

Bylaws of The Department of Plant Sciences  
University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture

#### PREAMBLE

According to the provisions of the UT Faculty Handbook, each department or separate unit shall adopt Bylaws describing the organization and governance of the group. These Bylaws will cover faculty governance in which the opinions, advice or consent of the faculty members are required or essential.

#### ARTICLE I - MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

The mission of the University of Tennessee Department of Plant Sciences is “to discover, develop and disseminate science and technologies to serve the teaching, research and outreach needs of students, stakeholders and peers in the agronomic and horticultural plant sciences”. The vision of the University of Tennessee Department of Plant Sciences is “to be an innovative and leading source for information and technologies in the agronomic and horticultural plant sciences”.

#### ARTICLE II - UT FACULTY HANDBOOK

The UT Faculty Handbook is intended to be a general reference for University guidelines, policies, services and resources. In all cases, the UT Faculty Handbook polices and procedures take precedence over these Bylaws, unless these Bylaws are more restrictive.

#### ARTICLE III - DEPARTMENTAL MEETINGS

##### Section 1. Frequency

Departmental meetings will be held at least quarterly during the calendar year. Additional meetings may be called by the Head as needed or at the request of any five faculty members of the department.

##### Section 2. Agenda

All departmental meetings will be governed by a written agenda. This agenda will be prepared by the Head, and it will contain items submitted by members of the department. All meetings will be called to order and adjourned by the Head or his designee.

##### Section 3. Participation

All faculty including adjunct faculty, other academic staff, and non-tenure track Extension Specialists are permitted and encouraged to attend and participate in meetings, except when deliberations concerning matters of retention, promotion and tenure are scheduled. Participation in these meetings will be limited to the tenured faculty.

##### Section 4. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of one more than one-half of the faculty members at the rank of Instructor, Extension Specialist or above and who have appointments of at least 75

percent full time employment. All faculty members at the rank of Instructor, Extension Specialist or above and who have appointments of at least 75 percent full time employment are eligible to vote on matters of record, excepting those concerning retention, tenure and promotion. Voting eligibility on these matters will be limited to the tenured faculty.

#### Section 5. Minutes

Minutes shall be taken at all departmental meetings and they will be distributed after each meeting.

### ARTICLE IV - COMMITTEES

Departmental committees and their chairs may be created and appointed by the Head. The composition and size of each committee is determined by the Head, with the advice of the departmental faculty, committee chairs and the anticipated functions and needs of each committee. Where appropriate, staff representation may be included.

The department has 10 permanent, standing committees. They are:

Internal Advisory  
Development & Marketing  
Awards & Recognition  
Undergraduate Programs  
Graduate Programs  
Facilities and Equipment  
Bylaws  
Newsletter & Alumni  
Seminar  
Social

Certain issues may arise within the department which require specific study, deliberation, program and/or document preparation, or some other unique attention. Ad hoc committees will be created on an as needed basis by the Department Head for these special situations.

### ARTICLE V - FACULTY APPOINTMENT, EVALUATION, PROMOTION, TENURE AND REVIEW

Revised bylaw voted in by departmental faculty on 11-20-09 and approved by UTIA Vice President Dr. DiPietro on 12-01-09

#### Section 1. Tenure-track and Tenured Faculty

##### 1.1 Appointment of Tenure-Track Faculty

When permission is obtained to search for a tenure-track position, the department head will appoint a search committee. The search committee and department head follow the process in the UT Faculty Handbook (Section 3.1).

##### 1.2 Criteria for Appointment to Faculty Rank

The criteria for appointment of tenure-track and tenured faculty to the ranks of assistant professor, associate professor, and professor are given in the UT Faculty Handbook (Section 3.2) and Appendix B of the Bylaws of the Faculty of CASNR, TAES and UT Extension. Criteria and procedures for appointment of emerita or emeritus faculty are provided in the UT Faculty Handbook (3.2.1).

