

Changing Times Call for Innovation

Balancing local touch, access to knowledge and a budget

Balancing perspectives

Personal health articles often point to *balance* as a key to success. It's no surprise that balance is increasingly a key for the health of University of Missouri Extension.

With societal and technological changes reshaping the *how and when* of education, MU Extension has reshaped the *how and when* of its programs. To remain relevant, we must do this. Communities across the state have told MU that they need a local community-focused person who is easy to contact and

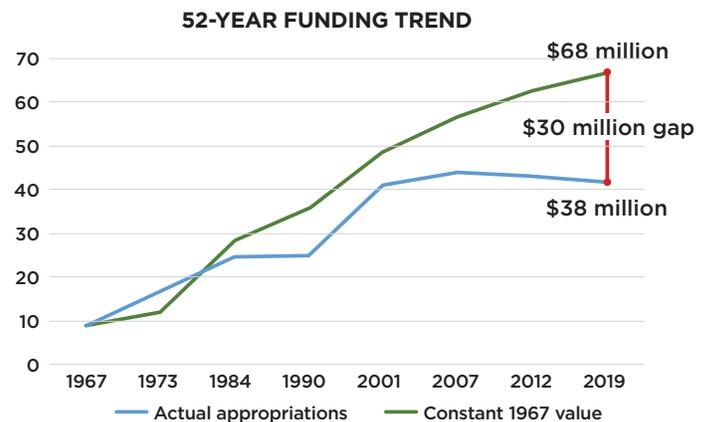
fully engaged with their community. They also want in-depth knowledge easily accessible in their communities, and a connection point to university researchers.

To make this happen, we are transitioning to balance local touch and in-depth knowledge to create stronger engagement and outcomes at the local level, built on applying high-tech university science to the community.

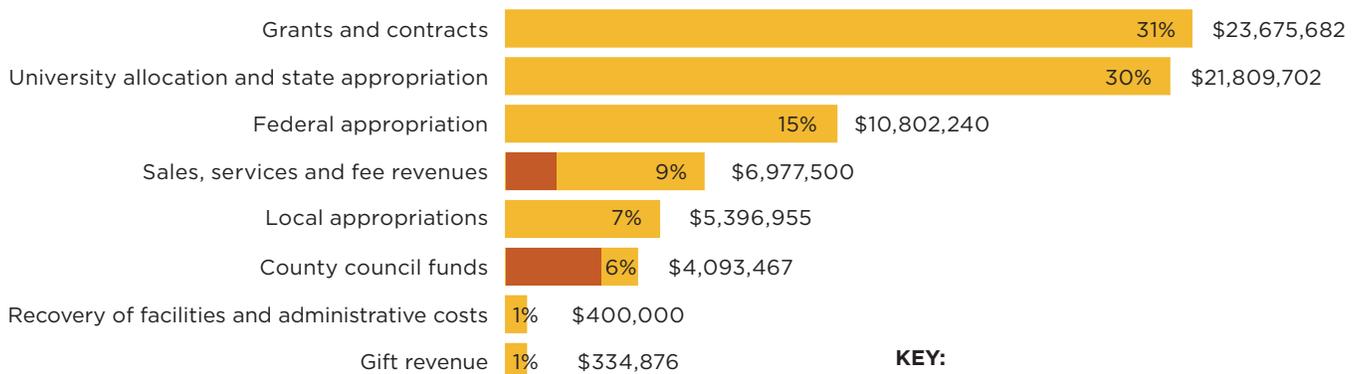
The challenge

Our challenge is to provide more effective local coverage with a diminishing budget. The graph on the right shows that over the last 52 years, appropriations have not kept pace with the rate of inflation and other cost of living factors (the Constant 1967 value). In 1967, we were serving approximately 4.6 million Missourians; but **today the population we serve has increased to 6.2 million.**

While federal, state and county appropriations have historically been referred to as a three-legged stool that supports extension, this model is changing, as shown below. In FY 2019, funding from grants and contracts has become the largest source of revenue for MU Extension, exceeding state appropriations. Today, the three-legged funding stool is no longer able to perform its function of supporting extension program delivery.



