

UF/IFAS Tenure/Permanent Status and Promotion Packet

Section 24. Extension Program Writer's Guide

Your goal is to describe your extension program in a clear, concise, and impactful way to show extension scholarship and distinction. Avoid excessive length. More is not always better. A clear and concise Section 24 is easier for evaluators to read, comprehend, and assess scholarship.

As paraphrased from Associate Provost Chris Hass (who oversees the work of UF's Academic Personnel Board), consider these points when writing Section 24:

- Emphasize continuity between objectives, activities, and measurable outcomes/impacts.
- Service to your clientele as an educator is the highest priority.
- Write your extension story and own it. Be creative, convincing, and persuasive.
- When considering your writing style, understand that your audience may not be familiar with cooperative extension, translational science, or extension scholarship.
- Be clear, concise, and impactful. Avoid making your audience read between the lines.
- Build your brand, credibility, vision, and mission by connecting Section 24 to other parts of the packet.
- Show that you facilitate meeting the needs of others.
- Show that you foster problem-solving.
- It is fine to be braggadocios, but do not be pompous.
- Clearly describe what you are known for.
- Explain why your work is impactful, how it has value, and how it meets the bar for distinction. Why do you do your extension work, and why does anyone care?
- Describe who benefits from your extension program, how they are using what you teach, how it is affecting them, and how is it affecting the state. Contextualize your program outcomes.
- Document fact-based financial, social, practice, and/or policy impacts. How many people are being impacted?
- Clarify individual contributions to group extension work.
- Highlight the answer to “so what?”
- Put more eggs in fewer baskets. More “main course,” less “buffet.”
- The impact is the key.

**PREPARING TENURE/PERMANENT STATUS AND/OR PROMOTION PACKETS
WITH EMPHASIS ON THE EXTENSION PROGRAM SECTION**

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to help UF/IFAS extension faculty produce complete, accurate, and easy-to-read Extension Sections in tenure/permanent status and/or promotion packets (a.k.a. “T & P” packets). The intended audience is state or county faculty members who are candidates for promotion and permanent status as well those who are preparing their 3rd-year review. Faculty must be aware of any changes in the formal T & P guidelines each year; this document is not intended to replace the annual T & P guideline document.

Permanent status/tenure and promotion are landmark events in the career of UF/IFAS faculty members. Your packet will be evaluated by numerous individuals who will likely have little knowledge of your discipline or area of responsibility. It is important to carefully prepare your packet so it does not become a hindrance to your success in the review process. Through the T & P process, your packet must speak for you in presenting your case for scholarship and distinction in extension.

The “Extension Program” section is a critical component of any application for tenure, permanent status, and/or promotion in UF/IFAS. This section is where faculty with an extension appointment present evidence of scholarly programmatic work and accomplishments for the time period under consideration. The assignment may vary from a small percentage of FTE to a high percentage of FTE for state faculty. For county faculty it is their full FTE. The Extension Program section also provides an opportunity for faculty without an official extension assignment to document extension activities in support of the land-grant mission.

This document discusses the relationship between the faculty member’s description of job duties and the organization and content of the Extension Program section. The essential components of the program section and the significance of each section as it relates to the applicant’s programmatic efforts and accomplishments are also discussed.

Since the packet reflects your work, the packet guidelines by default suggest what faculty members should be able to accomplish during the period of evaluation. It is most helpful to develop a strategy for your work that reflects the ideal packet. Reviewing these tips and information from the T & P training workshop with your mentoring committee could also improve your packet. Each packet is written somewhat differently, but they all should illustrate the basic concepts discussed below. Other examples may be obtained from your department/unit leader, other faculty, mentoring committee or the IFAS human resources office.

