

**Bylaws of West Florida Research and Education Center (WFREC)
University of Florida**

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 shared goals of the faculty and administration of WFREC are to attain excellence in academic responsibilities of teaching, research, extension and service and to provide a quality and ethical work environment. These goals can best be achieved with a governance structure from the Center level to the University level that fosters collegiality, collaboration, mutual responsibility and accountability, and transparency.

These Bylaws are intended to foster transparency, collaboration, mutual responsibility, and accountability in the Center’s administration. These Bylaws are subordinate to the University of Florida Constitution, the Faculty Senate Bylaws, the Constitution of the Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences, and the policies and directives of Florida’s Board of Trustees and the Florida Board of Governors. A statement in the WFREC Bylaws found to be inconsistent with the above authority does not necessarily invalidate other parts of the WFREC Bylaws.

Article I Governance of the Center

The University of Florida is committed to implementing shared governance between administration and faculty at all levels of the university. Shared governance includes:

“...procedures to ensure faculty collaboration in: strategic planning; setting budget priorities; setting resource allocation priorities;...resolving differences between faculty and administration,....[and] procedures for periodic review and evaluation of shared governance in practice...” [IFAS Faculty Assembly, *Shared Governance*, http://faculty.ifas.ufl.edu/assembly/shared_governance.html]

WFREC Bylaws are intended to provide for the open and timely exchange of essential information between administration and faculty. The Bylaws establish an administrative structure that guarantees to Faculty the opportunity to transform information into policy proposals recommended to administration.

The WFREC Administrative Organization Chart (Appendix 1) summarizes the orderly flow of information through the Center.

There is two way communications between the WFREC Director and the Faculty. For example, the WFREC Director is expected to communicate important information directly to the Faculty; and, individual faculty members may consult directly with the WFREC Director on personnel issues, career development,

administrative matters, and so on. Individual faculty members also maintain direct communication with Department Chairs in their respective tenure home departments.

The Director serves as the conduit of information between WFREC and IFAS administration as it relates to the management of the Department and serves as the liaison between faculty and staff. The Director serves as the Chair of the External Advisory Board and is responsible for directing communications between external stakeholders on the board and faculty.

Article II The Faculty

(A) Faculty Membership

(1) Faculty by definition [Senate Bylaw 21] are “persons employed by the University of Florida during the regular academic year...”

The faculty of the West Florida Research and Education Center 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 By-Laws and include the various ranks of Professor, Scholar, Lecturer, Research Scientist, Extension Scientist and Assistant In.

(B) The Voting Faculty

(1) The Voting Faculty is composed of all faculty members of the WFREC (as defined above), except in cases subject to restrictions imposed by university regulations regarding promotion and tenure [University of Florida Constitution, Article III, Sections 5,6; University of Florida Regulation 6C1-7.019(6)(b)(1) and 6C1-7.019(6)(c)(1)]. In those cases, only members of equal or higher rank may vote.

(2) WFREC budgeted faculty vote to determine the rights of non-budgeted faculty to vote on WFREC issues and to serve on WFREC Committees. Invitations to vote and participate in faculty governance are issued on an individual basis, and subject to restrictions imposed by WFREC Faculty.

(C) Advisory Role

The Faculty is the sole policy advisory body to the WFREC Director regarding policies impacting the Center. No individual WFREC Committee, nor the External Advisory Board, may supplant the Faculty in this role.

(D) 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 request and to receive essential and timely information required to participate in shared governance as established in WFREC 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 WFREC Director's rationale for vetoing Faculty recommendations.

(6) Faculty have the right to review the performance of the WFREC Director annually.

(E) 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.

Article III WFREC DIRECTOR

(A) Center Director Responsibilities

The Center is headed by a Director appointed by the Senior Vice President in accordance with the University Constitution. The Director serves as chief executive and administrative officer of the Center. The Director provides financial planning and policy and supervises routine operations of the Center, including faculty evaluations and evaluations of selected staff. The Director provides programmatic leadership and links the Center to the upper administration and key stakeholders. The Director is responsible to the Senior Vice President for administration of the Center and to the Deans for Teaching, Research and Extension, for other programmatic issues, and is the agent of the Center's faculty for execution of academic policy. The Director is expected to operate the Center in the spirit of shared governance and seek faculty input, consider it, and provide feedback and rationale about final decisions. The Director is expected to follow UF and IFAS guidelines for hiring departmental faculty and staff. The Director may maintain a program of teaching, research and/or extension. Faculty request that the Director's programs complement but do not compete with Center faculty.

(B) Administrative Coordinators

The WFREC Director with input from the faculty may appoint Administrative Coordinators from the Faculty to assist in administration of programs in WFREC.

Administrative Coordinators are not a policy-making entity but recommend policy to the voting faculty and the Director. The administrative Coordinators are:

(1) Associate Director

The WFREC Director with input from the faculty may appoint an Associate Director from the Faculty to provide various types of assistance including performing as the acting-Director during WFREC Director absence; representing the WFREC Director at various events; and administering special Center projects and initiatives.

(2) Undergraduate Coordinators

The Undergraduate Coordinators administer the undergraduate programs at WFREC. The Undergraduate Coordinators are responsible for assisting the WFREC recruiter with recruiting and admission of undergraduate students; responsible for advising students in course selection; tracking students' progress through their programs, and ensuring that their graduation requirements are met; participating as members of the WFREC scholarship committee; advising the WFREC Director on faculty staffing of undergraduate classes; arbitrating unresolved complaints by undergraduate students concerning instruction; reviewing the undergraduate curriculum annually and recommending modifications to courses and degree requirements to the curriculum committee; serve on curriculum committees which administer the degrees available at WFREC.

