

## **PREPARING TENURE/PERMANENT STATUS AND/OR PROMOTION PACKETS WITH EMPHASIS ON THE EXTENSION PROGRAM SECTION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this document is to help UF/IFAS extension faculty produce complete, accurate, and easy-to-read Extension Sections in tenure/permanent status and/or promotion packets (a.k.a. “T & P” packets). The intended audience is state or county faculty members who are candidates for promotion and permanent status as well those who are preparing their 3<sup>rd</sup>-year review. Faculty must be aware of any changes in the formal T & P guidelines each year; this document is not intended to replace the annual T & P guideline document.

Permanent status/tenure and promotion are landmark events in the career of UF/IFAS faculty members. Your packet will be evaluated by numerous individuals who will likely have little knowledge of your discipline or area of responsibility. It is important to carefully prepare your packet so it does not become a hindrance to your success in the review process. Through the T & P process, your packet must speak for you in presenting your case for scholarship and distinction in extension.

The “Extension Program” section is a critical component of any application for tenure, permanent status, and/or promotion in UF/IFAS. This section is where faculty with an extension appointment present evidence of scholarly programmatic work and accomplishments for the time period under consideration. The assignment may vary from a small percentage of FTE to a high percentage of FTE for state faculty. For county faculty it is their full FTE. The Extension Program section also provides an opportunity for faculty without an official extension assignment to document extension activities in support of the land-grant mission.

This document discusses the relationship between the faculty member’s description of job duties and the organization and content of the Extension Program section. The essential components of the program section and the significance of each section as it relates to the applicant’s programmatic efforts and accomplishments are also discussed.

Since the packet reflects your work, the packet guidelines by default suggest what faculty members should be able to accomplish during the period of evaluation. It is most helpful to develop a strategy for your work that reflects the ideal packet. Reviewing these tips and information from the T & P training workshop with your mentoring committee could also improve your packet. Each packet is written somewhat differently, but they all should illustrate the basic concepts discussed below. Other examples may be obtained from your department/unit leader, other faculty, mentoring committee or the IFAS human resources office.

### **GENERAL COMMENTS ON PACKET PRESENTATION AND HELPFUL HINTS**

1. Remember the Three Cs.
  - a. Clean: Check carefully for spelling, grammatical, and formatting errors. Ask one or two colleagues to proofread your packet; often fresh eyes can pick up mistakes more easily.

- b. Clear: Explain your programming efforts in such a way that virtually anyone reading your packet can understand what you have done. Consider asking someone unfamiliar with extension, like a teacher, to read your packet for clarity. Rework any sections your reviewer had difficulty understanding. If you plan to use acronyms to save space, spell them out at their first mention in the packet. For example, “100 participants in the Operation Military Kids (OMK) program...” Reviewers, especially those outside your program area, may not be familiar with acronyms you frequently use.
  - c. Concise: Avoid wordiness. Review each section of your packet, especially the Extension Program section, to see how you can “tighten” your narrative. Do not give the appearance of “padding.” If an activity belongs in two sections, reference one to the other; do not repeat. Avoid double-counting. Lengthy packets are not always good packets.
2. Attend the T & P workshop, preferably each year, and obtain copies of other packets from recent years that were judged to be excellent. Individuals who have a similar appointment will have packets that describe their work in ways you might emulate.
  3. Some of these guidelines in this document speak to program expectations for all faculty members, not just packaging techniques.
  4. Writing in first person is fine, and often easier to read. Avoid repeatedly saying “the agent” or “this agent.”
  5. Start the process early enough to incorporate feedback from district directors, peers, and mentors.
  6. Bullets, tables, and lists help condense information.
  7. Pay close attention to the current version of T & P packet guidelines.

**DESCRIPTION OF JOB DUTIES**

The foundation and guiding framework for organizing the Extension Program Section is the faculty member’s description of his/her extension job duties and/or assignments during the time period under consideration. The job duties description should delineate the major areas of assignment. The applicant may wish to provide a percentage breakdown for each program. Examples of description of job duties for state and county faculty are:

**State Faculty (Extension Specialist) With Extension Appointment Example**

The faculty member provides leadership and coordination for statewide extension educational efforts in turfgrass production and management, including the development, delivery and evaluation of programs.

Specific focus areas and percentage FTE breakdown are:

Water management and conservation.....	25%
Improved nutrient management programs.....	20%
Integrated pest management .....	15%

**County Faculty (Extension Agent) With Extension Appointment Example**

The faculty member is responsible for the development, delivery, and evaluation of educational programs in Family and Consumer Sciences in the areas of nutrition, health, and family resource

economics. As County Extension Director (CED), the faculty member also provides leadership and coordination for the total county extension educational effort in agriculture, family, youth and community sciences, 4-H youth development, and community resource development. The CED also manages the administrative affairs of the County Extension office.

Specific duties by percentage of FTE:

Nutrition and health.....	50%
Family resource management .....	25%
Administration.....	25%

Subsequently, the reader expects to find each of these areas addressed in the Extension Program section of the application packet in the order listed. Duties may be addressed as such, or they may serve as a broad heading under which more specific programs within that job assignment are identified and addressed. Plans of work and annual accomplishment reports developed during the time period involved should be useful in determining an effective organizational scheme, as well as serving as a key source of information for the content of each section.

Organizing the Extension Program section to directly track with the job duties as they are listed facilitates the reader’s conceptualization and understanding of the program content of the report in relation to the assigned duties. A different format may cause the reader to have to sort through the material to try to ascertain what was done in a particular assignment. All job duties must be addressed to prevent raising questions about what happened and to insure a complete report.