### 1.3 Faculty Review and Evaluation

All tenure-track and tenured faculty members will be reviewed annually in accordance with the Manual for Faculty Evaluation (Sections II.A and II.B) and the UT Faculty Handbook (Section 3.8). The review process will result in a narrative (in the years required by the Manual for Faculty Evaluation), and an evaluation signed by the department head and the faculty member. The faculty member's signature indicates that he or she has read the evaluation, but the signature does not imply agreement with its findings. The faculty member has the right to make a written response to this evaluation. Both the narrative and the evaluation are forwarded to the appropriate dean(s).

### 1.4 Departmental Tenure and Promotion Review Committee (TPC)

The Tenure and Promotion Review Committee will consist of all tenured faculty in accordance with Section III.C.2.b of the Manual for Faculty Evaluation. The department head will annually appoint a chair of the TPC who shall hold the rank of professor. For any vote by the Tenure and Promotion Review Committee, a quorum of 75% of eligible voting members will be required.

#### 1.4.1 Responsibilities of the tenured Faculty with regard to TPC Function

It is the responsibility of all tenured faculty members in the Department of Plant Sciences to thoroughly review all materials provided to the TPC regarding retention, promotion and tenure decisions. All tenured faculty members should make every reasonable effort to participate in TPC discussion and voting.

### 1.5 Annual Retention Review of Tenure-track Faculty

All tenure-track faculty members receive an annual retention review in addition to the annual evaluation. Procedures for the Annual Retention Review will be in accordance with those given in the Faculty Handbook (Section 3.11.3.4), the Manual for Faculty Evaluation (Section I.B.1) and these bylaws. Prior to the end of the calendar year, in accordance with a schedule established by the department head in consideration of University and UTIA deadlines, each tenure-track faculty member will prepare and provide to the department head:

1. A one page summary of activities and achievements for year.
2. A retention dossier in the same format as outlined in sections A, B, C, and D of Appendix B in the Manual for Faculty Evaluation. Sections A-D include:
  - Educational and employment history
  - Statement of responsibilities
  - Department and college criteria statements
  - Teaching ability and effectiveness

- Teaching evaluation summary
- Research, scholarship, creative achievement
- Institutional, disciplinary, and/or professional service

These materials will be made available to the department's Tenure and Promotion Committee (TPC) at least two weeks prior to a called meeting of the TPC. The mentor(s) of each tenure-track faculty member will report their assessment of the respective tenure-track person's professional activities, followed by faculty discussion. Mentors from outside the Department of Plant Sciences may be present to participate in the departmental mentor's assessment and faculty discussion, at the discretion of the tenure track faculty member and their Plant Science faculty mentor. At the end of faculty discussion, a formal ballot vote will be taken by the TPC members. The TPC members participating by conference call from locations outside Knoxville may send their ballots by mail, FAX, e-mail, or overnight courier to Knoxville. The chair of the TPC will provide to the department head a written summary of the faculty discussion and the vote for each candidate, which comprises the recommendation of the faculty to the head. When a tenure-track faculty member has not received a unanimous committee vote, the summary must include a discussion of the reasons for the divergent opinions. A positive vote by two-thirds or more of the TPC members participating in the meeting will be considered a positive vote for retention. Only TPC members participating in the meeting will be allowed to vote; no absentee or proxy votes will be allowed.

Dissenting statements may be submitted to the department head by any tenured faculty member in accordance with the Manual for Faculty Evaluation (I.B.1.g). At the same time of the retention vote, a separate vote will be taken regarding progress of each candidate toward tenure. This vote is advisory to the tenure-track faculty member and the department head. Results are available on request by TPC members, the UTIA Tenure and Promotion Review Committee and the respective deans, but they are not intended for the eventual tenure dossier.

In accordance with the procedures outlined in the Manual for Faculty Evaluation (I.B.1.d and e), the department head will conduct an independent retention review. The department head will then follow the procedures in the Manual for Faculty Evaluation (I.B.1.e, f, g, h, i and j) for forwarding the recommendation of the head and the faculty to the appropriate UTIA deans.

The faculty member under review may submit a written response to the vote and narrative of the tenured faculty, the department head recommendation, or any dissenting statements from faculty (Manual for Faculty Evaluation I.B.1.i).