Article IV Center Committees

(A) Purpose and classification

Service on committees at the WFREC is the primary means by which faculty can participate directly in the governance of the Center. General procedures for standing committees include:

1. Standing committees should meet regularly. A secretary, selected from within the committee membership, shall keep and archive minutes and records.
2. Reports of the standing committees shall be made to the faculty periodically via email messages, at faculty meetings, or using other appropriate methods for information dissemination.
3. Standing committees shall submit and archive an annual written report to the faculty (for the interval July 1 – June 30).
4. Policy recommendations developed in the standing committees shall be emailed to all faculty prior to faculty meetings at which time faculty input and discussion will be entertained.
5. Committee members for all committees shall be selected by the Director with faculty input.

(B) Committee Membership Eligibility

(1) Faculty

Any member of the WFREC Voting Faculty may be elected by the faculty as a whole to serve on Center committees. In some cases, special expertise and qualifications are required for nomination to membership on certain committees, and such qualifications shall be set forth in the bylaws.

(2) Staff

(a) Participation

WFREC Staff may serve on Non-Policy Committees and Policy Committees upon approval of the Faculty.

(b) Voting Rights

WFREC Staff have the right to vote on all matters that fall within the committee's purview except for policy concerning salary, leaves, insurance, retirement, and fringe benefits of faculty; decisions concerning the appointment, salary, reappointment, promotion, tenure or dismissal of individual faculty members; academic programs; and matters affecting the professional responsibility of the faculty to establish and maintain the intellectual authority of the university.

(c) Selection

WFREC Staff are nominated by the Committee chair and appointed by the WFREC Center Director. The term of appointment is negotiated between the Center Director and the staff member. Supervisors of individual staff must provide authorization prior to appointment by the Center Director.

(C) Policy Committees

Policy Committees are charged with making policy recommendations to the Faculty. Each Policy Committee has a chair and at least two other members.

The Policy Committees are:

(1) Administrative Advisory Committee

The Administrative Advisory Committee is responsible for providing input to the Center Director on matters of space, budget, and long-range planning. The committee will review the bylaws of the WFREC every three years and propose modifications to the entire faculty, as necessary. The Administrative Advisory Committee shall consist of three tenured/tenure-track faculty who will each serve three-year staggered terms. One member shall rotate off the committee every year and shall be replaced by one elected faculty member. The committee will be convened at the request of The Center Director with a faculty member serving as chair of the Committee. The agenda and the names of the committee members will be disseminated before each meeting with an invitation to faculty to propose items for discussion. The committee reviews, evaluates and assist The Center Director in relaying budgetary changes and concerns to the UF Milton

faculty. The committee facilitates faculty feedback or recommendations in the form of a voted proposal to the Center Director. Meeting minutes (edited for confidentiality) will be disseminated via email to the faculty after each meeting. The Administrative Advisory Committee, along with input from all tenured and tenure-accruing faculty, will be responsible for setting policy for general operation of the WFREC.

(2) Academic Programs Committee

The Academic Programs Committee formulates and coordinates policy for all teaching programs administered by WFREC. All faculty with a formal teaching appointment comprise the committee. Two sub-committees, the Natural Resource Conservation Curriculum Committee and the Environmental Horticulture Curriculum Committee, formulate policy specific to those two program areas. The Academic Program Committee will meet at least two times per academic year and will report to the Faculty at large during faculty meetings.

(2B) Scholarship Committee

The Scholarship Committee is responsible for administering scholarships to WFREC students. The Chair of the committee is responsible for advertising scholarship announcements, accepting applications, presiding over meetings to review and approve scholarships, and working with the Accounting Department to ensure distribution of such funds. All faculty members eligible to serve on the Academic Programs Committee are eligible to vote on approval of scholarships and to serve as Chair of the committee.

(D) Non-Policy Committees

Non-Policy Committees administer ongoing or recurring WFREC tasks. Each Non-Policy Committee has a chair and at least two other members.

(1) Awards Committee

The Awards Committee is responsible for advising WFREC faculty and staff of award opportunities and deadlines; and submitting award packets prepared by the faculty and staff being nominated.

(2) External Advisory Council

The WFREC External Advisory Council consists of stakeholders who are community leaders that support and promote the teaching, research, and extension programs at the center. The council meets throughout the year with the Center Director and advises the Director on center-related issues and opportunities

(3) External Advisory Committee(s)

WFREC has several advisory committees that focus on programmatic issues/opportunities in agriculture, natural resource conservation, and horticulture. An advisory committee can be formed around a programmatic area

at the WFREC. Nominations for membership are solicited by the Center faculty. The Chair of the committee is chosen by the Center Director with input from the faculty. These committees convene when issues dictate the need.

Article V. Faculty Meetings

The faculty meeting is the primary means of fostering communication among all faculty within WFREC. Faculty meetings should be held at least quarterly and as needed by the Center Director, or by request of any WFREC 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 WFREC should email to all faculty short summaries of critical items of relevance to WFREC being discussed before those bodies and placed in the WFREC 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. West Florida Research and Education Center faculty, plus emeritus, courtesy, and affiliate faculty may speak on any issue before the faculty. Voting on most matters shall be restricted to West Florida Research and Education Center voting faculty.

After all candidates for new faculty positions have interviewed, the merits of each candidate will be discussed in a faculty meeting. Written input on candidate qualifications will be submitted on an appropriate evaluation form. All faculty members may complete a written evaluation for a candidate for use by the Center Director in faculty hiring decisions.

Article VI. Ratification and Amendments

Section 1. These Bylaws shall become effective upon their ratification by the faculty of the WFREC West Florida Research and Education Center with a two-thirds majority vote, concurrence of the Center Director, and approval of the IFAS Senior Vice President.

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

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

Section 4. Faculty will have one month to review and register a vote for adoption and amendment of the Bylaws.

WFREC Organizational Chart