### **EXTENSION PROGRAM SECTION**

Applying scholarly extension communication skills will help to make this section reader-friendly. The target audience consists of faculty from all UF units. Some may not be familiar with extension. The objectives are for this audience to clearly understand the components of the extension program and to know how the candidate has satisfied the criteria for tenure/permanent status/promotion. It is important to emphasize again that the description of job duties provides a useful basis for organizing the Extension Program section. To help the reader, some writers briefly reiterate the job duties in an introductory paragraph before starting to write the details.

Here are two examples of introductory paragraphs taken from the job descriptions above written for state and county faculty, respectively.

“During the period covered by this application, my extension assignment was in turfgrass production and management, with major focus areas of water conservation and management, fertility programs, and pest management.”

"During the period covered by this application, my primary assignments were in nutrition and health, family resource management, and overall program leadership, and administration."

Following the introductory paragraph that describes the job, the Extension Program section should follow the sequential order found in the job description by percentage. For example, for the state specialist, the first educational program write-up would be on water conservation and management. The description should include five components: *program title, situation, program objectives, educational methods, and outcomes/impacts*. Subsequent assignment areas (fertility, pest management) should be reported in the same manner. County faculty should follow the same procedure. The first educational program the agent reports on is nutrition and health, followed by family resource management and administration. These descriptions should include the five components listed above. These components are identical to those found in Plan of Work and Report of Accomplishment reports.

**Program Title:** The program title clearly describes the focus of the program being reported. It should clearly and succinctly convey the nature of the program, in essence serving as an abbreviated description. For example: "Conserving Water and Improving Water Quality in the Florida Turf Industry;" "Reducing Fertilizer and Nutrient Loss;" "Improving Nutrition of Senior Citizens;" "Reducing Family Debt." Catchy logos and/or titles used in promotional efforts or straight subject matter listings (e.g., Fertility, Pest Management, Beef/Forage, Foods and Nutrition, Finances, etc.) do not clearly describe the essence of the program.

**Situation:** This section should convince the reader of the need for the program by stating the relevant issues in the community (shown by using local data) and the expected returns on investment in the program to address/solve these issues. The situation statement also describes the target audience(s) for the program. Including this component assures that the scope and impact of the program effort is seen within a meaningful situational context. The situation statement enables the reader to obtain a feel for the extensiveness and significance of the problem(s) addressed by the educational program. Again, this should be brief and focused – ½ to ¾ of a page is usually sufficient.

**Program Objectives:** Follow the "SMART Objectives" framework for best results. The SMART acronym stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound goals. For more details about SMART objectives, see <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fy1327>.

Your program objectives should be clear, measurable, and concise statements of the major intended outcomes of the program, i.e., the major changes the target audiences (e.g., county agents, turf producers, golf course managers, parents, youth, senior citizens, etc.) were expected to make. These may be expressed in terms of changes in practices, knowledge, attitudes, skills, etc. The objectives are derived directly from the situation statement (expected returns on investment), therefore the tie with the situation statement should be obvious. The end result (i.e., impacts) of these changes that affect participants' economic, environmental, or social status can be discussed in the Outcomes/Impacts Section.

**Educational Methods and Activities:** This section should provide a succinct yet comprehensive description of the nature and extent of the educational efforts. Faculty should write a sequential synopsis of specific teaching and learning activities (numbers and types of educational programs, newsletters developed, mass media used, visual aids, field demonstrations, in-service, etc.) carried out during the time period, including cooperative endeavors with other groups and agencies. There should be a clear tie between the educational

efforts and the objectives. Summary tables and the use of bullet lists are extremely helpful. It is also a good idea to mention the supporting material produced (e.g., five fact sheets, three slide sets, etc.) without repeating the entire citation for each.

**Outcomes/Impacts:** This section reports the results of the educational efforts. The information provided should answer the “So what?” question. Outcomes and impacts should speak directly to the previously-stated objectives and should be reported in the same order. It is always a good idea to restate the objectives and report outcomes and impacts for each. This prevents the reader from referring back to the Objectives section to determine if they were achieved. Here is where the reader is informed of the extent to which the stated objectives were reached, or the progress to date in reaching them. Relevant information on other impacts of the program should also be included. The results should be quantifiable and provide clear evidence of progress made. Information that could be provided include the number of clientele reached by the programs, positive change by the target audience, and improvement in the situation. For example, improvement in audience knowledge, attitudes and skills; changes in the way the audience behaves (improved practices); consequences of the audience using the information and adopting the practices taught in the educational program (end results). Try to be as quantitative as possible when reporting outcomes and impacts.

#### **OTHER PROGRAMMATIC EFFORTS**

There may be other significant program activities and accomplishments that should be reported but do not directly relate to one of the major program responsibilities listed in the description of job duties. In other words, there may be certain significant activities that tend to stand alone, such as work with an overall advisory committee, a community development effort, etc. These should not be left out, and may be reported under the heading of Other Programmatic Efforts, with a brief summary paragraph devoted to each.

#### **SUMMARY**

The presentation of each of the major program responsibilities as delineated by the description of job duties, or subsections thereof, should contain five components: a title, a brief situational statement, a concise statement of objectives expanded in changes to occur in clientele, a summary of educational methods, and a statement of outcomes and impacts or progress to date. There should be a clear and obvious relationship or common thread among the components, i.e., the situational statement should address the title, the objectives should clearly relate to the situational statements, the educational methods should contribute to reaching the identified objectives, and the outcomes and impacts should provide evidence of reaching or making progress toward the objectives. A well-written Extension Program Section does not guarantee success in achieving tenure or promotion. However, a well-written program section can greatly facilitate “putting one’s best foot forward” as the faculty member’s total accomplishments are being considered.