MU Extension's budgeted sources of funding for FY 2019



Balancing budgets

In order for MU Extension to continue our valuable educational work, we must increase revenue generation. One way we will achieve this is by implementing three major fiscal changes:

- ◆ Standardizing fees for programs offered statewide
- ◆ Recovering costs for infrastructure support
- ◆ Recovering costs for program maintenance and development

Statewide effects

By **standardizing fees** charged to customers across all counties for programs we offer statewide, we project an overall increase in program revenue for both county council and state program efforts in 2019. For the first time, extension will be able to accurately track and account for the many factors that go into program development, maintenance and delivery. Knowing these true costs will enable MU Extension to better support educational opportunities for Missourians.

Standardized fees for state-based programs will enable neighboring counties to fairly attract participants. A fixed amount of the fee will be credited to the local extension council and to program development. Costs for items such as room rental and food will be allowed above the state program fee.

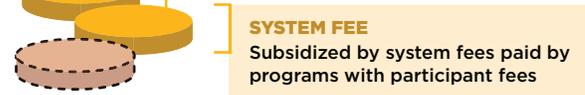
For most counties, moving toward standardized fees for statewide programs will increase local county program income, which will enable councils to promote and provide programming to constituents. It will also provide funding for state program units, and enable them to update and develop new curricula, add program faculty and staff, as needed, and collaborate with regional faculty for optimal program delivery.

In spring 2019, extension will begin **recovering costs for infrastructure support**. This includes credit card fees, Cvent fees (our new event management software), conference office staff support and a fee that helps offset the overhead of programs offered free to the public. It is crucial to note that, in the past, most event financial transactions were handled manually. There were no mechanisms to account for the actual cost of this manual labor. The new financial systems will enable us to accurately realize, track and assign these costs for the first time.

Extension will also more consistently **recover costs for program maintenance and development** through program revenue fees — an investment in ensuring that the university can continue to provide high-quality programming and delivery throughout the state. These fees go toward the substantial expense of updating existing programs and developing new ones. A new program costs an average of \$150,000 to develop. Updating a program averages \$35,000. Often, additional faculty need to be hired, outside curricula and materials need to be purchased or professional development opportunities need to be provided.

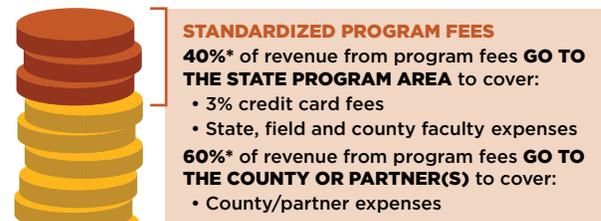
Extension programming value

Programs with NO FEES for participants



OPTIONAL FEES
Additional charges can be included to cover costs for food and facilities.

Programs WITH PARTICIPANT FEES



OPTIONAL FEES
Additional charges can be included to cover costs for food and facilities.

* The 40/60 split will be typical, but specific programs may justify a different split.

The decision as to which programs will have a fee, and the amount of the fee itself, is guided by the question of who pays for the programs, from those fully subsidized (such as emergency drought programs) to those with some individual contribution (such as estate planning). We recognize that reduced funding will directly shift some of the cost to participants who benefit from local programming. But, ultimately, this shift will help us sustain quality programming and staffing that can be adapted and updated to meet local needs.

How we share program costs



Balancing coverage

MU Extension’s staffing plan enables our faculty specialists to balance local touch and in-depth knowledge.

Local coverage

The role of county program director has been replaced by county engagement specialists (CES), who serve as a local liaison — matching MU’s resources and knowledge to the needs of each community. The CES specializes in 4-H youth development, nutrition and health or community-economic development. CES positions are mostly place-based assignments of one to four counties, and are supervised by the regional director.

Counties in most rural parts of the state have been aligned in trios, enabling three county engagement specialists to work together to provide high-impact programming to develop local economies, prepare youth for bright futures or promote community health in each county. Suburban and urban counties are served by all three CES program areas, but to better serve larger populations, all three specialists work in pairs of counties or in a single large county, with one or two in the role of CES.

Regional coverage

Field specialists serve larger areas typically made up of four or more counties. They deliver programming, technical assistance and research-based expertise to targeted stakeholders, such as farmers, small business owners or local gardeners. Some faculty, such as livestock specialists or horticulture specialists, are most effective working in small areas of four to six counties. Some faculty, in fields such as agricultural engineering, business development or human development, are covering larger areas. Field specialists are supervised by education directors within their subject matter, and coverage areas are needs-based.

