



Understanding Disciplinary Boundaries within Colleges of Agriculture: Implications for Graduate Student Development

Caitlin Foley

Rama Radhakrishna

Mark Brennan

The Pennsylvania State University

NACTA Conference, June 26, 2013

Overview

- Colloquium course
- “Methods” for final project
- Analyses of presentations
- Implications
- Final comments
- Questions

Purpose of Colloquium

- 10 guest speakers
- Showcase the diversity and richness of projects & programs
 - AEE/AESE
 - College of Ag Sciences (CAS)
 - Penn State
- Allow for student reflection and synthesis of topics
 - Final project



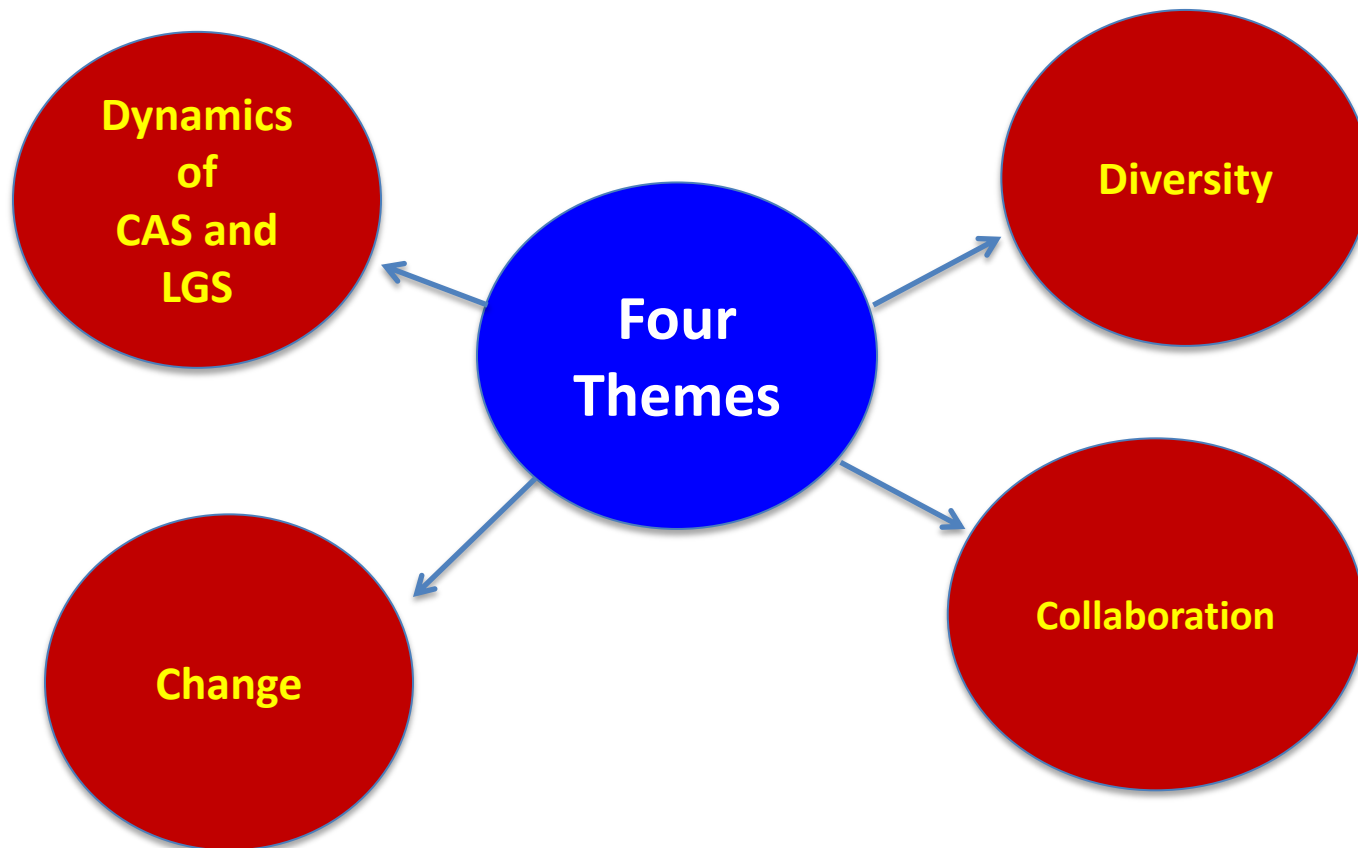
Selection of Speakers

- Purposive Sample
- Selection Criteria: chose 6 out of the 10 based on personal interest in the topics
 - Extension Business Model
 - Agriculture Entrepreneurs
 - Funding of Collaborative Multidisciplinary Research
 - International Programs in CAS
 - Academic Integrity & Ethics
 - Diversity in Higher Ed.



