

Cooperative Extension in Indigenous Communities: Collaborations between 1862 and 1994 Educators

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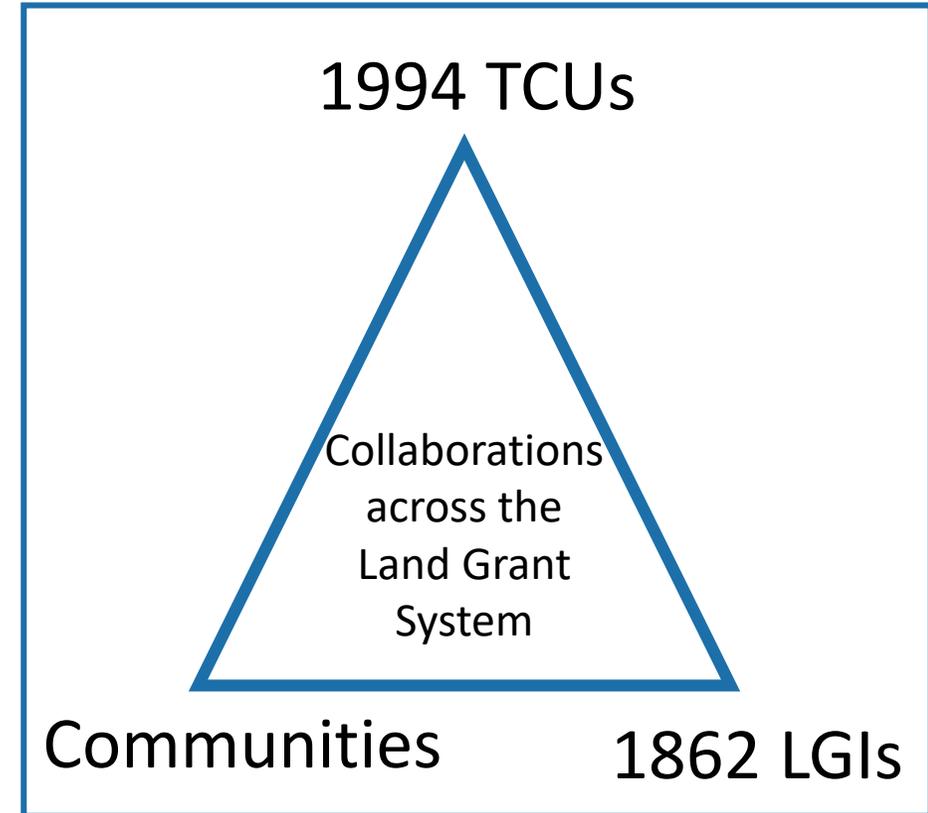
Agricultural Education and Studies

Iowa State University

Iowa State University aspires to be the best land-grant university at creating a welcoming and inclusive environment where diverse individuals can succeed and thrive. As a land-grant institution, we are committed to the caretaking of this land and would like to begin this event by acknowledging those who have previously taken care of the land on which we gather. Before this site became Iowa State University, it was the ancestral lands and territory of the Baxoje (bah-kho-dzhe), or Ioway Nation. The United States obtained the land from the Meskwaki and Sauk nations in the Treaty of 1842. We wish to recognize our obligations to this land and to the people who took care of it, as well as to the 17,000 Native people who live in Iowa today.

The Problem

- The mission of Land Grant Institutions (LGIs) and Extension has always included educational access.
- Extension has not served all communities equitably, in both their access to educational resources (Brewer et al., 2016; NCAI, 2010) and in the kinds of programs that they provide (Emm & Breazeale, 2008).
- Indigenous communities: Extension offices in less than 10% (Brewer et al., 2016; NCAI, 2010).
- Educators across the Land Grant System can **collaborate** to share expertise, engage students, and serve communities.