Statewide coverage

Extension state specialists are MU professors who serve the entire state by developing and improving upon research-based programming and providing technical assistance, publications and other resources that extend the knowledge of the university.

State specialists partner with field specialists and county engagement specialists in program development and improvement.

EXAMPLES OF LOCAL COVERAGE: COUNTY ENGAGEMENT SPECIALISTS

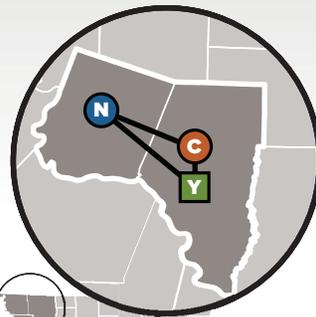
SERVING 3-4 RURAL COUNTIES

- ✓ Each trio of counties will have one of the following specialists in the CES role:
 - N** Nutrition and Health
 - Y** 4-H Youth Development
 - C** Community/Economic Development
- ✓ All three will serve in the CES role — matching resources of MU to the needs of the community.



SERVING 2 SUBURBAN COUNTIES

- ✓ Each suburban county duo will be served by a specialist in each of the three CES program areas: **Nutrition and Health, 4-H Youth Development and Community/Economic Development.**
- ✓ Two of the specialists will serve in the CES role — matching resources of MU to the needs of the community.



SERVING ONE URBAN COUNTY

- ✓ Each urban county will be served by a specialist in each of the three CES program areas: **Nutrition and Health, 4-H Youth Development and Community/Economic Development.**
- ✓ One of the specialists will serve in the CES role — matching resources of MU to the needs of the community.



- County Engagement Specialist
- Field Specialist (serving small areas)

New steps in continual improvement

We listened to your concerns and suggestions, and we have taken steps to address them. Here's how our new financial practices will benefit your county.

- ✓ Our **new staffing plan** is being implemented, filling existing gaps of extension specialists service coverage.
- ✓ Currently, 113 counties are participating in a **statewide travel system** in which MU Extension supports 30 percent of travel costs.
- ✓ Sixteen counties are taking advantage of an **MOU process** that enables their administrative support staff to become University of Missouri employees, thereby gaining access to staff benefits for these employees.
- ✓ In 2019, the calculation for the **youth program associates cost share is simplified**. We eliminated the fixed payment option, and are now using the actual percentage for each county, ensuring that each council is billed only for hours actually worked.
- ✓ Youth program assistant positions are now reclassified upward to youth program associates. Experience shows that this will improve the candidate pools.
- ✓ We are moving to a **single invoice/statement for funds moving between county councils and campus**. This will include 4-H membership fees and program fees.
- ✓ MU Extension will pay the full cost for two council members from each county to attend the County

DID YOU KNOW?

The new staffing model will provide each county with at least a dozen nearby specialists to serve their communities.

Extension Council Workshop **MU for You** in March 2019. Counties can send more than two council members, but will need to cover the additional cost. County engagement specialists will also attend this joint learning opportunity.

- ✓ **Online council training modules** will be live in March 2019, enabling council members to use them at their convenience.
- ✓ We are implementing a **Fill and Grow hiring policy** that will enable us to hire appropriate candidates with a bachelor's degree in instances where we have had failed searches.
- ✓ We are examining innovative ideas for blended positions that will help counties maximize personnel expenses, such as a full-time employee split serving both as a youth program associate and an administrative assistant.
- ✓ The Nexus@Mizzou team is moving forward with building out the **new MU Extension website**. The site is currently 60 percent complete and the target for full functionality is May 1, 2019.
- ✓ MU Extension's continuing medical education, nursing outreach and nutrition and health programs are collaborating with other MU schools and programs to **pilot an opioid interdiction program** in our Southeast Region.
- ✓ We are working with seven counties with an MOU to **bridge their funding gaps** so they can move to a three-quarter-time office over a four-year period.

Maintaining a correct balance that benefits all Missouri counties, and as many Missourians as possible, is a challenge that MU Extension is keenly focused on. Working together — counties and campus — we will collectively address grand challenges related to health, education and the economy in Missouri.
