

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Extension Program Peer Review Policy

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Developing and delivering effective, high-quality, Cooperative Extension programming is central to Virginia Tech's mission. Conducting periodic peer reviews of extension programming is consistent with the processes, practices, and scholarly rigor that is expected from extension faculty, and it is consistent with other forms of academic instruction peer review. Virginia Tech's P&T Guidelines specify that a peer review of extension program(s) be included in the dossiers of those faculty with extension appointments, *Section VI. D. Additional outreach and extension activities and outcomes* (http://www.provost.vt.edu/promotion_tenure/promotion_and_tenure.html). Unlike traditional academic instruction, extension programming is designed to reach a diverse clientele including audiences internal and external to the university. The CALS policy regarding peer review of Cooperative Extension programming is provided here.

I. Process:

1. The extension program of tenure-track specialists shall be peer reviewed at least once before going up for promotion and tenure. This review should occur later in the tenure clock (i.e., between the fourth and fifth year of employment). Departments may also conduct another review earlier, if desired.
2. The extension program peer review process is designed for faculty with a minimum of 25% extension responsibility; however, faculty with less than 25% extension responsibility, or the candidate's department head, may also request a peer review if they feel it is appropriate.
3. The candidate, at the instruction of the P&T chair or the candidate's mentor will make a request to the Department Head or their designee that a peer review be conducted. The Department Head of the specialist whose program is being reviewed, or their designee, will initiate the peer review process.
4. A Peer Review Team (PRT) will be selected by the Department Head or designee with input from the departmental Extension Leader and the specialist whose program is being reviewed. The PRT will include two faculty (one may be an agent, if appropriate). Optional: Adding a third faculty member from a unit other than that of the specialist whose program is being reviewed.
5. The specialist whose program is being reviewed will prepare an extension peer-review package. The package should be submitted to the PRT electronically in PDF format and include:
 - a. A narrative (three pages max) describing;
 - the specialist's area of extension programming responsibility and appointment,
 - the issues being addressed and relevance/importance to Virginia,
 - the target clientele,
 - the program's goals and objectives,
 - how others (e.g., specialists, agents, clientele, volunteers, students, and stakeholders) help inform and are engaged in the program,
 - record of external/internal funding secured to support extension activities and/or integrated research-extension programs, a brief summary highlighting significant program impacts.
 - b. Evidence of program outputs;
 - a summary table(s) of extension activities, publications, etc., a representative, but limited, sample of resource materials developed to support programming (e.g., PowerPoint presentations, Virginia Cooperative Extension peer-reviewed publications, descriptions of websites; links to webinars)
 - c. Evidence of program outcomes including examples of selected program impact statements;

- d. The names and contact information of three to five appropriate program clientele (e.g., program participants, agents, industry personnel, etc.).
6. The specialist will be given the opportunity to meet with the PRT to discuss the goals/objectives and impacts of the program being reviewed.
 7. The PRT will contact clientele to gain their perspective on the program being reviewed. Options for contacting clientele include, but are not limited to, web-based or paper surveys, email inquiries, and telephone/personal interviews.
 8. When/where possible, the PRT should observe the specialist delivering a presentation. This may include webinars (live or recorded) that the specialist has developed and delivered.

II. Written Report

The PRT will prepare a report (no maximum page limit) that contains the following:

- a. Executive summary
 - a brief summary of the report findings (one page maximum) suitable for inclusion in the specialist's promotion and tenure dossier as specified by the Provost (http://www.provost.vt.edu/promotion_tenure/promotion_and_tenure.html)
- b. PRT Membership
 - names, rank, appointments, area of responsibility, and home department
- c. Review Methodology
 - a brief description of how the review was conducted (e.g., were phone interviews conducted with clientele, did all PRT members participate in all interviews)
- d. Program Development and Delivery
 - a brief overview of the program's goals and objectives
 - a description and assessment of the methods used to ascertain clientele needs,
 - an appraisal of the quality and relevance of resource materials developed to support the program
 - a critique of program delivery methods and their effectiveness (e.g., demonstrations, webinars)
- e. Program Impacts
 - a critical assessment of how program impacts are being captured and communicated
- f. Constructive Recommendations
 - suggestions for ways to improve program development, delivery, evaluation (recommendations should strive for a balance between praise and constructive critique)