

**BY-LAWS  
of the  
FACULTY OF  
MOLECULAR AND ENVIRONMENTAL PLANT SCIENCES**

Revised  
January 24, 2000

## **By-Laws of the Faculty of Molecular and Environmental Plant Sciences**

### **Article I. Purpose and Intent**

The Interdisciplinary Faculty of Molecular and Environmental Plant Sciences (Faculty) shall promote and advise the administration of the teaching and graduate programs in the field of Molecular and Environmental Plant Sciences (MEPS) at Texas A&M University. The Faculty shall coordinate the graduate and undergraduate teaching programs and review the requirements for admissions, preparation, and training of candidates for the Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in MEPS. The Faculty shall also promote and facilitate communication among plant scientists and provide for continued development of the included disciplines. It shall arrange for periodic assembly of its members and their students and provide a forum for them and for others with similar intellectual interests. The organization and operational characteristics of the Faculty are intended to be broad enough to permit consideration of all academic and professional aspects of molecular and environmental plant sciences at Texas A&M University.

### **Article II. Status of Faculty**

In addition to departmental status, the membership shall be identified as members of the Faculty and shall be eligible to direct graduate research of candidates for Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Molecular and Environmental Plant Sciences.

### **Article III. Membership**

#### **1. Qualifications**

- a. Any member of the Graduate Faculty who is qualified to direct the research of candidates for M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in MEPS is eligible for full membership.
- b. Faculty with temporary academic or postdoctoral appointments to TAMU or the Graduate Faculty, and who are qualified to conduct research in any component discipline of MEPS, are eligible for associate membership. Associate membership is conferred by the Executive Committee of the Faculty. Associate members are afforded all the rights and privileges of full membership except they may not vote nor serve on the Executive Committee.

2. Nomination for membership. Nominations for membership may be made by any member of the Faculty through the appropriate Department Head and shall be made in writing to the Chair of the Faculty.

3. The Executive Committee shall (1) screen nominations for full and associate members to the Faculty, (2) distribute nominations for full membership to all full members along with a ballot to approve or disapprove the nomination, (3) notify all members of results of such ballots, and (4) each fall semester, update the membership roster.

4. Election to full membership shall be conducted by a mail ballot. Full membership shall be conferred by a two-thirds majority vote of those ballots returned to the Chair of the Faculty and with concurrence of the Dean of the nominee's college.
5. Members must actively support programs of the Faculty to maintain membership. Activity may be demonstrated in varied ways, including but not limited to, service on graduate advisory committees, active service on Standing or ad hoc Committees of the Faculty, teaching courses central to the MEPS academic program, and other activities promoting professional development of members of the Faculty and graduate students in the program. The membership will be reviewed for evidence of active program support at least once every three years.

#### Article IV. Executive Committee

1. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Chair and four additional members of the Faculty. The Chair and remaining members of the Executive Committee will be elected by the faculty, and no more than two committee members shall be chosen from a department.
2. The term of office of the Chair of the Executive Committee shall be three years and that of the members two years. Two seats on the Executive Committee will stand for election annually, so that terms of the Committee members will overlap. The Chair and the members may serve more than one term.
3. The Executive Committee shall elect, after the annual election of new Committee members, a Vice-Chair and Parliamentarian from among the Committee members to serve as officers for the ensuing year. Committee officers may serve for more than one term.
4. The Executive Committee shall fill by appointment any vacancies that may occur among its elected members during the year. All appointed positions will be declared open at the time of the next annual election.
5. The Chair of the Executive Committee shall be the chief officer and Chair of the Faculty Molecular and Environmental Plant Sciences and representative of the Executive Committee. The Chair shall preside over meetings of these bodies and shall appoint, with the approval of the other members of the Executive Committee, members of Committees.
6. The Vice-Chair shall serve as Secretary of the Faculty, prepare and distribute minutes of the Faculty and Executive Committee meetings to the general membership, and maintain other appropriate records of the Faculty activities. The Vice-Chair shall also serve as chief officer and Chair of the Faculty and Executive Committee in the absence of, or when designated by, the Chair.

7. The Parliamentarian shall monitor all meetings of the Faculty and Executive Committee according to Roberts' Rules of Order.

#### Article V. Election to the Executive Committee

1. The Nomination and Election Committee shall, on years ending the Chair's term, request nominations for Chair position from the membership. The two candidates who receive the most nominations and are willing to serve shall be placed on the ballot. The Nomination and Election Committee shall nominate two candidates for each vacant position on the Executive Committee. Additional nominations, with the prior consent of the nominee, are permitted from the floor during the scheduled annual meeting.
2. The Nomination and Election Committee shall conduct the election by mail ballot to be distributed to members after the scheduled annual meeting of the Faculty on or before April 15. Each member shall vote for no more than one candidate for each position to be filled. Persons receiving the most votes, with the exception of no more than two members being from one department, shall be declared elected. Election results shall be transmitted to the general membership promptly and elected members shall assume their duties on July 1.

