

**Approved - Fall 2010**  
**College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean's Advisory Council**  
**By-Laws**

The name of this organization shall be the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean's Advisory Council, hereafter referred to as the Council. The Council is a non-profit organization affiliated with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and the Virginia Tech Foundation.

**Purpose**

The purpose of the Council shall be to advise the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences on all aspects of teaching, research, and extension programs and to advance and promote the programs of the College. This includes matters pertaining to review current and future plans of the college; provide information and recommendations concerning these plans; assist in the dissemination of information with constituent groups; and public relations and image/reputation.

**Membership**

The Council shall represent the diversity of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the appropriate partnerships. The membership of the Council shall consist of individuals representing the stakeholders with whom the College regularly interacts and reflect changing domestic and international perspectives. The Dean will appoint members of the Council by virtue of their organizational affiliations or to obtain needed representation. The appointment of new council members shall be subject to approval of a majority of the Council membership.

All members of the Council have privileges of voice and vote. College staff are considered equal members of this partnership with all rights and responsibilities. However, College staff shall abstain from advocacy roles and shall not serve as officers of the Council. On advocacy issues, all staff members will announce conflict of interest and will not vote. The minutes shall reflect such abstinence. The Dean will determine the appropriate staff membership, numbers of which will never be over and above the basic membership of the Council.

The Council year of service will run from July 1 to June 30 each year.

It is the intention of the council to have members who:

- Represent the diversity of the College, agribusiness in Virginia and beyond, and other key constituents
- Are willing and available to actively participate in Council meetings
- Provide a balance of experience both professionally and/or on the Council with new perspectives and participants
- Strive to provide valuable perspective and advocacy for the College in general and the Dean specifically.

To help facilitate these intentions, we will use the following guidelines to balance membership and Council needs for continuity and new perspectives:

- All Charter members will serve at least one 2-year term, with some serving initial 2-year, 3-year or 4-year terms
- Beginning in Year 3, approximately one-third of Council members will become eligible for reappointment or replacement
- Reappointment will be based in part on previous participation, College and Council evolving needs, Council member availability and interest in future term(s)
- Replacement may occur prior to the end of a term if Council member is unable to participate in Council meetings

The Council shall provide input to the Dean concerning the mission and direction of the College and shall have the responsibility of serving as a communication link to relevant stakeholders. The member shall have the responsibility of recommending and providing leadership for implementing appropriate public relations activities in support of the College. This shall include those activities necessary to educate the stakeholders with respect to the impact of programs and the need for their involvement and support.

### **Meetings**

The Council will hold a minimum of two formal meetings per year of the entire membership, at least one of which will be in Blacksburg. Written notice of each meeting shall be mailed or emailed to Council members at least two months in advance of the meeting.

Members are expected to attend all meetings. While an occasional absence may be unavoidable, if both meetings in a council year are missed, it may be necessary to appoint a replacement.

### **Record of Council Meetings**

The secretary shall keep the minutes of Council meetings. The minutes shall maintain an accurate record of member attendance, deliberations and decisions of the regular meetings. Minutes will be sent out with the date and agenda for the next meeting, and will be presented for approval by the chair at that meeting. Following approval of the minutes, they will be posted to the College public website.

### **Organization of the Council**

The functions of the Council shall be organized around an Executive Committee and special or ad hoc committee(s) when deemed necessary. The Dean will ensure that staff support for the Council is provided.

Committee chairpersons and members shall be appointed by the Dean in consultation with the Executive Committee. Appointments to committees shall be based upon a member's interest and/or expertise in the area of the committee's responsibilities. While all members may not have assignments to a committee, all members shall react to the work of all committees and are free to make suggestions to committee chairs.

When appropriate, committee chairs shall present written or oral reports of the committees' work at or prior to regular council meetings.

### **Executive Committee**

The primary role of the Executive Committee is to assist the Dean in providing leadership for the Council. The executive committee's volunteer members will be elected by the existing membership for a two-year term prior to July 1, by way of electronic or mail ballots. Absentee and proxy voting are permitted for officer elections. The executive committee shall consist of three elected persons (Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary), the Dean, and the Dean's Administrative Assistant. If an officer vacancy occurs prior to the expiration of the elected term, the membership may elect a person to complete the remaining portion of the term. Upon recommendation of the Council Executive Committee, other membership vacancies that occur prior to the completion of the elected term may be filled by the Council membership at any time.

The chair shall preside at all meetings of the Council and of the executive committee. The chair shall be an ex-officio member of all committees. The chair shall have the prerogative of recommending ad hoc committees as the need arises.

The vice chair shall perform the duties of the chair in the event of the chair's inability to carry out the role of chair.

The secretary shall ensure that appropriate documents and records, including minutes of meetings, are prepared and maintained.

The executive committee shall focus on and develop the Plan of Work of the Council. This will include the development of the calendar, locations of the year's activities, as well as the agendas of all meetings. The agenda for each regular meeting shall be distributed to the membership two weeks in advance of the meetings. The proposed Plan of Work shall be presented to the members for input and adoption.

The executive committee shall review the Plan of Work of the Council on a timely basis and recommend corrective actions as warranted by their review. The report of the review shall be made to the members for their input and adoption.

The continuing education of the members shall be the responsibility of this committee. A portion of each meeting of the Council shall be devoted to member education, including discussions about the needs and activities of the College, as well as issues of concern throughout the Commonwealth.

The executive committee shall act on behalf of the Council when time and circumstances preclude the involvement of the entire council. Actions of the executive committee shall be reported to the entire Council at its next regular meeting.

### **Special or Ad Hoc Committee(s)**

The Dean shall, as needs arise, appoint special or ad hoc committees to address specific needs on behalf of the Council in consultation with the Executive Committee.

### **By-Law Amendments**

These by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Council. Such amendment(s) shall require a simple majority to be adopted. Further, notice of the proposed amendment(s) shall be submitted to the membership in writing at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which voting is to take place.