

Area XI FFA Association



FFA Policy and Procedures

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Area XI FFA Association - Policy and Procedure Handbook

Section 1: Active Membership Eligibility

1.1 Operational Premises

(a) The FFA Organization is an integral part of agricultural education, a leadership development program for students of agriculture, food and natural resources programs. FFA programs are intended to be applied activities related to the classroom and laboratory instructional programs, individual supervised agricultural experience programs and the leadership, personal and career development component of the agricultural education delivery model. Thus, membership guidelines should reflect this philosophy and support enrollment in agriculture, food and natural resources courses.

1.2 Constitutional Authority

National FFA Constitution, Section C. To be eligible for active membership in a chartered FFA chapter, a student must be enrolled in a secondary Agricultural Science and Technology program. To retain membership, a student must:

1. Be enrolled in a least one Agricultural Science and Technology course during the school year and/or follow a planned course of study; either course must include a supervised agricultural experience program, the objective of which is to gain experience in agriculture related careers.
2. Show an interest in the affairs of the Association by attending meetings, striving for degrees of membership, and participating in other organized activities of the chapter.
3. Pay all current District, Area, State and National dues by the date determined by the chapter.
4. Display conduct consistent with the ideals and purposes of the Area XI FFA Association.

1.3 Membership Eligibility

(a) A student may establish initial membership by enrolling in an approved agriculture, food and natural resources course. An approved agriculture, food and natural resources course shall be any course in the agriculture food and natural resources cluster, approved innovative course taught by the agriculture, food and natural resources instructor or any career and technical education courses approved by the State Board of Education to be taught by an agriculture, food and natural resources instructor. A course not considered part of the agriculture, food or natural resources cluster or one of the courses approved by the State Board of Education for delivery by agriculture, food and natural resources instructors, but part of a recognized agriculture, food and natural resources pathway shall be considered a qualified course for membership and participation provided that the pathway has been declared by the teacher upon the student's entry into the program and filed at that time via the state roster management

system.

(b) After completing two consecutive semesters for high school credit, a student may maintain continuous membership for a maximum of one membership year while not enrolled in a course provided they maintain an approved supervised experience program which is documented in an approved agriculture, food and natural resources record book. Pursuant to state and national constitutions, the membership year shall begin September 1 and conclude the following August 31. For the purposes of this policy, two one-semester classes taken concurrently count as two consecutive classes semesters. After re-enrolling and completing one agriculture, food and natural resources course, a student will be eligible to maintain one more year of membership without re-enrollment provided an approved, documented SAE is in place.

(c) Local departments may establish more stringent membership requirements.

(d) More rigorous enrollment standards, which apply to competitive events, supersede this policy and are enumerated in the respective handbooks.

Section 2: Student Officers: Hazing and Sexual Harassment

2.1 Hazing

(a) Hazing is any intentional, knowing or reckless act, directed against a member by one person acting alone or by more than one person occurring on or off the premises that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a member for the purpose of pledging or associating, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, seeking and/or maintaining membership in any organization whose membership consists of students. Consent and/or acquiescence by a member or members subjected to hazing is not a reasonable defense in a disciplinary proceeding.

(b) Hazing includes but is not limited to:

(1) Any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating using a harmful substance on the body or similar activity.

(2) Any type of physical activity, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, or calisthenics that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of a student.

(3) Any activity involving consumption of a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug or other substance which subjects a student to an unreasonable risk of harm or which adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of a member.

(4) Any activity that intimidates or threatens a member with ostracism, that subjects a member to extreme mental stress, shame or humiliation or that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of a member or that discourages a member from engaging or remaining engaged in the programs and/or activities of this association or that may reasonably be expected to cause a member to leave the organization rather than submit to acts described in this policies or any other acts of similar nature.

- (5) Any activity which involves mock quizzes or oral examinations which are not sanctioned by policies and procedures related to an officer, award or other selection process.
 - (6) Any activity in which an imposed piece of clothing, outfit, item or something else worn by the member in a way that would bring negative attention to the wearer. Including, but not limited to gender cross-dressing, collars and/or leashes.
 - (7) Misuse of authority by virtue of one's class rank or leadership position.
 - (8) Taking of a member to an outlying area and dropping him/her off.
 - (9) Acts of personal servitude that has been required by a member.
 - (10) Addressing members by obscene phrases that imply inferior status.
 - (11) Requiring pledges to carry comfort items such as pens, matches, or coins.
 - (12) Throwing, applying, or pouring eggs, paint, honey, water, or any other substance onto the body of a member.
 - (13) The use of blindfolds unless they are a part of the initiation service prescribed by the ritual of the association approved by the Area Advisor (Area), district advisor (district) or agricultural science teacher (local program).
 - (14) Any activity in which hazing is either condoned or encouraged or any action by an officer or combination of members, associates or alumni of the organization of committing or assisting in the commission of hazing.
 - (15) Any activity in which a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids or attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing; intentionally, knowingly or recklessly permits hazing to occur; has firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident which has occurred and knowingly fails to report the incident into the appropriate governing authority.
- (c) Advisory sessions may be held to constructively educate and critique the progress of new officers/new members, however, all such sessions must be monitored by the Area Advisor. Their duration must be of reasonable length and must conform to all of the standards of this policy.

