

Shared Governance of the Horticultural Sciences Department, University of Florida

A. Preamble; Guiding Principles:

The Horticultural Sciences (HS) Department is fully committed to shared governance principles in the interactions among the Chair, Faculty, staff, and students as established by the IFAS Constitution in its Preamble and Article I, Section 2. The Horticultural Sciences Department will use shared governance in planning, policy making, implementation and major decision-making. Three levels of interactions will characterize shared governance of the Horticultural Sciences Department:

1. **Determination:** The HS Chair shall recognize and delegate to the Faculty and its representative body, the Faculty Advisory Committee, the authority **to determine** certain matters, which will be defined and agreed upon.
2. **Recommendation:** The Chair shall recognize the purview of Faculty and its representative body, the Faculty Advisory Committee, **to recommend** on matters relating to the areas of faculty welfare, planning, budget and resource allocation, scholarship in its various forms, and academic facilities, infrastructure, and as noted elsewhere in this document. “To recommend” means to seek a decision jointly, such decision not to be modified by the Chair without further discussion with faculty representatives and an effort to find a solution satisfactory to all members of the department
3. **Consultation:** The Chair shall recognize that the Faculty through the Faculty Advisory Committee will have an opportunity **to consult** with the Chair on other matters connected with the priorities and policies of the Department and their implementation. “To consult” is to have input into the decision-making process, and especially to be informed of the nature and rationale for decisions prior to implementation.

B. Department Chair

1. Responsibilities

The Department is headed by a Chair appointed by the Senior Vice President in accordance with the University Constitution. The Chair serves as chief executive and administrative officer of the Department. The Chair has a leading role in finances, planning, developing policies, and supervises routine operations of the Department, including faculty evaluations and evaluations of selected staff. The Chair is responsible to the Senior Vice President (SVP) for administration of the Department and the Deans for programmatic issues and is the official representative of Department Faculty for execution of academic policy. The Chair is expected to operate the Department with commitment to shared governance with faculty input as described throughout this document.

Operation of the department includes appointment of graduate and undergraduate coordinators, undergraduate advisors, and committee members except as specified below. The Chair will present at a faculty meeting an Annual State of the Department Report including budget overview, position allocation, personnel, infrastructure, and plans for the coming year. The Chair shall also annually solicit feedback on his/her performance from the Faculty and discuss the results of the Faculty feedback at the next faculty meeting.

2. Selection, Evaluation and Retention of the HS Chair

The Horticultural Sciences Chair holds the position most critical to a culture of shared governance. For the selection of a new chairperson, the Faculty Advisory Committee, following consultation with the entire faculty of the Department, shall represent the Department and shall request a meeting with SVP for Agriculture and Natural Resources to establish the procedures of recruitment and consultation as prescribed by the University Bylaws. The HS Chair and faculty fully accept and respect the prerogatives of the SVP to hire, evaluate and retain or replace the HS Chair in accordance with the IFAS Constitution and pertinent Internal Management Memoranda. As such, the HS faculty shall wholeheartedly engage in all appropriate selection processes and provide the SVP with well-reasoned counsel regarding candidates for the Chair position. As part of periodic IFAS administrator evaluations, the HS faculty will provide the SVP a consultation for the retention or replacement of the incumbent Chair. The HS faculty, as a whole, reserves the right at any time to petition the SVP for the retention or replacement of an incumbent Chair. Such consultation and/or petition shall be mediated through the Faculty Advisory Committee.

3. Associate Department Chair

The Department Chair may select a faculty member to serve as Associate Department Chair. The Associate Department Chair will have a defined term as agreed upon by the faculty member, the Department Chair, and the HS voting Faculty in accordance with the University Constitution, IFAS Constitution, and IFAS Internal Management Memoranda. The duties of the Associate Department Chair shall be outlined by the Department Chair.

C. The Faculty

The Faculty of the Horticultural Sciences Department 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.

1. Faculty Rights:

Faculty have all of the rights and privileges granted to them by University of Florida Constitution and the IFAS Constitution. These include:

- a) The right to know the expectations of their job assignment and how they will be evaluated.
- b) The right to assemble without limitations to discuss issues of concern.
- c) The right to open academic discourse without fear of retribution
- d) The right to file grievances without fear of retribution

2. Faculty Responsibilities

- a) Faculty are responsible for planning and conducting teaching, research, extension and service in a competent and professional manner.
- b) Faculty are responsible as equal partners for the operations of the Department, including building, infrastructure, social, and outreach functions.
- c) Faculty are responsible as equal partners for the governance of the Department, IFAS, the University, and their professional societies.

D. TEAMS/USPS Staff

Staff shall consist of employees governed under the TEAMS/USPS salary pay plans.

