

Guidelines

Mission Statement

The mission of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service is to provide research-based information through non-formal education to help Arkansans improve their economic well-being and the quality of their lives.

Purpose

The purpose of a State Extension Advisory (SEA) Committee is to provide counsel to programming faculty and/or the administration of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service regarding Extension programs, priorities, policies, and procedures.

Each approved SEA Committee serves only in an advisory capacity, with no legal ability to execute their recommendations. A SEA Committee does not have any liability that may result from consequences of actions taken by the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service. A SEA Committee is effective because of the counsel it provides, rather than any legal authority.

Functions

Each approved SEA Committee assists the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture with programmatic issue decisions related to needs assessments, program implementation, educational program evaluations, and the publication of program impacts. The responsibilities of a SEA Committee include:

- Collaborate with programming and/or administrative faculty concerning critical issues by identifying the needs of Arkansans on which to base statewide educational programs.
- Advise programming and/or administrative faculty in the development of statewide Extension programs, including the priorities, policies, and procedures to assist in their implementation.
- Assist programming and/or administrative faculty in the development of resources, funds, partnerships, and contact networks in order to strengthen Extension educational programs.
- Provide the necessary volunteer leadership at the state level through committee work and assignments throughout the year.

- Communicate and promote the mission and vision of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service and its educational programs to key stakeholder groups.
- Assist programming and/or administrative faculty in evaluating the impacts of educational efforts and provide suggestions to guide changes in statewide programming emphasis.

Administrative Requirements for a SEA Committee

The following items must be reviewed and approved by the director, an associate director, or a department head:

- New committee appointments are effective on **January 1**. A Committee Member Nomination form (**PSD003**) must be submitted to the appropriate department head and the appropriate associate director before an individual may be appointed to the committee.
- A SEA Committee Membership List (**PSD005**) must be submitted to the appropriate department head and the appropriate associate director by **January 15** of each year.
- A copy of the minutes from each SEA Committee meeting must be provided to administration for review within 30 days of each meeting.

Starting a New State Extension Advisory Committee

Requests to start a new SEA Committee must be made to the Associate Vice President – Extension Service. See the Request to Establish a State Extension Advisory (SEA) Committee (**PSD002**).

Upon obtaining approval to begin a committee, the following documents must be submitted for administrative approval:

- The Committee Member Nomination Form (**PSD003**) must be submitted to the appropriate department head and the appropriate associate director for approval before an individual may be appointed to the committee.
- A Vision, Mission, Goals & Objectives form (**PSD004**) must be submitted to the appropriate department head and the appropriate associate director prior to the second meeting of the committee.
- The By-Laws of the SEA Committee must be approved by the appropriate department head and the appropriate associate director prior to a vote of the committee membership to adopt the by-laws.

Membership and Terms

- SEA Committees are organized bodies of volunteer leaders. There must be at least eight members, but no more than twelve are allowed.
- Members of a SEA Committee may serve either a two-year or a three-year term, which may extend until their successors are elected. A member may not serve more than six consecutive years. Half of the membership will be appointed to serve a two-year term, while the other half of the membership will be appointed to serve a three-year term. Committee appointments become effective on **January 1**. Individuals may be re-appointed after a one-year absence.
- If an individual resigns from the SEA Committee, his or her replacement will complete the remainder of that term.
- In the event that a SEA Committee member misses two (2) consecutive meetings without prior notification, that member will be contacted by the programming or administrative faculty as to his/her interest, and will be replaced if necessary.
- No member will be excluded on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status.
- The total membership for the SEA Committee should maintain an accurate representation of gender, cultural diversity, population density, and all other factors which best reflect the composition of the programming area's population.
- Each SEA Committee shall include in its membership an ex-officio member from the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service Administration, such as the Director, an Associate Director, Department Head, or other as appointed by the Director. The ex-officio member does not have voting privileges in the committee, but is present to provide information and advice.

