

Bylaws of the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication
University of Florida
Approved October 7, 2009

Vision

To lead in developing and strengthening educators, communicators, and leaders to meet society's challenges in agriculture and natural resources.

Mission

To serve society through the land-grant mission of teaching, research, and extension in agriculture and natural resources by enhancing leadership in communities and organizations, education in formal and non-formal settings, and communication of ideas and issues.

Article I – Governance of the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication

Section 1 – Shared Governance

These Bylaws establish the general principles by which the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication shall be governed. These Bylaws consistent with and not in conflict with the Constitutions of the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences and the University of Florida, as well as 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 Education and Communication shall be shared between the administration and the faculty.

Article II – The Faculty

Section 1 – Faculty Membership

The faculty of the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication shall consist of individuals in tenured, tenure-accruing, and non tenure-accruing faculty positions. Faculty members are defined in the University of Florida Constitution and Senate Bylaws and include the various ranks of Professor, Scholar, Lecturer, Research Scientist, Extension Scientist and Assistant In. Voting rights are limited to faculty members who are salaried in the Department and those who hold an academic home in the Department but have faculty assignment at a research and education center.

Section 2 – Faculty Responsibilities

- a. Faculty members are responsible for planning and conducting teaching, research, extension, and service as outlined in their appointment in a competent and professional manner.
- b. Faculty members are responsible for the professional development of students, including mentoring, and organizing, attending, and presenting seminars.

- c. Faculty members are responsible for contributing to the operations of the Department, including building, infrastructure, social, public relations, and outreach functions.
- d. Faculty members are responsible for contributing to the governance of the Department, IFAS, the University, and their professional societies.

Section 3 – Department Leadership

a. Department Chair

The Department is headed by a Chair appointed by the Senior Vice President in accordance with the University Constitution. The Chair serves as the chief executive and administrative officer of the Department. The Chair provides financial planning and policy and supervises routine operations of the Department, including faculty evaluations and evaluations of appropriate staff. The Chair is responsible to the Senior Vice President for administration of the Department and the three Deans for programmatic issues and is the agent of the Department faculty for execution of academic policy. The Chair is expected to operate the Department in the spirit of shared governance and seek faculty input, consider it, and provide feedback and rationale about final decisions. The Chair may maintain a program of teaching, research, and/or extension, as time permits.

b. Associate Department Chair

The Department Chair may select a faculty member to serve as Associate Department Chair for a period of time to be agreed upon by the faculty member and the Department Chair in accordance with the University Constitution, IFAS Constitution, and IFAS Internal Management Memoranda. The duties of the Associate Department Chairs shall be outlined by the Department Chair.

Article III – Committees

Purpose and Classification

Service on Department committees is the primary means by which faculty can participate directly in the governance of the Department. Faculty shall have the opportunity to participate in standing committees. The Department standing committees shall be: Graduate Committee and Undergraduate Committee. General rules for standing committees include:

- a. Standing committees shall meet regularly. The Academic Support Services Coordinator shall keep and archive minutes and records (edited for confidentiality as necessary) of the Graduate and Undergraduate Committee meetings.
- b. Reports of the standing committees shall be made to the faculty at each faculty meeting. All meeting dates, times, and locations of standing committees shall be posted on the Department bulletin board and emailed to all faculty and staff. All faculty and staff are invited to standing committee meetings and are welcome to contribute to the discussion. Only committee members will have voting privileges.

Section 1 – Graduate Committee

The Graduate Committee shall be chaired by a member of the graduate faculty who is currently serving as the Graduate Coordinator. The Graduate Coordinator will be appointed by the Department Chair and shall serve a period of time to be agreed upon by the Graduate Coordinator and the Department Chair. Four graduate faculty members, in addition to the Graduate Coordinator, will serve as the members of the Graduate Committee. Each graduate committee member will serve two-year staggered terms with two rotating on and off at the same time.

One committee member seat will be reserved for each graduate-level specialization in the Department: Agricultural Education, Extension Education, Agricultural Communication, and Agricultural Leadership. Committee members are expected to communicate with faculty within their specializations regularly. Graduate faculty will notify the Department Chair by July 1 of each year the graduate-level specialization with which they wish to align for committee membership purposes. Faculty may only align with one specialization for this purpose. Members of the Graduate Committee shall be appointed by the Department Chair based on their designated graduate-level specialization.

The Agricultural Education and Communication Graduate Student Association (AECGSA) will elect one MS and one PhD student to serve on the Graduate Committee in an advisory, non-voting role. Student representatives will not participate in nor be present for student admission decision discussions.

