

**BY-LAWS FOR THE BLACK EXTENSION PROFESSIONALS'
ORGANIZATION UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE and TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION**

Article I

Section I- The name of this association is the Black Extension Professionals, an affiliate of the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture and Tennessee State University, hereinafter referred to as the BEP of UTIA and TSU. BEP is an employee resource group that provides support and opportunities for African American employees to engage, network, and build community. BEP strives to foster an environment for personal and professional development and will provide our members with opportunities to engage in professional development sessions, community engagement, philanthropic efforts, social/recreational opportunities, and personal support initiatives while provide members with opportunities to connect, recharge, and identify resources to succeed within their various counties.

Section II- The objectives of the association are to:

- A. BEP strives to foster an environment for personal and professional development through engagement in professional development sessions, philanthropic efforts, social/networking opportunities, and personal support initiatives.
- B. Provide an opportunity for recognition of outstanding leadership and achievement.
- C. Create a network of support for professionals in extension that specifically focuses on addressing the challenges and issues affecting Black members.
- D. Recruit potential applicants for professional positions and internship opportunities with UT and TSU Extension and other Extension organizations.

The purpose of the Bylaws is to provide the organizational structure for stability and accountability in the operation of the BEP of the University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University Extension. The black faculty and staff are integral members of the UT/TSU organization. We have established this organization with provisions for representatives to advance the rights and responsibilities of this membership. Our commitment is to ensure that the Universities are aware of and responsive to the needs of Black Extension employees and ensure equitable representation within UT and TSU Extension. It is in the spirit of maintaining harmony and diversity and furthering the two University's mission that BEP was established.

Article II

Section I- Membership- BEP membership is open to all Extension employees working in any capacity and who support the organization's purpose and objectives. All such people are eligible for membership irrespective of the position held at the University. Membership dues will be \$10.00 paid at the annual meeting.

Section II- Voting – BEP members shall be active, voting members entitled to votes in the organization's business, attend business meetings of the organization, and hold office in the organizations. Members are entitled to the rights and privileges of full membership.

Article III

Section 1- Officers- The elected officers of the Association are the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President of Communications, Vice President of Public Policy, and Vice President of Member Resources.

Section II- Qualifications and Terms

The officers of the BEP should be current employees of the University of Tennessee or Tennessee State University Extension. All officers will serve for a two-year term. The Vice President will rotate into the President's position after the two-year term as Vice President.

All officers of the organization shall be voted upon by the active membership present at the electoral meeting. The organization's officers shall be elected by a majority vote of all votes cast by members in good standing. In the event of a vacancy, the President shall appoint with the approval of the executive committee, a replacement to serve the remainder of the term.

Any individual who serves as an officer may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board, at any duly held Executive Board meeting, or electronic ballot (with the vote counted and audited by at least three officers). Removal from the office can occur based on general misconduct, neglect, refusal to perform duties, prejudice to good order, or abusing authority beyond what is delegated by the by-laws, policies, or IRS duty of care regulations for not-for-profit organizations. The vote of the Executive Board shall be a written ballot, whether it occurs at an in-person meeting or by electronic ballot. The individual in question shall be afforded an opportunity to present a statement "in defense" depending on the format in which the vote is taken. A majority vote of the Executive Board will determine if such a statement can occur in person or in writing, or both. If the Executive Board votes to remove an officer, it is effective immediately.

Section III - Duties of Officers

A. President shall:

1. Give administrative guidance to the Association; work with Association officers and in coordinating their efforts in carrying out the organization's objectives and programs.
2. Call and preside at Board and Association business meetings.
3. Appoint all committees necessary to carry out the business of the Association with the exception of the nominating committee and the audit committee and serve as an ex-officio member of said committees except nominating.
4. Approve the payment of bills.
5. Strengthen public relations and maintain cooperative relations with other organizations.
6. Exercise all powers and duties pertaining to the office of the President.

B. Vice President shall:

1. Serve as chair of the bylaws committee.
2. Serve as a member of the annual audit committee.
3. Serve as a member of the statement of a policy committee with the Treasurer and the Vice President for Public Policy.

4. Perform all the duties of the office of the President in the event of absence, disability or at the request of the President.
5. Responsible for attending state joint board meetings with other Extension professional associations.

C. Vice President for Public Affairs shall:

1. Perform all duties of the office of President in the event of absence, disability, or at the request of the President or Vice President.
2. Assume any other duties that may be assigned by the President or the Executive Board.
3. Chair and serve as the liaison between the public affairs committee (consisting of Regional Vice Presidents of Public Affairs) and the Executive Board.
4. Coordinate the committee to develop and implement strategies that address issues related to external communications, coalition building, public policy education, and funding opportunities, as defined by the Executive Board.
5. Serve as chair of the statement of the policy committee and be responsible for presenting it at the spring board meeting and annual meeting. Other committee members are Vice-President and Treasurer.
6. Responsible for attending PILD, if not able to attend must report to the President to have an active member attend.

D. Vice President for Member Resources shall:

1. Chair and serve as a liaison between the member resources committee and the Executive Board.
2. Coordinate the committee to develop and implement strategies that address issues related to networking opportunities for members with diverse and similar interests. Encourage active participation and leadership.

E. Vice President for Communications

1. Maintain association website and social media account(s) in partnership with Regional Vice Presidents for Member Resources.
2. Develop and implement a marketing and communication plan to attract and retain members and applicants.
3. Serve as the historian.