#### 1.5.1 Enhanced Annual Retention Review

Each tenure-track faculty member with a probationary period of four years or more will undergo an enhanced retention review in the academic year following the midpoint of the probationary period, typically in the fourth year. The review will follow the procedure in the Manual for Faculty Evaluation (I.A.2.a and I.B.1.a).

## 1.6 Tenure and Promotion Review

### 1.6.1 Tenure Review

The department will follow the procedures for awarding tenure found in the Manual for Faculty Evaluation (Part III) and the UT Faculty Handbook (3.11). A Tenure and Promotion Review Flowchart is also provided in Appendix A of the CASNR, TAES and UT Extension Bylaws.

General criteria for the awarding of tenure are found in the Faculty Handbook (3.11.4). Procedures for the Departmental Tenure Review will be in accordance with those given in the Faculty Handbook (3.11.5), the Manual for Faculty Evaluation (III.C.2) and these bylaws. In the year of tenure evaluation, in accordance with a schedule established by the department head in consideration of University and UTIA deadlines, each tenure candidate in consultation with their faculty mentor(s) will work with the department head member to prepare the tenure dossier. Specific information about the content of the dossier and the specific responsibilities of the candidate and the department head in assembly of the dossier are found in Part IV of the Manual for Faculty Evaluation. The dossier will be made available to the department's tenured faculty (who constitute the TPC) at least two weeks prior to a called meeting of the TPC. The mentor(s) of the tenure candidate will provide their assessment of the candidate's professional record during the probationary period, followed by open discussion among the tenured faculty. Mentors from outside the Department of Plant Sciences will be requested to be present to provide their assessment and participate in the faculty discussion of their mentee. At the end of faculty discussion, a formal ballot vote will be taken by the tenured faculty.

Faculty members participating by conference call from locations outside Knoxville may send their ballots by mail, FAX, e-mail, or overnight courier to Knoxville. The chair of the TPC will provide to the department head a written summary of the faculty discussion and the vote for each candidate, which comprises the recommendation of the faculty to the head. When a candidate for tenure has not received a unanimous committee vote, the summary must include a discussion of the reasons for the divergent opinions. A positive vote by two-thirds or more of the tenured faculty participating in the meeting will be considered a positive vote for tenure. Only faculty participating in the meeting will be allowed to vote; no absentee or proxy votes will be allowed.

Dissenting statements may be submitted to the department head by any tenured faculty member in accordance with the Manual for Faculty Evaluation (III.C.1.g). In accordance with the procedures outlined in the Manual for Faculty Evaluation (III.C.2.f), the department head will conduct an independent tenure review. The faculty member under review may submit a written response to the recommendation and vote of the tenured faculty and/or the department head recommendation (Manual for Faculty Evaluation Part III.C.2.g).

### 1.6.2 Promotion Review

Departmental Promotion Review will generally follow the procedures given above for tenure review, except that in voting for promotion, only faculty members of higher rank than the candidate will participate in the review discussion and vote, and review

materials for candidates for promotion will only be made available to faculty members of higher rank. Generally, assistant professors will be considered for promotion to the rank of associate professor at the same time as they are considered for tenure. Normally, associate professors serve at least five years in rank before promotion to full professor.

### 1.6.3 Additions to Dossier and Faculty Reconsideration of Recommendation

Dissenting statements by faculty, responses of the candidate to votes or dissenting statements and other materials may be added to the dossier after the faculty vote, in accordance with the Manual for Faculty Evaluation, Part III.C. The tenured faculty have the opportunity to reconsider their recommendation after review of any additional material (Manual for Faculty Evaluation, Part IV.A.2). The tenured faculty who are eligible to vote will be notified by the department head of any additions to the dossier. Following such notification, faculty members will have two weeks to notify the department head in writing of their desire to reconsider their recommendation. If one fourth or more of the tenured faculty members who are eligible to vote on the recommendation for tenure or promotion so notify the department head, a meeting of the eligible tenured faculty will be called by the department head.