The responsibilities of the Graduate Committee shall be to:

- a. Advise the Department Chair on the distribution of graduate fellowships and assistantships. This committee shall select the recipients of the Grinter Fellowships and UF Graduate School Fellowships as allocated to the Department by the College each year.
- b. Recommend enhancements and improvements to the graduate curriculum.
- c. Review new and revised graduate courses or curricula requiring a UCC1 or UCC2 form as stated in UF/CALS policy. Once approved by the committee UCC1 and UCC2 requests will be forward to the full faculty for action or announcement and then to the CALS Curriculum Committee.
- d. Establish procedures regarding admissions decisions such as deadlines, application review, and voting procedures.
- e. Recommend theses and dissertations to be nominated for IFAS, University, and other national awards and honors.
- f. Encourage and support the nomination of AEC graduate students for CALS, UF, and national awards.
- g. Develop policies and procedures related to graduate students and graduate studies, as outlined in the AEC Graduate Handbook.
- h. Advise the Department Chair on the expenditure of funds for prospective graduate student travel. Faculty members shall submit a request for funds to the Graduate

Coordinator. Such a request should, at a minimum, include a copy of the prospective student's resume.

- i. Monitor the status, scope, and quality of AEC graduate programs and proactively guide the program toward one of national prominence.
- j. Oversee AEC graduate programs promotion and recruitment efforts, including regular updating of the AEC Department website pages pertaining to graduate programs.
- k. Work with the Department Chair in proactively leading the faculty and graduate students in building a strong academic and research culture in the Department.

Section 2 – Undergraduate Committee

The Undergraduate Committee shall be chaired by a member of the faculty who is currently serving as the Undergraduate Coordinator. The Undergraduate Coordinator will be appointed by the Department Chair and shall serve a period of time agreed upon by the Undergraduate Coordinator and the Department Chair. Two faculty members, in addition to the Graduate Coordinator, will serve as the members of the Undergraduate Committee, each serving two-year staggered terms.

One committee member seat will be reserved for each undergraduate-level specialization in the Department: Agricultural Education (TCH) and Communication & Leadership Development (CLD). Committee members are expected to communicate with faculty within their specializations regularly. Faculty who teach undergraduate courses will notify the Department Chair by July 1 of each year the undergraduate-level specialization with which they wish to align for committee membership purposes. Faculty may only align with one specialization for this purpose. Members of the Undergraduate Committee shall be appointed by the Department Chair within undergraduate-level specializations

The responsibilities of the Undergraduate Committee shall be to:

- a. Select undergraduate students to receive scholarships offered by and through the Department.
- b. Recommend enhancements and improvements to the undergraduate curriculum.
- c. Review new and revised undergraduate courses or curricula requiring a UCC1 or UCC2 form as stated in UF/CALS policy. Once approved by the committee UCC1 and UCC2 requests will be forward to the full faculty for action or announcement and then to the CALS Curriculum Committee.
- d. Develop policies and procedures related to undergraduate students and undergraduate studies, as outlined in the AEC Undergraduate Handbook.
- e. Evaluate academic learning compacts.
- f. Encourage and support the nomination of AEC undergraduate students for CALS, UF, and national awards.
- g. Oversee AEC undergraduate programs in promotion and recruitment efforts, including regular updating of the AEC Department website pages pertaining to undergraduate programs.
- h. Work with the Department Chair in proactively leading the faculty and undergraduate students in building a strong academic community for undergraduate students in the Department.

Section 3 – Ad hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees can be formed by the Department Chair, as needed. Current ad hoc committees include:

a. Mentoring Committees

The Department Chair will initially select a mentor or mentors for any untenured or newly appointed non-tenure accruing faculty member. At the end of the new faculty member's first year, the faculty member and the Department Chair should discuss the relationship with the mentor(s) and whether a new mentor or mentors might be more appropriate. Where appropriate, the Department Chair should give strong consideration to the preference of the new faculty member. The mentor(s) will write an annual assessment to the new faculty member describing his/her progress toward tenure (or permanent status) and that letter will be shared with the Department Chair by April 15 of each year. This assessment should be provided orally to the new faculty member initially, and he/she should be given opportunity to respond and for the assessment to be modified as a result of this meeting if appropriate. The Department Chair and the mentor (or mentoring committee) should also meet to discuss the progress of the new faculty member on an annual basis.

b. Peer Observation for Teaching Assessment Committees

AEC Department policies for faculty peer observation require at least one peer observation prior to the third year review and a second observation prior to tenure and promotion to associate professor. In addition, at least one peer observation should be completed before submitting the dossier for promotion to professor and for the professor Salary Step Program. Peer observation committees should include one faculty member selected by the Department Chair, one faculty member from the AEC Department selected by the faculty member undergoing peer observation, and one faculty member in IFAS but external to the AEC Department. The external faculty member shall be jointly selected by the Department Chair and faculty member being observed.