Purpose

- Understand the context of Extension educators working in Indigenous communities and their collaborations across the Land Grant System
 - What makes them successful, the barriers they encounter, and the support structures they need
- **1862 Educators that collaborate with 1994 TCUs and Indigenous communities**

Methodology

- Transformative convergent mixed methods:
 - Large size of the region, with unique cultures, goals, and constraints (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).
 - Allows for triangulation and complementarity (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006).
 - Highlights the importance of value-based, action-oriented research, that directly engages members of diverse groups (Mertens, 2010; Mertens, 2011).
- Thematic analysis (Bazeley, 2020; Braun & Clarke, 2006).
 - Emphasis on counternarratives and the co-construction of knowledge with participants (Battiste & Youngblood, 2009; Cajete & Pueblo, 2010; Falcón, 2016; Fierros & Delgado Bernal, 2016; Latulippe, 2015; Mutua & Swadener, 2004).
 - Participants' identifiable information was removed and pseudonyms were used, but all held different kinds of professional positions, had varying levels of administrative power, and were both Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

Participants

State/ US Territory	Number of Responses	Response Rate	Response to Q4		
			Current	Past	Never
Alaska	0	NA			
American Samoa	0	NA			
Arizona	13	2.56%	8	2	3
California	78	3.13%	22	18	358
Colorado	19	3.41%	4	7	8
Guam	1	1.29%	1	0	0
Hawaii	16	14.81%	13	2	1
Idaho	50	35.71%	19	8	23
Micronesia	1	3.03%	1	0	0
Montana	9	2.21%	7	1	1
Nevada	32	12.75%	9	9	14
New Mexico	10	30.30%	8	2	0
Northern Mariana Islands	0	NA			
Oregon	29	4.04%	18	5	6
Utah	42	28.00%	18	3	21
Washington	0	NA			
Wyoming	7	6.42%	3	0	4
Western Region	307	5.50%	131	57	119

Table 1
Survey Responses by State



Figure 2
Interviews by State



Who's Collaborating?

- 20 interview participants:
 - 4 had collaborations with 1994 TCU
- 307 survey respondents:
 - 188 that said they either had current or past collaborations with Indigenous communities (61%)
 - 9 had current collaborations and 4 had past collaborations with a 1994 TCU (7%)
 - 2 had worked for a 1994 TCU in the past



Findings

Major themes:

1. Projects were centered on the goals of the communities
 2. Were both local and regional
 3. Barriers: time, institutional differences
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Centering the Goals of the Community

Hannah and Danielle: project to bring buffalo to the reservation they serve.

- Idea originated with an advisory group at the reservation and a faculty member from the 1994 TCU reached out to the 1862 Extension to assist.
- Training students from the 1994 TCU to facilitate interviews and focus groups, while others worked in the community.

There's a lot of meaning shown in the buffalo, not only spiritual health, but nutritional health and history and all these things.

- Danielle

Centering the Goals of the Community AND Local and Regional

Frank also includes 1994 TCUs on some of his grant projects.

- He included a TCU from another state.
- He found commonalities in the agricultural context so that they could tackle similar issues together.
- He planned to travel to the TCU to include students.

The USDA grant was showing people above the Arctic circle how they could take shipping containers and put LED lights and make plants grow 24/7 and have heat come in through solar panels. I look at trying to help tribes figure out how to provide heat at a cost efficient basis, not only for the home, but also for food growing. We tied in [Tribal College in another State] because they have some of the same climatic conditions. I was to go teach the students at the Tribal College how to build thermal mass heaters, basically extending the season with heat.

- Frank

Local and Regional

Kent and his university have worked with 1994 TCUs for decades, including those in his state and regionally.

- Integrate on grants and at conferences, set up transfer programs to help students, and include students in their research projects.
- Jointly hire faculty

I'm trying to get sabbaticals so faculty down here can go up there and integrate more, as well as even some joint positions. We're still looking at other joint things that we can do. This last year, we integrated the 1994 Extension Agents into our Extension conference. While we were there, we talked about collaboration. They were able to talk with people, and with our FRTEP Agents, and we talked about our partnerships and collaborations. I asked, "How's it going, where can we build strength?"

