adapt what I learned in graduate school to help local communities work towards achieving their community goals. Often times you learn that there’s a difference between what works in school and how things actually work in local communities.”

Mark Porth
Housing & Environmental Design Specialist
University of Missouri Extension
“The internship with Sharon Gulick at ExCEED helped prepare me for the community coaching I do now. I still recall those experiences as I work South Dakota communities. The internship allowed the skills and theories learned in the classroom to come to life in Missouri communities. You simply can’t replace real world experience, and I am grateful for the opportunity the ExCEED internship provided me early in my community development career.”

Kenneth Sherin
Community Development Field Specialist
South Dakota State University Extension
“Being a student-researcher with ExCEED has taught me an invaluable lesson on how to properly and realistically approach data collection in rural areas. There are unteachable moments that happen unobtrusively when one conducts research in the field—experiencing these lessons firsthand is the only practical way to prepare for them.”

Elliott Meador, Ph.D. Candidate, Rural Sociology, University of Missouri

“Working with the ExCEED program has been a tremendous opportunity for me to grow in practical ways, as an aspiring community development practitioner. What I am learning, on a daily basis—through ExCEED—cannot be gained via lectures or textbooks; these lessons must be lived.”

Renée Reed-Miller, Master’s Candidate, Rural Sociology, University of Missouri
For more information, contact:

Sharon Gulick, PCED
Director, ExCEED
University of Missouri Extension
573-884-0669
GulickS@missouri.edu