2.2 Sexual Harassment

- (a) Sexual harassment shall be defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature in the following context:
- (1) When submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's standing in the organization; or
 - (2) When submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for organizational decisions affecting such individual, or
 - (3) When such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment.
- (b) Conduct prohibited by this policy may include, but is not limited to:
- (1) Unwelcome sexual flirtation, advances or propositions for sexual activity.

- (2) Continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature, such as suggestive comments and sexually explicit jokes.
- (3) Sexually degrading language to describe an individual.
- (4) Remarks of a sexual nature to describe a person's body or clothing.
- (5) Display of sexually demeaning objects or pictures.
- (6) Offensive physical contact, such as unwelcome touching, pinching, brushing the body.
- (7) Coerced sexual intercourse or statutory rape.
- (8) Rape, date or acquaintance rape, or other sex offenses, forcible or non-forcible.
- (9) Actions indicating that benefits will be gained or lost based on response to a sexual advance.

2.3 Procedures for Handling Alleged Violations

- (a) Allegations of hazing/sexual harassment will be handled by the Area Advisor on the area level, unless such allegations involve the Area Advisor. In cases involving the Elected Area Advisor, such allegations may be submitted to any adult member of the Area XI Agriculture Teacher Executive Board.
- (b) Charges of possible violation(s) may be brought forth to the appropriate authority by any person who observes, or has reasonable cause to suspect, inappropriate behavior and/or hazing. Such cases will be judged on their merits. Decisions will be based upon evidence, including statements and testimony.
- (c) In cases where an individual report being the victim of an act of hazing/sexual harassment, and where the circumstances warrant, the appropriate authorities will weigh the merits of the charge, degree of severity, and any appropriate corrective actions for code violations. In such cases it is not the intent of the act which matters, but the degree of discomfort, either mental or physical, which is reported that will be given substantial consideration. This principle acknowledges that human tolerances vary greatly from individual to individual. Enjoyment for some may cause pain in others. For purposes of complaint adjudication, it is hazing if the recipient of any act, no matter how well intended, substantially experiences the discomforts that are defined, clarified, and prohibited by this policy.
- (d) All cases of alleged hazing/sexual harassment shall be acted upon using established disciplinary action. Where a violation is found, appropriate penalties will be administered in adherence to the Area XI FFA disciplinary policies (member officer discipline or employee policies) or policies adopted by respective district associations.
- (e) The Area XI FFA Association and its administrative subdivisions shall cooperate in the any law enforcement or school district investigation concerning allegations of misconduct as described or similar to descriptions in this policy.

Section 3: Officer Selection

3.1 Constitutional Authority

Refer to Article 6: Area XI FFA Officers in the Area XI FFA Association Constitution.

3.2 Area Officer Selection Procedures

Detailed information can be found in the Area XI FFA Officer Selection Policy Manual.

Section 4: Competitions

4.1 Leadership Career Development Events

FFA members must be in good standing with Area XI Association to participate in Area XI Leadership Development events. All members must adhere to standards and rules set forth by the Texas FFA and Area XI Association.

- a) Each district will advance the top 3 teams to the Area contest.

4.2 Career Development Events

FFA members must be in good standing with Area XI Association to participate in Area XI Career Development events. All members must adhere to standards and rules set forth by the Texas FFA and Area XI Association. Area XI CDEs will be held in the Spring.

4.3 Speaking Development Events

FFA members must be in good standing with Area XI Association to participate in Area XI Speaking Development events. All members must adhere to standards and rules set forth by the Texas FFA and Area XI Association. Each District will advance 3 Public Speakers to Area Contest per contest.

- a) The Area will advance 1 winner from each category in Sr. Prepared Speaking to the state contest at the State FFA Convention.
- b) The area will advance the top two winners from Jr Prepared, Soil Stewardship, Extemporaneous to state, but only one from any one chapter in an event.
- c) The same speaker may qualify in more than one speaking event.