-Kent

Barriers: Time and Institutional Differences

Different priorities, timelines, and expectations between institutions.

- Many TCU faculty have large teaching loads and have different promotion and tenure requirements than 1862 faculty do.
- 1862 LGIs values things like grant dollars, publication impact factors, and participation numbers, which is sometimes not conducive to collaborating with 1994 TCUs.

Trying to get faculty where they could be recognized for engaging in those [collaborations], which is tricky. If they're trying to get tenure, they don't lend themselves very well to that. You have to have some way to integrate that. These are vital programs.

-Kent

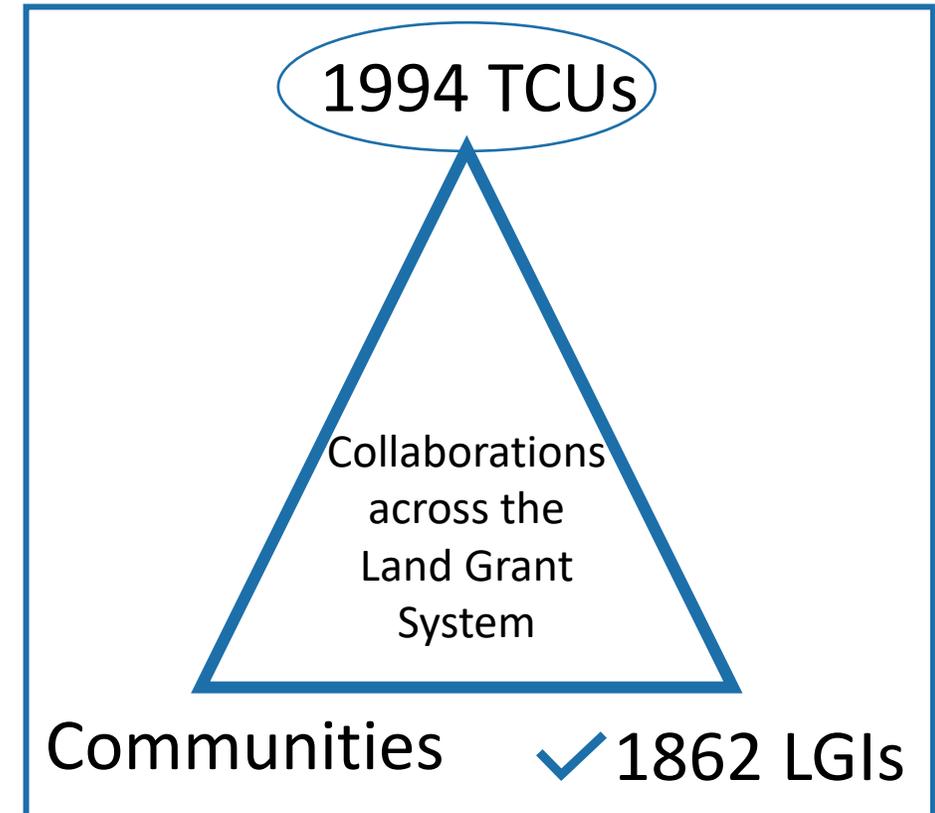
Discussion: Prioritize to Collaborate

- Collaborate on grants that will be mutually beneficial and center the goals of the community (Hartmann & Martin, 2021).
 - Can include educational opportunities for students from both the 1862 and 1994 LGI.
- Give everyone ample time to plan and work together, understanding different goals and constraints.
- Include educators from across the Land Grant System at conferences and other professional gatherings to share knowledge and assess how educators can enhance each other's efforts.

What's Next?

I am starting a parallel study to look at the same kinds of research questions, but with a focus on Extension educators that work at 1994 TCUs.

- Investigating the perspectives of Indigenous community members that collaborate with Extension, either with 1862 LGIs, 1994 LGIs or both, is an important next step.



Thank you!
Questions
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