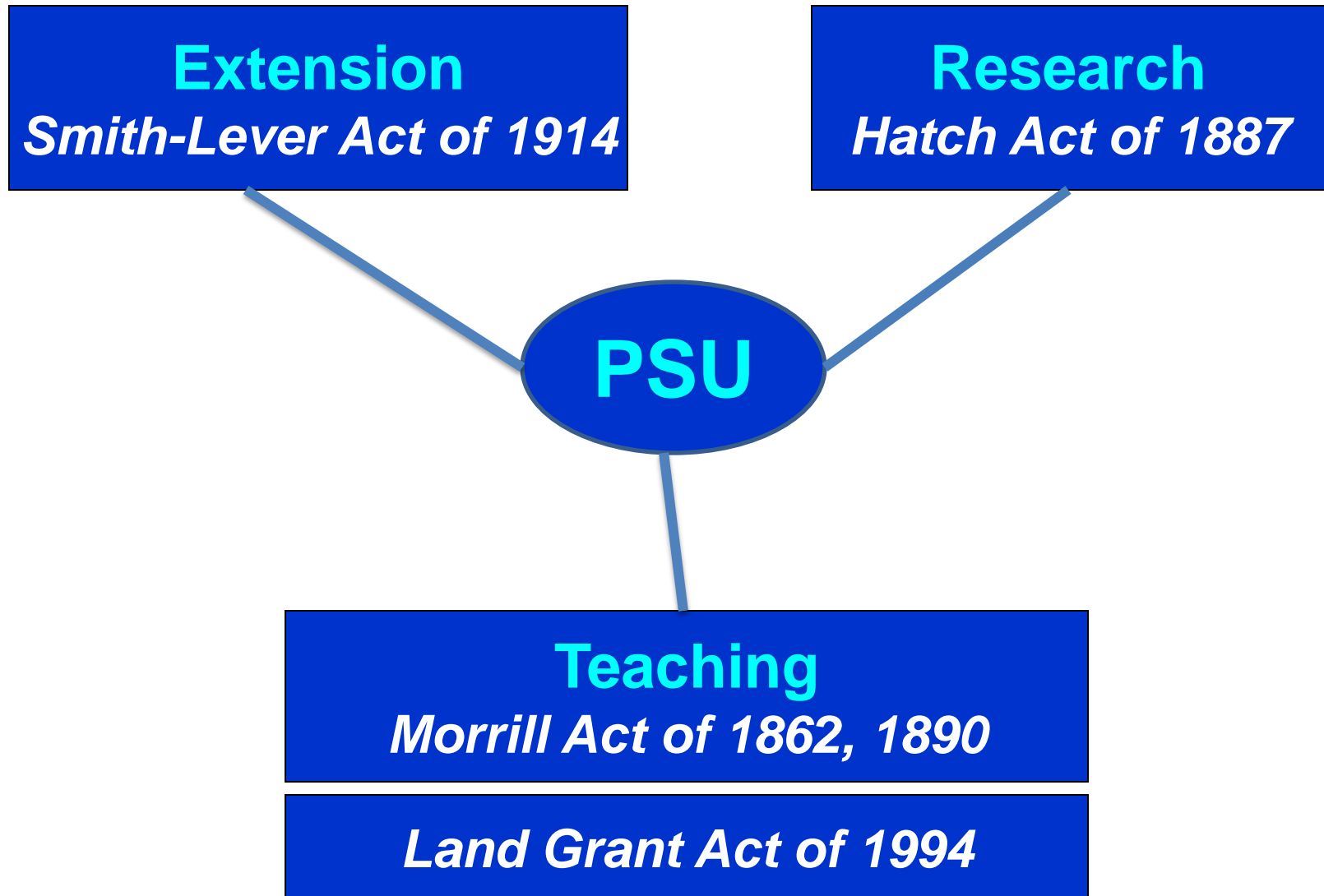
Analyses of Presentations

- 4 themes across the 6 seminars





CAS & The Land-Grant





Diversity

- “Diversity = differences”
 - Faculty with split appointments
 - 11 new Extension teams/high-priority areas
- “Extension must assess the needs of the diverse audience.”
- “Multidisciplinary = multiple disciplines”
- “Link PA to other countries with global Ag competence.”
- “Responsible research conduct applicable to ALL disciplines”



Change

- “100-year old companies must re-position themselves for the future.”
- “Butts in seats.” – Role of programmers



- Research: “Strategies to integrate and get funding.”
- “Build global perspectives into degree programs.”
- “US projected to be 54% minority in 2050.”



Collaboration

- “Extension teams = aggregated human resources based on stakeholder needs”
- Multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, multi-institutional & team research
 - Solve complex problems, increased funding
- “Develop strategic global partnerships”
- “Increase diversity awareness between department, college, & university levels.”



Assessment of Presentations

	Graduate Education	Career Preparation	Scholarship	Professional Development
CAS & Land-Grant	Understanding, appreciation, experience	Pursuit of position in academia	Research, Extension, Teaching	Ethics, grant-writing workshops
Diversity	Awareness, multidisciplinary committee, peer differences	Options, background, positioning	Multidiscipline Research, Extension, International	Global literacy, multidisciplinary meetings / networking
Change	Department merger, assistantship	P & T, faculty appointments, departments, funding, time	Revisit the Land-Grant mission & purpose	GSA, integrate with merged departments
Collaboration	Multidisciplinary research, committee	Research plan, split appointments, industry & gov't	Integration to solve complex problems, Extension	Research, networking, meetings



Implications: Grad Student Development

- Courses – exploration for thesis/dissertation
- Research – multidisciplinary activities
- Career – today's societal problems require a multidisciplinary approach
- Diversity – acquire skills in various disciplines
- Public Good – what impact will your education have?



Additional Implications

- Relevant to every program in CAS and beyond
- This type of reflection, synthesis, and analyses could be incorporated into many courses
 - Career prep, seminars, technology, research methods



Questions??