F. Secretary shall:

1. Keep a full and accurate record of the proceedings of all meetings of the Executive Board and the association and send copies of minutes to officers within two weeks after the meeting has concluded.
2. Serve as a member of the annual audit committee.

G. Treasurer shall:

1. Keep an accurate record of monies received and disbursed.
2. Prepare and present an annual financial report and budget.
3. Pay all bills as approved by the President.
4. Serve as a member of the future statement of policy committee along with the Vice President and Vice President for Public Affairs.

5. Keep an official record of the membership
6. The state Treasurer will collect dues and forward membership renewal to VP of Member Resources.

Article IV

Section I- Election

The Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President in June and the elections take place biennially in May. The Nominating Committee shall conduct the annual election.

1. The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of nominees at the annual election meeting. Nominations may also be made from the floor.
2. The annual election meeting shall be held in August.
3. Article VI-2 of these bylaws can be suspended by a majority vote of the membership in attendance at a regular meeting.
4. Officers shall assume their duties at the annual meeting.

Section II- Standing Committees

The President shall appoint standing Committees unless otherwise indicated herein.

A- Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is the governing body. The Executive Committee is composed of the founding members of BEP.

1. The Executive Committee will work in the conceptual phase of the organization by developing goals, objectives and purpose for the current year. It will also develop policy statements as necessary for consideration by the body.

B- The Administrative Board

The Administrative Board shall be composed of all current elected officers and the chairs of standing committees elected by the majority membership at the meeting scheduled for the election of officers; and shall act as a planning committee and conduct the business of the organization between regular meetings.

1. All Committee action must be presented to the membership for approval before it can be issued in the name of the organization. A simple majority vote on the part of the membership present will constitute approval.
2. Two-thirds of the Administrative Board shall constitute a quorum for voting. The voting of the majority shall be necessary for passage of a motion.
3. One member from the Executive Committee will serve as a voting-representative on the Administrative Board (rotating yearly). In the event the current year representative is unable to attend the Administrative Board meeting, another representative from the Executive Committee will attend.

C. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall consist of at least four persons appointed by the

President in June annually. The nominating committee shall present a slate of candidates for all offices at the annual meeting. The nominating committee shall ensure that all regions are considered when developing a slate of officers.

D. Bylaws Committee

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall respond to inquiries and proposed changes to the bylaws as prescribed in Article XIV of these by-laws. The committee shall review the bylaws annually and shall ensure that new members receive them.

E. Oversight Committee

The Oversight Committee is tasked with monitoring and supervising the activities of the association to ensure compliance with established policies, procedures, and legal obligations. This committee plays a crucial role in maintaining transparency, accountability, and ethical standards within the organization. They review financial reports, assess the effectiveness of internal controls, and provide recommendations to enhance governance and operational practices.

F. Caring and Compassion Committee

The Caring and Compassion Committee focuses on promoting a culture of empathy, support, and inclusivity within the association. They organize initiatives and activities that foster a sense of community, encourage members to lend a helping hand to one another, and ensure that everyone feels valued and cared for. This committee may organize social events, volunteer programs, and support networks to promote a caring environment within the association.

G. Budget Development Committee:

The Budget Development Committee is responsible for creating and managing the association's budget. They work closely with the association's leadership to develop financial plans, allocate resources, and ensure that the organization's financial goals are met. This committee conducts regular financial analyses, reviews funding requests, and makes recommendations to ensure responsible and effective financial management.

H. Health and Wellbeing Committee

The Health and Wellbeing Committee is dedicated to promoting the physical and mental well-being of association members. They develop programs and initiatives that encourage healthy lifestyle choices, provide resources for stress management and mental health support, and organize educational events related to health and wellness. This committee may also collaborate with external organizations to offer fitness classes, workshops, and health screenings.

I. Social Committee

The Social Committee oversees the planning and execution of social activities and events. This involves coordinating various social gatherings, such as parties, outings, and networking events, to foster a sense of camaraderie and engagement among association members. The Social Committee works closely with other committees, volunteers, and

external stakeholders to create enjoyable and meaningful social experiences for all members.

**Article V
Meetings**

Section 1 - There shall be one annual meeting of BEP which shall be held for the purpose of furthering the objectives of the Association.

Section 2 - The BEP annual meeting guidelines shall contain policies and procedures for the state meeting.

Section 3 -The President, with the approval of the Executive Committee, may call a special session of the Association and/or conduct business by mail or electronically as necessary.

Section 4 - In case of a national or state emergency, major health crisis, or other major events, the President, with the approval of the Executive Committee, may cancel and/or change the format of the Annual Session. Members shall be notified.

Section 5 - The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the Association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not consistent with these by-laws, the statement of policy of the association.

**Article VI
Amendment**

Section 1 - These adopted bylaws may be amended at any meeting or by mail (postal or electronic) ballot by 2/3 vote of the members voting.

Section 2 - Proper and sufficient notice of proposed changes, revisions, or repeals must be mailed or electronically mailed to members not less than 30 days prior to the opening date of the annual meeting. Amendments must originate at a previous annual meeting or with the Executive Committee.

Section 3 - When amendments are made to the BEP Bylaws that affect state policy, the state bylaws shall automatically be changed to correspond with national regulations.

**Article VII
Budget and Statement
of Policy**

Section 1 -The Executive Committee, President and Treasurer shall meet annually to review and revise budget.

Revision History
Written- 8/11/23