Officers

Officers shall include chair, vice-chair, secretary and treasurer. They shall be elected at the first meeting. The immediate past chair shall also serve as an officer. Upon the resignation of an officer, the un-expired term will be filled by appointment from the current membership by an open election at the next committee meeting. Ex-officio members are not eligible for office.

Chair

- Oversee SEA Committee and executive committee meetings.
- Serve as an advocate for Extension and the programmatic area.
- Work with the programming and/or administrative faculty to recruit new members.
- Call special meetings, if necessary.
- Appoint members to special sub-committees as needed.

- Assist program and/or administrative faculty in the evaluation of committee member roles and performance.

Vice-Chair

- Attend all SEA Committee meetings.
- Serve on the executive committee.
- Carry out special assignments as requested by the SEA Committee president.
- Understand and perform the duties of the SEA Committee president when the SEA Committee president is absent.

Secretary

- Attend all SEA Committee meetings.
- Serve on the SEA executive committee.
- Maintain all SEA Committee records and ensure their accuracy.
- Review SEA Committee minutes.
- Provide notice of meetings of the SEA Committee when such notice is required.
- Assume responsibilities of president and vice-president in their absence.

Treasurer (May be combined with Secretary)

- Attend all SEA Committee meetings.
- Serve on the SEA executive committee.
- Maintain a record of all SEA Committee income and expenses and ensure their accuracy.
- Work with audit committee to annually audit financial records.
- Work with budget committee to develop annual budget.

Committee Member Responsibilities

- Attend all SEA Committee meetings and functions.
- Remain informed of the organization's mission, service, policies, and programs.
- Review agenda prior to each meeting, and be prepared to participate in discussion at each meeting.
- Serve on committees and take special assignments as needed.
- Inform others about the mission and purpose of the program.
- Work with programming and/or administrative faculty to recruit new members.
- Stay current on developments concerning the program area.
- Assist the Committee in carrying out its responsibilities.

Meetings

A SEA Committee should meet a minimum of twice a year, but may hold additional meetings as needed.

Sub-Committees

Much of a SEA Committee's work shall be accomplished through its sub-committees. Sub-committees will make recommendations to the SEA Committee for discussion and

action. The subcommittee members appointed by the SEA Committee president will serve where necessary to carry out the goals and objectives of the SEA Committee. The membership of a sub-committee may include members outside of the overall SEA Committee. Sub-committees do not replace faculty and staff responsibilities.

Sub-committees may include governance, finance, program, and *ad hoc* or task forces.

- Governance Sub-Committee – address internal matters, such as nominations.
- Finance Sub-Committee – deal with financial issues, such as budget preparation, annual audits, and preparation of financial reports.
- Program Sub-Committees – concerned with outreach functions, such as program delivery, expansion of program offerings, reaching new audiences, evaluating outcomes, publicizing outcomes, measuring impacts, and other program-related activities (Sieverdes & Hardwick, 2002).
- *Ad Hoc* or Task Forces – assume responsibility for special projects.

Effective SEA Committee Work

- Develop written job descriptions for individual committee members.
- Develop an annual schedule of meetings, determined a year in advance.
- Distribute agendas and other relevant materials two or three weeks prior to each meeting.
- Maintain complete, accurate records of all meetings.
- Keep meetings brief but focused.
- Keep all committee members involved in the discussion.
- Ask each committee member to serve on at least one sub-committee and to take an active role.

References

Boleman, C. and Burkham, A. (2005). *Volunteer administration in the 21st century: Roles volunteers play in Texas Cooperative Extension*. Austin, TX: Texas Cooperative Extension.

Sieverdes, C.M. and Hardwick, E.P. (2002). *Improving board and organizational effectiveness: Nonprofit organization board and staff training for non-profit and faith-based organizations*. Southern Rural Development Center. Retrieved from: <http://srdc.msstate.edu/nonprofit/index.html>

Ohio State University (2002). *Guidelines for state extension advisory committee*. Retrieved from: <http://cfaes.osu.edu/college/govrelations/bylaws.pdf>

The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.