



# Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

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## Virginia Cooperative Extension Leadership Council By-Laws

This organization shall be known as the Virginia Cooperative Extension Leadership Council (VCELCL). The VCELCL is a non-profit organization affiliated with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and Virginia State University.

### Mission Statement

The purpose of the VCELCL is to advance and promote the educational mission of Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) and strengthen local Extension Leadership Councils (ELC's).

### Membership

The VCELCL shall represent the diversity of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the partnerships appropriate for VCE. The membership of the VCELCL shall consist of planning district representatives, at-large members, and ex-officio members. Planning district representative have privileges of voice and vote, face-to-face or electronically, whereas ex-officio members have privileges of voice only. Planning district representatives should include one representative from each of the geographic planning districts recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Each planning district representatives should reside or work in her/his designated planning district.

At-large members with voting privileges shall be nominated to the membership committee by the director and the administrator of VCE. The number of such at-large positions shall not be restricted and may be filled as needed to address issues of membership balance.

Ex-officio members are Virginia Tech or Virginia State University employees who support the VCELCL by providing guidance and regular reports. Ex-officio members include the director of VCE at Virginia Tech, the administrator of VCE at Virginia State, and any other employees appointed by the director and the administrator of VCE. The list of ex-officio members shall be reviewed and updated annually by the director and the administrator of VCE.

The VCELCL year of service will run from July 1 - June 30 each year. Elected members representing planning districts and at-large members shall serve terms of three years beginning July 1 of the year of election and may be re-elected for a second three-year term. Following six years of consecutive service, members may not serve again until they have been absent from the council for at least one year. Members filling an un-expired term due to a vacancy are eligible to complete two consecutive terms in addition to the term they complete associated with the vacancy.

The VCELCL shall have the responsibility of serving as a communication link to local Extension Leadership Councils and other relevant stakeholders. The VCELCL shall have the responsibility of recommending and providing leadership for implementing the appropriate public relations

activities in support of VCE. This shall include those activities necessary to inform the stakeholders of VCE with respect to the impact of VCE programs and the need for their involvement and support. Examples, not inclusive, of such stakeholders, are the members of federal, state, and local governments; commodity groups; the Farm Bureau; the Virginia Agribusiness Council; consumer, agriculture, youth, and family groups; and the news media.

## **Meetings**

The VCELC will hold a minimum of two face to face meetings per year of the entire VCELC membership. At least one meeting per year will be held on the campus of VA Tech and one meeting per year will be held on the campus of VA State. Tele-conference meetings may be utilized when deemed appropriate by the chairperson.

Members are expected to attend all meetings of the VCELC. While an occasional absence may be unavoidable, more than two absences in a council year may warrant replacement.

## **Record of Council Meetings**

The chair shall designate a member to keep the minutes of the VCELC meetings. The minutes shall maintain an accurate record of member attendance and the deliberations and decisions of the regular meetings. The meeting attendance record will be provided to the membership committee for their use in determining member involvement. Minutes will be sent out with the notice and agenda for the next meeting and will be presented for official approval by the chair at that meeting. Immediately following approval of the minutes at the regular meetings, the minutes will be posted to the VCE Intranet to allow local units, their ELCs, faculty and staff to stay apprised of the activities of VCELC.

## **Organization of the Council**

In addition to those responsibilities set forth in the job description for planning district membership, the functioning of the VCELC shall be organized around the executive committee, membership committee, advocacy committee, communications and marketing committee, and special or ad hoc committee(s) when deemed necessary.

The VCELC chair will appoint committee members. Committee members will elect standing committee chairs. The VCELC chair shall appoint committee chairpersons for ad-hoc committees. Committee chairs and committee members shall serve at the pleasure of the VCELC chair and shall be eligible for reappointment annually. Committee chairs will submit reports of the committee's work to the VCELC chair.

Committee size shall depend upon the number of persons required to carry out the committee's responsibilities. Appointments shall be based upon a member's interest and/or expertise in the area of the committee's responsibilities. While all VCELC members may not have assignments to a committee, all members shall be reactive to the work of all committees and are free to make suggestions to committee chairs.

## **Executive Committee**

The executive committee's primary role is to provide leadership for the VCELC. The executive committee shall consist of the Chair and Vice Chair, the Director of VCE at Virginia Tech, the Administrator of VCE at Virginia State, and the VCE faculty member(s) assigned to work with and support the VCELC.

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

The executive committee should focus on and develop the internal program of the VCELC itself. 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 all regular meetings shall be mailed to the membership two weeks in advance of such meetings. The proposed internal program shall be presented to the VCELC members for input and adoption.

The executive committee shall review the internal program plans of the VCELC on a timely basis and recommend corrective actions that are warranted as a result of the review. The report of the review shall be made to the VCELC for their input and adoption.

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

## **Membership Committee**

The membership committee shall have the responsibility for the recruitment and nomination of the elected members of the VCELC, the planning district volunteer members of the VCELC, and officers of the VCELC. The Director of VCE at Virginia Tech is responsible for recruiting and appointing At-Large members. The Director may request the membership committee to assist in the recruitment of At-Large members. The orientation and clarification of the roles of all new members shall be within the province of the membership committee. The VCE faculty member(s) supporting the VCELC shall assist in the orientation of new members.

The process of recommending candidates from the districts to the membership committee shall be overseen by the VCE district directors. The process shall endeavor to recommend candidates who have had experience with VCE at the local level, preferably through membership on the local ELC, and represent the diversity of the state and the programs of VCE. While the district directors shall oversee the process for obtaining candidates, all decisions, including distinguishing between potential candidates, shall be the province of the membership committee of the VCELC. In the event a member resigns prior to the completion of the term, the membership committee will seek membership to fill the un-expired term.

The slate of nominees shall be complete for presentation and election by the VCELC membership at its last regularly scheduled meeting of the council year or some other time as determined by the

executive committee. Nominations from the floor will be sought. Election shall require a simple majority vote by members.

The membership committee shall be responsible for monitoring and reporting attendance inconsistencies to the Executive Committee.

### **Advocacy Committee**

The goal of the Advocacy committee is for VCE to have the resources needed to carry out its programs. To this end, the Advocacy committee works with the VCELC and the Unit ELC's to assure that stakeholders (local, state, and federal elected officials, University administrators, and key clientele groups and leaders) understand and value VCE and that stakeholders understand the resource needs of VCE. The proposed annual advocacy plan for VCELC shall be developed by this committee and presented to the council.

### **Communications and Marketing Committee**

The Communications and Marketing committee shall develop, nurture, and recognize the value of local ELC's. To this end, the Communications and Marketing committee will promote the ELC concept and communicate the value of successful local ELC's to the VCE and audience: agents, volunteers, administrators, and other stakeholders by identifying and sharing local ELC best practices across the state.

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

The VCELC chair, as needs arise, shall appoint special or ad hoc committees to address specific needs on behalf of the VCELC.

### **By-Law Amendments**

These by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the VCELC. Such amendment(s) shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority to be adopted. Further, notice of the proposed amendment(s) shall be submitted to the membership in writing or electronically at least 10 days prior to the meeting at which voting is to take place.