The faculty participating in the called meeting will discuss the addition to the dossier, and a new recommendation vote will be taken. In addition to those participating, eligible voting faculty unable to attend or participate in the special called meeting will be given one week to submit a vote by mail to the TPC chair. The TPC chair will then report the result of the new vote along with a summary of the discussion to the department head. The new recommendation will be considered to replace the original departmental recommendation, provided that seventy-five percent or more of the eligible faculty participate in the new vote. If less than seventy-five percent participate in the new vote, the prior recommendation will be considered to be the departmental recommendation.

## Section 2. Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

### 2.1 Non-tenure track Teaching, Research and Extension Regular Faculty

The Department will follow the general principles and guidelines set forth in the UT Faculty Handbook (Chapter 4) for appointment of non-tenure-track faculty. The tenured and tenure-track faculty will evaluate the credentials of applicants for non-tenure-track appointments and vote on the appointment. This vote will be advisory to the department head, who will then decide whether to recommend appointment to the appropriate Dean.

As provided in the Faculty Handbook (Chapter 4), non-tenure-track teaching, research, and extension appointments will be made for a term of one year or less. Appointments are renewable subject to availability of funds and satisfactory performance. The faculty will evaluate and vote annually on reappointment of non-tenure-track faculty members subject to reappointment. The evaluation of non-tenure-track faculty and voting for reappointment will normally take place during the fall semester. Distinguished lecturer appointments may be made for a term of five years. Faculty votes will be advisory to the department head, who will then decide whether to recommend reappointment to the appropriate dean.

## 2.2 Adjunct Faculty

Individuals who provide uncompensated or part-time compensated service to the instructional, research, or Extension programs of the Department of Plant Sciences may be given adjunct faculty appointments. Each adjunct faculty must have an advocate faculty in the Department. Adjunct faculty may be invited to attend faculty meetings, but do not vote on departmental matters.

Nominations of individuals for adjunct faculty positions will be made by tenured and tenure-track faculty members. Documentation of professional credentials to support the nomination should be submitted to the faculty. Normally, adjunct faculty candidates will be asked to give a departmental seminar before the faculty vote. The faculty will recommend approval or rejection, with approval requiring a majority vote of the tenure and tenure-track faculty. Adjunct faculty will be appointed for a period of up to five years from issue of the letter of appointment. Initial appointment may be considered at any time of calendar year.

In accordance with the UT Faculty Handbook, adjunct faculty appointments may be made at the rank of adjunct professor, adjunct associate professor, adjunct assistant professor, and adjunct lecturer. Rank at the time of initial appointment will be determined by the tenured and tenure track faculty in accordance with the criteria for appointment to faculty rank given in Appendix B of the Bylaws of the faculty of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, AgResearch and UT Extension. Requests for promotion to higher rank may be made to the faculty at any time during the period of appointment by the adjunct faculty member or by an advocate member of the faculty. Promotion will be approved or rejected by a majority vote of the tenured and tenure track faculty.

All adjunct faculty members must provide service to the instructional, research, and/or Extension programs of the Department of Plant Sciences. Professional duties of the appointee may include teaching courses, serving on graduate student committees, or participating in departmental research or Extension. Although uncompensated adjunct faculty members are not employees of The University of Tennessee, they are subject to certain university policies as described in the UT Faculty Handbook (Chapter 4, Section 4.2.4). Uncompensated adjunct faculty members are not subject to annual performance review. Evaluation of compensated adjunct faculty members will follow procedures for other non-tenure-track faculty. At least one month prior to the end of an individual's appointment, the department head, or the Chair of the TPC acting for the department head, will issue a memo to the tenured and tenure-track faculty informing them of the termination date and requesting renomination if the level of activity within the department warrants.

If the adjunct faculty member is re-nominated, the tenured and tenure-track faculty members will consider the adjunct faculty member's record of service to the department, and a ballot vote will be taken to extend the appointment of the adjunct faculty member. A positive majority vote of tenured and tenure-track faculty will be required for renewal of adjunct status.

### 2.3 Visiting Faculty

All visiting faculty appointments will be made for a term of one year or less by the department head based on consultation with regular faculty. As with all other non-tenure-track faculty appointments, a letter of appointment will be issued to the visiting faculty member by the head. Visiting faculty may be invited to attend faculty meetings, but do not vote on departmental matters.