1. Staff Rights

Staff shall have all of the rights and privileges granted to them by University of Florida Constitution and the IFAS Constitution. Policies established by federal and state law, as well as the University of Florida Board of Trustees, are to be considered the minimum guidelines for insuring the fair and ethical interactions with staff in the decision-making processes. Staff rights include:

- a) The right to know the expectations of their job assignment and how they will be evaluated.
- b) The right to file grievances without fear of retribution
- c) The right to be fully represented in aspects of shared governance pertaining to staff, either individually or as a group, in all relevant aspects of departmental operations.
- d) The expectation that decisions affecting staff will be disseminated promptly and transparently to promote trust and communication in Horticultural Sciences
- e) The right to form their own committees, e.g. Administrative Management committee and Technical Support committee, and to

elect representatives to address the Faculty and/or Chair on issues that affect them.

2. Staff responsibilities

Staffs are expected to support the ongoing mission within their assigned programmatic area and work in accordance with the established policy of the University as outlined in the TEAMS/USPS employee handbook.

E. Graduate Students

Graduate students have all the rights granted to graduate students of the University of Florida and IFAS. Within the Department, Graduate students also have the right to form a graduate student committee and to elect a representative to address the Faculty and/or Chair on issues that affect students.

F. Faculty Meetings

Faculty meetings will typically be held monthly, set to follow the monthly Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC) meetings, and not less than twice per semester. Faculty meetings will be arranged by the Chair at least two weeks in advance and announced to all members of the Department. At that time, faculty can add items to the agenda by notifying the Chair. For issues that affect students and/or staff, representatives of these groups will be given time on the agenda to address such issues. Inclusion of non-faculty groups in the Faculty meeting will normally be coordinated through the FAC. The agenda will be sent to all members of the Department one week before the meeting. Documentation and/or data to be discussed should also be provided in advance of the meeting. Voting will be open to all on-campus HS faculty. Voting requires a quorum, defined as 50% plus one of the on-campus HS faculty. In general, a simple majority will be required to approve a motion. A 2/3 majority of all on campus HS faculty will be required to approve changes to the Bylaws. The Faculty or Chair can request electronic balloting in cases where a vote of all on campus HS Faculty is desired. Faculty serving as UF Senators and members of the IFAS Faculty Assembly and other UF/IFAS faculty governing bodies should email short summaries to the FAC so that dialogue can be initiated on critical items currently before those governing bodies. Reports from standing and ad hoc committees will also be presented at faculty meetings, including an annual report of each committee's activities. Minutes of the faculty meeting will be distributed by the Chair and placed on the web by the web administrator. Unless otherwise noted, faculty meetings and committee meetings will be conducted according to Roberts Rules of Order, although informally and collegially applied (i.e. with the least procedural formality necessary to conduct business fairly, effectively, and efficiently).

G. New Faculty Hires

1. Prioritizing new positions

Prioritizing needs for new faculty hires is among the most important activities for shared governance. New faculty hires determine the future of the department, and the faculty should frequently discuss priorities for future faculty positions. Faculty positions should seek to replace vacancies, introduce new and needed expertise, create a critical mass in priority program areas, and foster integrative and multidisciplinary teaching, research and extension activities. Priorities for faculty positions will be discussed at a faculty meeting at least once per year, but continuous discussions are encouraged. The Faculty, through faculty meeting vote, will recommend the direction of new hires.

2. The Hiring Process

The composition of the Search and Screen Committee (SSC) for faculty positions should include a wide range of program representation. The Chair should obtain recommendations from the FAC for the composition of all SSCs.

The Search and Screen Committee (SSC) leads the process of securing applications from as many qualified candidates as possible, and identifying the most highly qualified individuals for on-site interviews. Hiring decisions are based on data collected in a narrow time frame, such that efficient collection, sharing and synthesis of information is important. The SSC reaches consensus on interview candidates (typically three or four) and makes interview recommendations to the Chair.

Interviews of candidates will be communicated in advance to faculty, staff and students. Faculty, students, and staff are encouraged to participate in on-site interviews and discussions, and provide feedback on candidates after the interviews. At a faculty meeting held shortly after the final interview, the SSC leads discussion of the candidates.

The Faculty seek consensus on acceptable candidates and will vote to recommend a candidate for hire. It is expected that the Chair will follow that recommendation. Should the Chair disagree with that recommendation, he/she will explain how their decision will be in the best interest of the Department. If no candidate was found acceptable, then the Faculty discussion shifts to exploring either interviewing more applicants or re-opening the search.

H. Standing Committees

1. General Procedures

Standing Departmental Committees are those committees tasked with making decisions that affect the Department. With the exception of the Tenure and Promotion Committee, all Standing Departmental Committees will:

- a) Announce meetings in advance
- b) Post agenda with new business and old business clearly noted
- c) Circulate documents relevant to the meeting business in advance
- d) Post meeting minutes on the departmental website through the website administrator
- e) Elect a member to serve as secretary with responsibilities for taking and maintaining minutes
- f) Place the responsibility of advertising the meeting and posting the minutes on the Committee chair
- g) Establish a system of rotating members and chairs to ensure continuity and participation by experienced members
- h) Allow members in good standing to seek successive terms
- i) Unless otherwise noted, all committees should meet formally at least once a year
- j) Subcommittees and *ad hoc* committees may be formed as needed.

2. Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC)

The FAC is a Departmental shared governance entity that will consult with and serve as a liaison between the Chair and faculty, staff, and students. The FAC will make recommendations to the Chair on policy decisions influencing any member of HS. Examples of such guidance include budget priorities, opportunities for new faculty positions, staff additions/reductions, merit pay, graduate student stipends, and other policies that directly affect the faculty, staff, students, and programs of HS. The FAC will recommend which matters should be brought to the HS faculty as a whole for discussion and vote. Any recommendation made directly by the FAC to the Chair may be subject to review and action by the entire faculty at the subsequent faculty meeting. The FAC will require from the Department Chair sufficient information and involvement to serve these roles. All committees and subcommittees are encouraged to request time on the FAC meeting agenda as needed. The FAC will typically meet once a month and no less than twice per semester.

The FAC is also responsible for communicating HS faculty consultations to the Senior Vice President regarding the retention or replacement of the Chair.

- a) Terms of Service: All terms are three-year staggered terms.
- b) Composition of Committee: The committee will be composed of five members, of whom two are appointed by the Chair, and three are elected by the Faculty. The members should reflect programmatic diversity as well as diversity of HS as a whole, i.e. type of appointment (research, teaching, extension), rank, and gender.

3. HS Academic Programs Committee (HAPC)

The HAPC provides leadership for curricula, undergraduate scholarships, courses, seminar, and other educational activities. Members are responsible for soliciting input from faculty, staff and students. Members of the committee include the HS undergraduate coordinator, the HS graduate coordinator, a HS undergraduate advisor, and two members elected by the Faculty. The HAPC works with members of the IFAS Curriculum Committee and can appoint *ad hoc* committees to address specific issues as needed. Terms of service for faculty-elected members; three years.

4. Graduate Committee

Members support the Graduate Coordinator for recruiting and screening graduate students, and for recommending funding for assistantships, fellowships, and graduate awards. Members of the Committee include the Graduate coordinator as well four members appointed by the Chair.

5. Tenure and Promotion Committee

This committee is responsible for reviewing and providing feedback for Department Faculty submitting Three-Year Review and Tenure & Promotion Packets. For faculty preparing three-year reviews, the committee assesses their packets for strengths and weaknesses and indicates where the faculty member should concentrate their efforts in the time remaining in order to be successful in the tenure process. For faculty preparing packets for Tenure and Promotion, the committee provides constructive suggestions to improve the packet presentation.

- a) Terms of Service: Five-year staggered terms.
- b) Composition of Committee: Five members, with at least one person who has served (as recently as possible) on the college Tenure and Promotion Committee, and one member from an off-campus Research and Education Center. Committee composition should represent basic and applied research, teaching, and extension. The Department Chair appoints both the Center faculty representative and the member who most recently served on the College Tenure and Promotion committee. Remaining members are elected by the Faculty.

- c) *Ad hoc* committees can include:
 - New Faculty Mentoring Committees
 - Peer Evaluation Committees

6. Operations Committee

The function of the Operations Committee (OC) is to facilitate the operation of the department and ensure that departmental staff members are fully integrated into UF and HS shared governance policies. The FAC and/or the Chair informs the OC of proposed changes that affect department operations in such areas as facilities, administrative, human resources, safety, purchasing, vehicles, USPS/TEAMS staff assignment/reassignment, information technology/communications, and social events. The OC makes suggestions regarding the implementation of these changes and also serves to facilitate implementation. Additionally, the OC may propose changes in departmental operations to the FAC. The OC requires from the FAC and the Chair sufficient information on the operation of the department to perform these roles. The OC shall report to the FAC and other departmental committees as needed.

- a) Terms of Service: Committee membership should be reviewed annually.
- b) Composition of Committee: Members include at least one person from each operational area: faculty, office staff, IT, farm operations, lab operations, and graduate students. Membership may change depending on the needs of the Department, with the mission of the OC to maintain representation from every operational class. Members will be appointed by the FAC. Members shall elect a chair, who will coordinate activities of the OC and conduct meetings.
- c) Ad-hoc committees reporting to the Operations Committee may include:
 - USPS/TEAMS Committee
 - Administrative Management Committee.
 - Social Events Committee

I. Changes to This Document

Changes to this document can be requested by any faculty, staff, or student of HS. Potential changes will be discussed by the FAC and taken to the faculty as a whole for consideration and vote as needed. A 2/3 vote of the Faculty is required for adoption of changes to the bylaws.