4.4 Talent Contest

FFA members must be in good standing with Area XI Association to participate in Area XI Talent Contest at the Area Convention. All members must adhere to standards and rules set forth by the Texas FFA and Area XI Association. Must submit signed copy of rules by established deadline. Talent and campaign speeches may be videotaped. Each district will advance the top two teams to Area.

Section 5: Ag Science Teacher Responsibilities and Expectations

5.1 Competition Judges

Districts will rotate judges for Leadership Development Events. Teacher will sign up at VATAT conference and/or be contacted directly to judge in the District LDE Judge rotation. At least half of the District association teachers should expect to be requested to judge each year.

5.2 Area Teacher Committees

Districts are expected to fulfill Area Teacher Committee responsibilities with qualified teachers. Teachers will be elected and/or sign up at the VATAT conference, depending upon committee terms per Area XI FFA Policy and Area XI Executive Committee procedure. Committee term lengths are for two years, with staggered elections or as defined in Area Officer Election Policy Manual.

5.3 State Teacher Committees

Area XI FFA Association is expected to fulfill State Teacher Committee responsibilities with qualified teachers. Teachers will be elected and/or sign up at the VATAT conference, depending upon committee terms and Area XI Executive Committee procedure. Committee term lengths are for two years, with staggered elections.

5.4 Agriculture Teacher Executive Committee

Executive Committee members are elected for two year terms. Coordinator and Secretary will be elected in even years. President and Treasurer will be elected in odd years. Area Advisor will be elected every three years. Duties of the officers are listed below.

Coordinator: Duties included but are not limited to the following:

- Attend Area Coordinator Retreat
- Disseminate information to Area XI teachers
- Coordinate LDEs, CDEs, SDEs and other Area events with elected representatives
- Coordinate Mid-Winter program and workshops with elected representatives and executive committee members
- Coordinate Area Degree Check at Area Convention
- Attend State Degree Check and ensure that all Record books, applications are accounted for and submit list to State Office.

President: Duties included but are not limited to the following:

- Attend Area Coordinator Retreat,
- Assist Area Coordinator in disseminating information to Area XI teachers
- Coordinate with Area VII for Area LDE judges

- Assist in coordinating Area Degree Check
- Assist with Record book reconciliation following Area Degree Check
- Attend State Degree Check and check record books
- Assume duties of Area Coordinator if/when necessary.

Secretary: Duties included but are not limited to the following:

- Maintain records and minutes of all area business and executive meetings.
- Maintain and record minutes of area VATAT business
- Develop agenda for meetings and Mid-Winter program and certificate
- Correspond with state staff for attendance at conferences
- Correspond with area teachers to assemble and compile area directory teacher information, Area and State Contacts
- Compile information for major stock show changes and pertinent information
- Develop area leadership and speaking rotations
- Compile information from Area meetings for State office
- Compile information from Districts for Area Degree Check
- Attend area meetings, conferences, degree check, scholarship selection, executive meetings
- Maintain Area website and social media platforms

Treasurer: Duties included but are not limited to the following:

- Plan annual budget (estimate upcoming expenses and income. Take into account teams going to National Contests, trends in FFA membership, interest rates, banner and medal costs, scholarship commitment, estimated administrative costs, etc.) and present twice a year.
- Maintain year-to-date log of actual expenses and income compared to the annual budget.
- Communicate and collaborate with Elected Area advisor concerning FFA jackets, officer shirts, FFA officer travel, travel to State Officer Camp, etc.
- Order banners, medals, and plaques for Area LDEs, CDEs, and Convention.
- Maintain Area FFA roster and make numerous deposits from the incoming dues.
- Make deposits from Area Leadership Camp and pay expenses from the camp and work with Elected Area Advisor to fulfill Leadership Grant requirements. Manage/renew Area Certificates of Deposit.
- Maintain forms for travel for Area III Ag Teacher officers/Area FFA officers and make appropriate payments. Notify recipients of Area scholarships and pay out appropriate funds.
- Maintain benevolent fund- make deposits, keep current list of members, and be ready to deliver funds to a beneficiary when the time comes.
- Represent Area at the State Advance Degree Check every year.

Elected Area Advisor: Duties included but are not limited to the following:

- Coordinate Area officer activities (LDEs, CDEs, etc.) with the assistance of the Area XI officer advisors.
- Coordinate Area Leadership Conference, ELITE Conference, Greenhand Camp and Area XI Convention with Area XI officers
- Coordinate travel plans for Area XI officers attending National FFA Convention as voting delegates.
- Coordinate Area XI officers during State Leadership Conference.
- Coordinate Area XI delegates during State FFA Convention.
- Arrange for verification of participation of Area XI Officers per UIL/FFA guidelines through-out the year.
- Assume responsibility for Area XI paraphernalia.
- Approve and facilitate all travel and expenses for Area XI Officers.