### 2.4 Joint faculty appointments

Joint Faculty members are appointed under the terms of a Joint Faculty Agreement between the University of Tennessee and another entity, such as the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. Joint Faculty members with the other entity as home institution are not eligible for tenure. Joint Faculty members participate in teaching, research, and service missions of the department in accordance with the provisions of the Faculty Handbook. The specific allocation of effort in the Plant Science Department is negotiated as part of the Joint Faculty Agreement.

Nominations of individuals for Joint Faculty membership will be made by tenured or tenure-track faculty members who anticipate cooperative programs with the nominee. Documentation of professional credentials to support the nomination should be submitted to the faculty. Joint faculty candidates will normally be expected to present a seminar describing their current work and their interest in joining the department. The faculty will recommend approval or rejection, with approval requiring a majority vote of the tenure and tenure-track faculty. Joint faculty will be appointed for a period of up to five years from issue of the letter of appointment. Initial appointment may be considered at any time of calendar year.

Joint Faculty members carry one of the following titles: Joint Faculty Assistant Professor, Joint Faculty Associate Professor, or Joint Faculty Professor. Rank at the time of initial appointment will be determined by the tenured and tenure track faculty in accordance with the criteria for appointment to faculty rank given in Appendix B of the Bylaws of the faculty of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, AgResearch and UT Extension. Requests for promotion to higher rank may be made to the faculty at any time during the period of appointment by the Joint Faculty member. Promotion will be approved or rejected by a majority vote of the tenured and tenure track faculty.

Professional duties of Joint Faculty may include teaching courses, serving on graduate student committees, or participating in departmental research or Extension programs. Joint Faculty will normally serve as chair of a graduate committee only with a tenured or tenure-track faculty member as co-chair, but this requirement may be waived at the discretion of the department head. Joint Faculty may be invited to attend faculty meetings, but do not vote on departmental matters.

Joint Faculty members will ordinarily not be compensated by the department. If compensation is included as part of the appointment, the source of funding will be

identified at the time compensation begins and there will be no commitment on the part of the Department of Plant Sciences to continue compensation if the original source of funding becomes unavailable. Other departmental resources may be committed for support of the Joint Faculty member's program if deemed desirable by the department, but there is no commitment to provide resources beyond those stipulated at the beginning of the appointment, if any. Joint faculty members may submit proposals for funding from outside sources through the Plant Sciences Department provided that a tenured or tenure-track departmental faculty member is a co-principal investigator. The requirement for a co-principal investigator may be waived at the discretion of the department head.

Joint Faculty members are not subject to annual performance review within the Plant Science Department. Joint Faculty members who wish to have their appointment renewed will inform the department head at least two months prior to the end of their appointment period. Reappointment will be by majority vote of tenured and tenure track faculty.

## 2.5 Evaluation

The performance of all non-tenure-track regular faculty members will be evaluated annually, with a written record of the evaluation maintained in departmental and human resources files. The annual performance review for retention will be based on guidelines that are outlined in the UT Faculty Handbook (4.3). Adjunct, joint and visiting faculty members are not subject to annual performance review.

Revised bylaw voted in by departmental faculty on 12-07-2012 and approved by UTIA Chancellor Dr. Arrington on 6-16-2014.

## ARTICLE VI - FACULTY MEMBERS

### Section 1. Membership

Membership includes all tenured and tenure-track faculty, and non-tenure-track faculty in the department. Unless otherwise noted, the term "regular faculty" will refer to voting members of the faculty as defined in Section 2.

### Section 2. Voting Members

The various faculty ranks are defined in the UT Faculty Handbook (Chapters 3 and 4). The voting faculty includes all faculty members whose appointment in the department is more than half (50%) time.

### Section 3. Honorary faculty members

Honorary faculty members includes those persons designated as Professors Emeriti, Adjunct Faculty, Visiting Professors, and faculty on temporary or part-time appointments in Plant Sciences and are subject to policies outlined in the UT Faculty Handbook (Chapters 3 and 4). Honorary faculty members serve in an advisory capacity and do not have a formal vote on departmental matters.