(See *Appendix A* for further guidelines).

c. Social Committee

This committee, consisting of faculty, staff, and students, organizes and implements plans for Departmental social occasions to foster community among all members of the Department. Membership on this committee is voluntary and is reconstituted annually, with the committee chair or co-chairs selected from among the committee members.

d. Visiting Scholars Committee

This committee of three faculty members and one graduate student is appointed annually by the Department Chair. Its primary responsibility is to organize an annual or biannual Visiting Scholar Seminar. The committee of faculty and graduate student is responsible for selecting the speaker and making all arrangements. The committee works cooperatively with the Department Chair to secure funding for this activity.

e. Search and Screen Committees

This committee is assembled by the Department Chair to solicit and screen applicants for open faculty member positions. The committee shall submit to the Department Chair a list of candidate names to be invited for an interview as requested by the Department Chair. After all candidates for the new faculty member position have interviewed, faculty members are asked to provide written feedback on candidate qualifications. This feedback will be used to assist the Department Chair in making a hiring decision. (See *Appendix B*)

Article IV – Faculty Meetings

The faculty meeting is the primary means of fostering communication and decision making among all faculty within the Department. Faculty meetings should be held regularly on a schedule published at the beginning of each semester. Faculty members should assist the Department Chair in developing meeting agenda items and are expected to fully participate in faculty meetings. The agenda should be distributed via email at least one week before the faculty meeting, as well as other important documents required for faculty action. Minutes of all faculty meetings will be kept and distributed to faculty in a timely manner.

The faculty meeting is the most important venue for discussion of policy issues, changes in curriculum, new positions, and other issues relevant to the Department mission. All Department faculty, staff, and students may speak on any issue before the faculty. Voting on most matters shall be restricted to Departmental faculty. A quorum of the voting members must be present for the valid transaction of business during a faculty meeting. A quorum consists of the majority of faculty in the Department.

Article V – Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall govern the department in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this constitution and bylaws, the constitution and bylaws of IFAS and the University of Florida, any special rules of order the department may adopt and any statutes applicable to this organization that do not authorize the provisions of this constitution and bylaws to take precedence.

Article VI – Ratification and Amendments

These Bylaws shall become effective upon their ratification by the faculty of the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication with a two-thirds vote, concurrence of the Department Chair, and approval of the IFAS Senior Vice President.

Proposals for amendments to these Bylaws may be made by the Department Chair or any faculty member. Changes to these Bylaws become effective when approved by a two-thirds vote of the faculty. Faculty shall have thirty days to review a proposal prior to a vote being taken, either in a faculty meeting or by paper or electronic vote.

APPENDIX A

Peer Observation for Teaching Assessment Guidelines Department of Agricultural Education and Communication

Steps in the Peer Observation Process

1. Scheduling Peer Observation

It is strongly recommended that the Department Chair and respective faculty members plan for peer observations to occur at appropriate times in the individual's academic career, as per Department policy.

2. Selection of Committee

Peer observation committees should include one faculty member selected by the Department Chair, one faculty member from the respective discipline selected by the faculty member undergoing peer observation, and one faculty member in IFAS but external to the AEC Department. The external faculty member shall be jointly selected by the Department Chair and faculty member being observed.

3. Pre-Observation Conference

The pre-observation conference should include the peer observation committee and the faculty member being observed. During this meeting the peer observation committee should:

- ❖ Relieve stress and build trust with the faculty member being observed;
- ❖ Become acquainted with one another and the faculty member being observed;
- ❖ Discuss the course design, purpose, objectives, and related features;
- ❖ Review the pre-conference information sheet;
- ❖ Answer questions about the peer observation process and discuss the observation/course materials final report sheet ;
- ❖ Schedule observations;
- ❖ Collect course materials and related information; and
- ❖ Note any special considerations – (e.g., first time the teaching course, team teaching, limited resources, physical limitations of room or laboratory, etc.).

4. Classroom and/or Laboratory Observation

This includes classroom and/or laboratory observations, as well as a review of course materials.

5. Post-Observation Meeting

- ❖ Convene a meeting with the faculty member being observed.
- ❖ Share perceptions of classroom/laboratory observation and course materials.
- ❖ Arrive at consensus on strengths and recommendations for improvement.
- ❖ Obtain the faculty member's perceptions of the peer observation process.
- ❖ Arrive at a consensus on the content of the final report.
- ❖ Provide the observed faculty member an opportunity to respond to a draft report.
- ❖ Submit the final peer observation report to the Department Chair.

APPENDIX B

**Evaluation of _____
Candidate for _____ Professor of _____
UF/IFAS AEC Department**

Please rate the candidate using the following scale:

- _____ Excellent
- _____ Above average
- _____ Average
- _____ Unacceptable

What are the strengths of this candidate for this position?

What do you see as the candidate's weaknesses for this position?

Contact with the candidate (circle all that apply):

- 1. Did you review the candidate's application packet? Y / N
- 2. Did you attend the candidate's seminar? Y / N
- 3. Did you have individual contact with the candidate? Y / N
(Meal / Group Faculty visit / Program Faculty)

Submitted by _____

Please return to _____ by _____. Thanks!