

**Bylaws of the
Tropical Research and Education Center
University of Florida
As Approved: 2010**

Preamble

The administrator and voting faculty of each academic unit have the shared responsibility “to adopt and publish bylaws” [University of Florida, Bylaws for Academic Governance 2.2.1]. The Bylaws of the Tropical Research and Education Center (TREC) outline organizational and operating procedures to implement shared governance between administration and faculty of the Center’s academic, service, and social responsibilities. The shared goals of the faculty and administration of TREC are to achieve excellence in teaching, research, extension, and service, and to attain national and international recognition for these programs. These goals can best be achieved with a governance structure from the TREC level to the University level that fosters collegiality, respect, collaboration, mutual responsibility, accountability, and transparency.

Article I – Governance of TREC

These Bylaws establish the general principles by which the Tropical Research and Education Center shall be governed. These Bylaws are governed by and are subordinate to the Constitutions of the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences and the University 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 Tropical Research and Education Center shall be shared between the administration and the faculty.

Article II – The Faculty

Section 1 – Faculty Membership

Faculty members at the Tropical Research and Education Center are defined by the University of Florida Constitution and Senate Bylaws and include the various ranks of professor, scholar, lecturer, research scientist, and extension scientist.

Section 2 – Faculty Rights

1. Faculty have the right to know the expectations of their job assignment and how they will be evaluated.
2. Faculty have the right to receive essential and timely information required to participate in shared governance as established in TREC Bylaws.
3. Faculty have the right to assemble without limit to discuss issues of concern.
4. Faculty have the right to open academic discourse without fear of retribution.
5. Faculty have the right to know, and question, the TREC Director’s rationale for vetoing Faculty recommendations.

6. Faculty have the right to review the performance of the TREC Director annually.

Section 3 – Faculty Grievance Procedures

The Center will follow the Grievance Procedures specified by the Regulations of the University of Florida 6C1-7.041, Methods for Review and Resolution of Faculty Grievances, and by Faculty Senate Bylaw 7, Procedures of the Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Freedom, Tenure, Professional Relations and Standards.

Section 4 – Faculty Responsibilities

1. Faculty are responsible for planning and conducting teaching, research, extension, and service activities in a competent and professional manner.
2. Faculty are responsible for contributing to the governance of TREC, IFAS, and the University.
3. Each faculty member is encouraged to provide input for the operations of TREC, including building, infrastructure, social, public relations, and outreach functions.
4. Faculty members are responsible for the professional development of students.
5. Faculty members are responsible for participating as mentors to junior faculty, actively engaging in the constructive guidance of said faculty.

Section 5—Director Responsibilities

The Tropical Research and Education Center is headed by a Director appointed by the Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources in accordance with the University Constitution. The Director serves as chief executive and administrative officer of TREC and provides financial planning and policy, and supervises routine operations of TREC including faculty and staff evaluations (see Appendix A for more complete description). The Director is responsible to the Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources for administration of TREC and is the agent of the TREC faculty for execution of academic policy. The Director is expected to operate TREC in the spirit of shared governance and seek faculty input, consider it, and provide feedback and rationale about final decisions.

Article III –Committees

Service on TREC committees is one of the means by which faculty members can participate directly in the governance of the center. Faculty and staff shall have the opportunity to participate in TREC committees. The TREC Center Director in consultation with the faculty may choose to use committees to focus attention on various needs of the Center. Committees may be formed and dissolved as required by the Center Director in consultation with the faculty. Committees may be comprised of (but not limited to) faculty, staff, and students as deemed fit by the faculty and Center Director. Members of committees may be appointed by the Center Director or elected by faculty. The social committee does not comply above requirement and is voted by faculty, staff, and students annually with the committee chair or co-chairs selected from among the committee members.

Article IV – Faculty Meetings

The faculty meeting is the primary means of fostering communication among all faculty members within TREC. Faculty meetings should be held at least every 2 months and scheduled by the Director, or by request of any faculty member. Faculty and administration have the right to place items on the agenda for discussion by contacting the Director in a timely fashion. The agenda should be distributed at least one week before the faculty meeting. When appropriate, UF Senators and members of the IFAS Faculty Council and other IFAS governing bodies from the Tropical Research and Education Center should email to all faculty short summaries of critical items of relevance to TREC being discussed before those bodies and placed in the TREC faculty meeting agenda before each faculty meeting so that dialogue can be initiated on these items.

The faculty meeting is the most important venue for discussion of policy issues, changes in curriculum, new positions, and other issues relevant to our academic mission. TREC faculty, plus emeritus, courtesy, and affiliate faculty may speak on any issue before the faculty. Voting on most matters shall be restricted to active TREC faculty.

Each faculty member at TREC should have the opportunity to participate in the interview process for new faculty positions that are made available at the Center. After all candidates for new faculty positions have been interviewed, the merits of each candidate will be discussed in a faculty meeting. Any faculty member may also complete a written evaluation for a candidate for use by the Director in faculty-hiring decisions. The Director will solicit recommendations on candidates from all faculty members and select the candidate to offer the position after reaching a consensus from the entire faculty.

Article V – Ratification and Amendments

Section 1. These Bylaws shall become effective upon their ratification by the faculty of TREC with a two-thirds majority vote of all TREC faculty members, concurrence of the Director, and approval of the Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources of the University of Florida.

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

Section 3. Changes in these Bylaws shall be made by a two-thirds majority vote of all TREC faculty members.

