Coordination of Research, Teaching, and Extension

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The development of the Land Grant College system in the different states, while following a similar pattern in a broad outline, has shown deviations which have permitted different organizational patterns to develop. The instruction phase of the program, which followed the enactment of the Morrill Bill in 1862, shows a great similarity from state to state. The organization of the agricultural experiment stations, following the Hatch Act of 1887, presented the initial problem of coordination of the type on which our discussion is based. In most Land Grant Colleges and Universities, the problem was dealt with by combining teaching and research functions in the same individuals. In most cases, the Dean of Agriculture became the Director of the agricultural experiment station. However, in a few institutions, separate staffs were developed under two administrative officers. The desirable feature of the joint teaching and research appointment was so obvious that most Land Grant Colleges accepted as a basic philosophy this type of dual responsibility wherever possible. It should be noted, however, that as late as the 1930s several Land Grant Colleges continued to maintain research and teaching as independent entities with separate staffs, farms, herds, and other facilities.

The creation of the cooperative extension program in Agriculture and Home Economics following the passage of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 resulted in the development of an extension staff in all Land Grant Colleges with appointees devoting full time to the extension program. In many instances, the extension program was under a director directly responsible to the President of the College or University. In a few institutions, the extension program became the responsibility of the Dean of the College of Agriculture. These few institutions thus started with an integrated program for agriculture with the integration effected by the Dean of the College of Agriculture. Through the years, more and more of the colleges moved toward this pattern of integration, at least on paper. Today only a few Land Grant institutions maintain administratively non-integrated programs in agriculture. However, the development of branch experiment stations and the staffing of these units with a large number of scientifically trained people have presented an additional type of integration problem. The coordination of research becomes more complex with each additional branch station, especially where the station is multipurpose.

In spite of the apparent integration of teaching, research, and extension in the great majority of our Land Grant organizations, many institutions are still concerned with the problem. This suggests inadequate coordination. The joint appointment of teaching and research staff largely solves the problem. People are frequently concerned with the coordination of resident research, the integration of these two elements not presenting serious difficulties in most institutions with the greatly expanded research staffs.

The cleavage between extension and the resident research elements of the agricultural program is much more marked. The extension personnel usually have no resident teaching responsibility. Their employment is distinct from that of the other two. The bond between the extension worker and the USDA is very illustrious by the fact that extension personnel have civil service retirement and many fringe benefits available to staff members doing research and teaching. In some institutions, the extension worker has academic status. Emphasis on scholarly activity has been less in the case of extension personnel than it has for resident instruction and research staffs. The obvious differences have tended to segregate the staff from their colleagues within the College or University. Segregation once started is difficult to eradicate.

Much attention has been given the problem of integration of agricultural programs with the extension worker and the USDA. The cause is teamwork approach to the solution of problems. The majority of thinking people agree that integrable, yet complete integration of resident teaching, research, and extension is the exception. One top official admitted that coordination became his project only since assuming his present position. As he put it, "It was somewhat of a headache. It is one that I coordinate someone else and quite another to do ourselves."

Real progress toward coordination of research, teaching, and extension has been made over several years. In spite of the fact that on paper most of our Land Grant institutions do not have an integrated program, the reality of the situation is formidable. Few of the programs in many institutions in spite of the pressure of the part of the administrative head of the College of Agriculture, the State Experiment Stations Division, and Federal Extension Service of the USDA. This has been frequently the result of jealousy, personal selfishness on the part of individuals making up the organizations, as well as the innate human resistance against change to new procedures. How to get over these personal barriers is the real problem of administrators of coordinated agricultural programs.

Research, classroom teaching, and extension phases of a single program and not unrelated. The Colleges of Agriculture are service institutions obligated to serve the interest of agriculture. The