#### Section 3.1. Emeritus Faculty

Recommendation for emeritus status is conferred in the Department of Plant Sciences via two-thirds majority faculty vote. Privileges and responsibilities include a standing invitation to departmental faculty meetings and inclusion on pertinent, faculty-wide correspondence. Requests for additional privileges will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Recommendation Emeritus status and privileges may be revoked at the discretion of the department head after consultation with the faculty and a two-thirds majority vote.

### Section 3.2. Adjunct Faculty

Individuals who provide uncompensated or part-time compensated service to the instructional, research or extension programs of the department may be given adjunct faculty appointments. Adjunct faculty may be invited to attend faculty meetings, but do not vote on departmental matters. Appointment procedures for adjunct faculty are given in Section 2.2 above.

### Article VII - Evaluation of Instruction: Peer Review

New bylaw voted in by departmental faculty on 11-20-09 and approved by UTIA Vice President Dr. DiPietro on 12-01-09.

### Section 1 Purpose

For retention/tenure/promotion or considerations of merit, all non-tenure track, tenure-track and tenured faculty should be evaluated periodically for their instructional effectiveness in both formal and informal settings.

### Section 2. Membership

At the discretion of the department head and in consultation with the appropriate administrative coordinator and the faculty member being evaluated, a panel of at least three faculty members (with the expectation that at least two members are tenured) will be identified. Faculty members will be appointed by the department head and charged by the appropriate administrative coordinator to serve as the evaluation committee.

### Section 3. Responsibilities

It is the duty of the committee to ascertain and encourage that comments are unbiased, constructive, and reflect the genuine perceptions of the commentator.

### Section 4. Chair

The senior ranking member from within the department will serve as chair for the review process, which culminates in a summary letter of evaluation.

### Section 5. Procedures

At the request of the department head, the committee will develop instruction evaluation plans for faculty in line for retention/tenure/promotion or considerations of merit. The committee may review course syllabi, seek evaluations of courses taught, interview students or participants who were enrolled in the courses, attend a representative presentation, lecture and (or) lab, or may use other agreed-upon criteria for evaluating

instructional effectiveness. For visits in an instructional setting, the instructor and committee shall agree on a date for an in-class visit by the evaluation committee.

#### Section 6. Reporting

The committee chair, with the assistance of the other members, will prepare a report summary on the instructional performance of the person being evaluated. This report also will be provided to the faculty member as part of his/her annual evaluation. The department head will retain original evaluation forms from individual evaluators.

#### Section 7. Instructor Response

Upon conclusion of any evaluation, the evaluated instructor may respond in writing to the department head regarding the committee's final evaluation.

### ARTICLE VIII - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY AND RULES

#### Section 1. Rules of Order

The rules contained in the latest version of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all departmental meetings in all cases for which they are applicable and are not in conflict with these Bylaws.

#### Section 2. Parliamentarian

The Head may appoint a parliamentarian from among the departmental faculty to assist with the conduct of meetings.

### ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

#### Section 1. Origin of Amendments

Amendments to these Bylaws shall originate from the Head or at least 33 percent of the tenured faculty.

#### Section 2. Notice

The proposed amendments shall be distributed a minimum of 3 weeks prior to the meeting at which they are to be discussed.

#### Section 3. Consideration

Proposed amendments shall be considered at any regular faculty meeting or at any special meeting called for that specific purpose.

#### Section 4. Voting for Adoption

An affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of all departmental tenure track faculty members shall be required for adoption of amendments to the Bylaws, pending approval by the UTIA Vice President.

### ARTICLE X - ADOPTION AND EFFECTIVE DATE

#### Section 1. Adoption

The departmental Bylaws must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all departmental tenure track faculty members, and by the UTIA Vice President prior to their effective date.

Section 2. Effective Date

These Bylaws shall become effective when approved by the UTIA Vice President

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Original Approval:

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G. Neil Rhodes, Jr. January 19, 2007  
Department Head, Plant Sciences

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Dr. Joe DiPietro  
Vice President, UTIA