APPENDIX A

Tropical Research and Education Center Director Position Description

The Center Director provides vision in planning, developing, and implementing programs in research, teaching, and extension; leadership in recruiting and fostering academic growth; professional development of faculty, staff, and students; administration of the Center's personnel and financial resources; and promotion of external funding opportunities. The Director administers state, national, and international programs of the Center, assists and supervises faculty and staff, and evaluates personnel performance. The Director represents Center and faculty interests with administrators, other departments and units, outside agencies, groups and individuals in academia, industry, and the community. The Director will collaborate with the Senior Vice President, Deans, Associate Deans, Assistant Deans, IFAS Chairs, other Research and Education Center Directors, and other administrators in providing leadership for delivering integrated programs to meet the needs of extension clientele, research sponsors, and other stakeholders.

Specific Tasks and Duties of the TREC Director

1. Governance

- Facilitate development and administration of TREC policies, goals, and objectives
- Conduct faculty meetings
- Encourage open communication between faculty members and the Director
- Establish, and use effectively, TREC committees
- Delegate administrative responsibilities to faculty and/or committees
- Facilitate development and administration of TREC policies, goals, and objectives
- Help determine services to be supplied by the TREC to College, University, and State
- Serve as an advocate for the TREC and its personnel
- Monitor acquisitions, and other resources and services that affect the quality of the TREC and its programs
- In Director's absence, establish secondary and tertiary authorities/administrators for unit
- Enhance diversity of the TREC and oversee compliance with affirmative action plans of the University

2. Tropical Research and Education Center Programs

- Communicate and facilitate the vision of TREC directions and programs to faculty, students, staff, and administration
- Work to ensure availability of space and equipment to meet needs for teaching, research, and extension efforts

3. Faculty Activities

- Set a tone of high professional, ethical, and scientific excellence in the TREC
- Reward academic scholarship in all forms, including discovery, dissemination, and application of knowledge
- In cooperation with faculty members, establish processes for recruitment and selection of faculty members
- As appropriate, assign faculty responsibilities for teaching, research and committee work
- Provide oversight for the peer evaluation process
- Facilitate and encourage an open and constructive exchange of ideas, coordination and cooperation among faculty members and between the faculty and Director
- Monitor and evaluate faculty performance in teaching, research, extension, service, and citizenship within TREC
- Deal with unsatisfactory faculty and staff performance
- Maintain communication with other units of the university
- Reduce, resolve, and prevent conflict among faculty members
- Encourage, when appropriate, faculty participation in TREC, department, college, and university activities, including governance
- Reward meritorious productivity and professional recognition among faculty and staff members with equitable salary compensation
- Based on outstanding service to the University of Florida and profession, nominate faculty and staff members for awards and honors

4. External Communication

- Serve as interface between the TREC and deans of the college, and other administrators
- Serve as interface between the TREC and the USDA, State units of Agriculture, and other agencies and groups as necessary
- Serve as a contact for outside groups requesting information about the TREC and its programs
- Provide for the completion of forms and surveys
- Oversee production of TREC advertising and recruitment material

5. Budget and Resources

- Communicate TREC needs to the college and university administration
- Administer the TREC budget (state and federal funds allocated by the Vice President and deans)
- Provide oversight of faculty contract and grant budgets
- Review travel expenditures, especially foreign travel
- Coordinate special requests to the deans for funding
- Encourage submission by faculty of grant and contract proposals
- Reallocate space and support staff to meet changing needs and requirements

6. Facilities and Office Personnel Management

- Manage TREC facilities, including inventory control
- Initiate and supervise new construction projects and renovation, as necessary
- Provide for building security, safety, and maintenance, including grounds
- Hire, supervise, and evaluate administrative and maintenance staff
- Supervise record-keeping and accounting functions by TREC personnel
- Compile information for productivity reports

7. Professional Development

- Foster the development of each faculty member's interests and talents, and help in blending them into a functional program
- Encourage faculty personal development, including participation in self improvement programs, faculty development leaves, and international experiences
- Foster excellence in teaching, research, extension, and service
- Promote affirmative action
- Encourage faculty to enhance the visibility and reputation of TREC, IFAS, and the University of Florida

8. Personal Development

- Keep current in main activities of each TREC faculty member in order to serve as a representative and advocate for all TREC research, extension, and teaching programs
- Contribute to productivity and reputation of the TREC through participation in the TREC's programs in instruction, research, extension, and/or service

APPENDIX B

CONFIDENTIAL

Evaluation of Prospective Faculty

You are invited to evaluate the candidate according to the requirements and qualifications stated for this position and his/her suitability to serve in the role. These evaluative comments will be kept confidential, summarized for use by the Director of the Tropical Research and Education Center, and then destroyed.

Please indicate your rating and comments and return this form as soon as you have completed the interviewing process. Your help in this important matter is very much appreciated.

Additional comments are very useful.

Candidate:

Position:

Rating: _____ Recommend highly and without reservation
 _____ Recommend with reservation
 _____ Do not recommend

Please state what factors influenced the above rating:

Other comments regarding this candidate's suitability for the position:

Submitted by: _____ Date _____

Please return form to xxxxxx.

APPENDIX C (draft)

Mentoring of Junior Faculty

1. During the first year of employment, each tenure-track Assistant Professors must select a mentoring committee composed of at least one tenured faculty members from TREC. A Chairman will be selected by the TREC Director.
2. Faculty members being mentored should provide their mentoring committee members with their annual plan of work and report of accomplishments.
3. The mentoring committee will provide an annual written assessment of the mentee's progress towards tenure to the Director.
4. A mid-career review will be conducted for faculty members during the tenure probationary period no later than the end of the third year of academic service.
5. As part of the mid-career review, junior faculty will prepare a tenure and promotion packet (without external letters).