#### Article VI. Functions of the Executive Committee

1. The principal functions of the Executive Committee shall be to:
  - a. Oversee activities and act on recommendations of Standing Committees.
  - b. Appoint, charge, and act on recommendations of ad hoc committees. Ad hoc committees shall be used to assess and interpret information and develop alternative courses of action on topics of limited scope and duration not included within the purview of the Standing Committees.
  - c. Ensure all requirements for administration of the graduate program in MEPS are completed in a timely manner.
  - d. Maintain records of students, reports of Committees, and correspondence so as to ensure continuity in program administration.
  - e. Work closely with Department Heads to secure financial support for MEPS students.
  - f. Publish and distribute the agenda of the annual meeting to all members one week prior to the meeting.
  - g. Annually appoint members of Standing Committees to serve from July 1 through June 30.
  - h. Ensure fiscal accountability for monetary resources allocated to the faculty.
  - i. Maintain a current list of students.
2. Additional procedures of administrative nature which pertain to graduate degree programs may be administered through the appropriate channels of the administrative department of the student's major professor.

## Article VII. Meetings

1. The annual meeting of the Faculty shall be held during the first two weeks of the month of April each year. Items for the agenda must be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee two weeks prior to the annual meeting.
2. Special meetings of the Faculty may be held at the call of the Chair or by written application to the Executive Committee by at least five members of the Faculty.
3. A regular meeting of the Executive Committee shall be held each fall and spring semester. Other meetings of the Executive Committee may be held as frequently and for such purposes as are deemed desirable by the Executive Committee.
4. The minutes of each Annual and Executive Committee meeting shall be approved by the Executive Committee and distributed to all members of the Faculty within 10 days after their approval.
5. At Executive Committee and Faculty meetings, Roberts' Rules of Order shall be followed in matters of parliamentary procedure.

## Article VIII. Standing Committees

1. Nomination and Election Committee. See Article V, Sections 1 and 2. In addition, the committee will identify and submit to the Faculty names of Faculty members who could be nominated to elected offices of the American Society of Plant Physiologists.
2. Graduate Admission and Recruitment Committee. One faculty advisor from each department represented by the Faculty shall be appointed by the Executive Committee to serve on the Admissions and Recruitment Committee. The Committee will develop literature which publicizes the graduate program in MEPS. The Committee shall organize recruitment of new students, respond to inquiries from potential graduate students, maintain a file of and screen all current applicants, recommend acceptance or rejection of applicants to the Office of Graduate Studies through the appropriate department, and facilitate equitable access to applicants and their files for all members of the Faculty. The Chair of this committee shall serve as the temporary advisor to new students until such time as a permanent advisor is named.
3. Program Committee. The committee meets twice annually or as requested by the Executive Committee. The duties of the committee include:
  - a. Proposed undergraduate and graduate courses in the MEPS program
  - b. Evaluate current and proposed courses that may impact the undergraduate or graduate programs (at request of Executive Committee).
  - c. Coordinate and improve visibility of the undergraduate and graduate programs.
  - d. Identify and prioritize capital equipment needs for undergraduate and graduate courses.
  - e. Recommend faculty to teach undergraduate and graduate courses.
  - f. Establish and evaluate policies pertaining to graduate student involvement and function within

the Faculty. Encourage graduate student interaction and participation with the Faculty and foster communication between graduate study body and the Executive Committee. Working with the leadership of the graduate student body, submit nominations of students to serve on Standing Committees in an ex-officio capacity.

- g. Identify and select faculty for awards offered by the Faculty. Identify university, regional, and national awards for which members of the Faculty and MEPS graduate students are eligible. Publicize awards, solicit nominations from members of the Faculty, and select candidates for each award. Coordinate preparation of nominations for university, regional, and national-level awards.
4. Seminar and Social Committee. The Committee shall:
- a. Organize and coordinate seminars sponsored by the Faculty. Arrange financial support of invited speakers, and print and distribute schedules to faculty and graduate students to promote professional and social interactions. Arrange seminar refreshments and social functions for visiting speakers.
  - b. Organize social functions for Faculty members and graduate students during fall and spring semesters.
5. Membership Committee. The Committee shall:
- a. Identify potential members and facilitate their participation in Faculty functions.
  - b. Screen nominations for full and associate members to the Faculty and make recommendations to the Executive Committee.
  - c. Annually, update the faculty research directory and the membership roster, including a brief description of research for each member.
  - d. Review members for evidence of active program support at least once every three years in accordance with standards and processes approved by the Faculty.

#### Article IX. Other Committees

Ad hoc Committees shall be appointed by the Executive Committee as required.

#### Article X. Student Participation

1. Graduate Student representatives nominated by the Program Committee shall be appointed by the Chair to Standing Committees upon approval by the Executive Committee. The students will serve on these committees in an ex-officio capacity.
2. Suggestions for changes in curriculum, program, seminar, admissions, or items of similar interest to students may be submitted in writing at any time by any registered student to the Executive Committee.

#### Article XI. Amendments

Suggestions for amendments to the By-Laws may be submitted in writing at any time by any member of the Faculty to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will arrange

for discussion by the Faculty of any such amendments, and submit revisions for mail ballot. All amendments to the By-Laws must be approved by at least two-thirds of the votes cast by the Faculty via a mail ballot.