

DRAFT
BYLAWS OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL AND BIOLOGICAL ENGINEERING
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Preamble

The shared goals of the faculty and administration of the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering are to attain excellence in teaching, research, and extension and to attain national and international recognition for these programs. The faculty and administration of the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering have enjoyed a long history of shared-governance that has involved open and spirited debate, diverse participation on standing and *ad hoc* committees, and decision making via voting and consensus. The purpose of this document is to codify the open and flexible nature of governance that has served the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering so well for so long.

Article 1 – Governance

These Bylaws establish the general principles by which the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering shall be governed. These Bylaws are subordinate to the Constitutions of the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences and the University of Florida and the policies and directives of the University of Florida’s Board of Trustees and the Florida Board of Governors. Operating within the context of these Bylaws, the governance of the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering shall be shared amongst the faculty.

Article 2 – The Faculty

Section 1 – Faculty Membership

The faculty of the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering shall consist of individuals in tenured, tenure-accruing, and non-tenure accruing faculty positions. Faculty members are defined by the University of Florida Constitution and Senate Bylaws and include the various ranks of Professor, Scholar, Lecturer, Research Scientist, Extension Scientist, and Assistant In.

Section 2 – Faculty Member Rights

1. Faculty members have the right to know the expectations of their job assignment and how they will be evaluated.
2. Faculty members have the right to assemble without limit to discuss issues of concern.
3. Faculty members have the right to open academic discourse without fear of retribution.

Section 3 – Faculty Member Responsibilities

1. Faculty members are responsible for planning and conducting teaching, research, extension, service, and other duties in a competent and professional manner.
2. Faculty members are responsible for the professional development of students
3. Faculty members are responsible for contributing to the functioning of the Department, including building, infrastructure, social, public relations, and outreach functions.

Contributions can include, but are not limited to, service on committees, long-range planning, and promoting the department.

4. Faculty members are responsible for contributing to the governance of the Department, IFAS, the University, and their professional societies.

Section 4 – Department Chair Responsibilities

The Department is headed by a Chair appointed by the Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources in accordance with the University Constitution. The Chair serves as chief executive and administrative officer of the Department. The Chair reports to the Senior Vice President for Agricultural and Natural Resources in matters concerning administration of the Department; to the three IFAS Deans for programmatic issues, to the Dean of College of Engineering for the academic issues related to the engineering undergraduate and graduate academic programs; and to the faculty members of the Department for execution of academic policy. The Chair, following the established history of the Department, shall operate the Department in the spirit of shared governance by seeking and considering faculty input and providing feedback and rationale for final decisions.

Article 3 - Committees

Service on Department committees is one means by which faculty members can participate directly in the governance of the Department. Both on-campus and center personnel shall have opportunities to participate in Department committees. The Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering may use committees to focus attention on the various needs of the Department. Committees may be formed and dissolved as required by the Department Chair and/or the faculty. Committees may be comprised of (but not limited to) faculty, staff, and students as deemed fit by the faculty. Members of committees may be appointed by the Department Chair or elected by faculty members.

Article 4 – Faculty Meetings

Faculty meetings are a primary means of fostering communication among faculty members within the Department. All personnel associated with the Department, including faculty members, administration, staff, and students have the right to place items on the agenda for discussion at faculty meetings by contacting the Department Chair. When appropriate, faculty members that serve as UF Senators and members of the IFAS Faculty Assembly and other UF IFAS and College of Engineering governing bodies shall distribute summaries of critical items of relevance to the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering being discussed before these bodies to all faculty members prior to faculty meetings. These critical items shall be placed on the faculty meeting agenda.

Faculty meetings are an important venue for discussion of policy issues, changes in curriculum, new positions, and other issues relevant to the mission of the Department. All personnel associated with the Department shall be given the opportunity to speak on any issue before the faculty meeting.

Article 5 – Decision Making

Decisions shall be made by a voting process involving Department faculty members (as previously defined). Voting will be conducted by the method deemed most appropriate by faculty members to address any particular issue. However, voting on promotion and tenure will follow IFAS and University guidelines (only tenured faculty at higher rank may vote). Discussions regarding tenure and promotion should be considered confidential. Votes taken on tenure and promotion should be by paper or electronic ballot and the results made available upon request to the tenured faculty permitted to vote.

From time-to-time the Department Chair may make decisions on behalf of the faculty. Any decision made by the Chair on behalf of the Department shall be subject to challenge by Department faculty as described in Article 6.

Article 6 – Challenging Decisions

Any decisions made by the Chair in lieu of a faculty vote may be challenged by a simple majority of at least three tenured faculty members present at the time of the challenge. The challenged decision will then go to the full faculty for a proper vote, with the method of voting selected as appropriate by the faculty.

Article 7 – Ratifications and Amendments to Bylaws

Section 1 – These Bylaws shall become effective upon their ratification by the faculty of the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering with a 2/3 majority vote.

Section 2 – Proposals for amendments to these Bylaws may be made to the Chair by any member of the faculty.

Section 3 – Changes and amendments to ratified ABE Bylaws shall require the vote of at least 2/3 of tenured faculty members.