GENERAL COMMENTS ON PACKET PRESENTATION AND HELPFUL HINTS

1. Remember the Three Cs.

a. Clean: Check carefully for spelling, grammatical, and formatting errors. Ask one or two colleagues to proofread your packet; often fresh eyes can pick up mistakes more easily.

b. Clear: Explain your programming efforts in such a way that virtually anyone reading your packet can understand what you have done. Consider asking someone unfamiliar with extension, like a teacher, to read your packet for clarity. Rework any sections your reviewer had difficulty understanding. If you plan to use acronyms to save space, spell them out at their first mention in the packet. For example, “100 participants in the Operation Military Kids (OMK) program...” Reviewers, especially those outside your program area, may not be familiar with acronyms you frequently use.

c. Concise: Avoid wordiness. Review each section of your packet, especially the Extension Program section, to see how you can “tighten” your narrative. Do not give the appearance of “padding.” If an activity belongs in two sections, reference one to the other; do not repeat. Avoid double-counting. Lengthy packets are not always good packets.

2. Attend the T & P workshop, preferably each year, and obtain copies of other packets from recent years that were judged to be excellent. Individuals who have a similar appointment will have packets that describe their work in ways you might emulate.

3. Some of these guidelines in this document speak to program expectations for all faculty members, not just packaging techniques.

4. Writing in first person is fine, and often easier to read. Avoid repeatedly saying “the agent” or “this agent.”

5. Start the process early enough to incorporate feedback from district directors, peers, and mentors.

6. Bullets, tables, and lists help condense information.

7. Pay close attention to the current version of T & P packet guidelines.

DESCRIPTION OF JOB DUTIES

The foundation and guiding framework for organizing the Extension Program Section is the faculty member’s description of his/her extension job duties and/or assignments during the time period under consideration. The job duties description should delineate the major areas of assignment. The applicant may wish to provide a percentage breakdown for each program. Examples of description of job duties for state and county faculty are:

State Faculty (Extension Specialist) With Extension Appointment Example

The faculty member provides leadership and coordination for statewide extension educational efforts in turfgrass production and management, including the development, delivery and evaluation of programs.

Specific focus areas and percentage FTE breakdown are:

- Water management and conservation.....30%
- Improved nutrient management programs.....30%
- Integrated pest management20%

County Faculty (Extension Agent) With Extension Appointment Example

The faculty member is responsible for the development, delivery, and evaluation of educational programs in Family and Consumer Sciences in the areas of nutrition, health, and family resource economics. As County Extension Director (CED), the faculty member also provides leadership and coordination for the total county extension educational effort in agriculture, family, youth and community sciences, 4-H youth development, and community resource development. The CED also manages the administrative affairs of the County Extension office.

Specific duties by percentage of FTE:

- Nutrition and health.....50%
- Family resource management 25%
- Administration..... 25%

Subsequently, the reader expects to find each of these areas addressed in the Extension Program section of the application packet in the order listed. Duties may be addressed as such, or they may serve as a broad heading under which more specific programs within that job assignment are identified and addressed. Plans of work and annual accomplishment reports developed during the time period involved should be useful in determining an effective organizational scheme, as well as serving as a key source of information for the content of each section.

Organizing the Extension Program section to directly track with the job duties as they are listed facilitates the reader’s conceptualization and understanding of the program content of the report in relation to the assigned duties. A different format may cause the reader to have to sort through the material to try to ascertain what was done in a particular assignment. All job duties must be addressed to prevent raising questions about what happened and to insure a complete report.

EXTENSION PROGRAM SECTION

Applying scholarly extension communication skills will help to make this section reader-friendly. The target audience consists of faculty from all UF units. Some may not be familiar with extension. The objectives are for this audience to clearly understand the components of the extension program and to know how the candidate has satisfied the criteria for tenure/permanent status/promotion. It is important to emphasize again that the description of job duties provides a useful basis for organizing the Extension Program section. To help the reader, some writers briefly reiterate the job duties in an introductory paragraph before starting to write the details.

Here are two examples of introductory paragraphs taken from the job descriptions above written for state and county faculty, respectively.

“During the period covered by this application, my extension assignment was in turfgrass production and management, with major focus areas of water conservation and management, fertility programs, and pest management.”

"During the period covered by this application, my primary assignments were in nutrition and health, family resource management, and overall program leadership, and administration."

Suggested template for EXTENSION PROGRAMS

(Use tables as needed, number them consecutively, and refer to them in the text.)

A. Introduction

This is a brief description of Sections 2 (Brief description of job duties) and 3 (Areas of specialization) of the packet. Describe your technical expertise and how you are a trusted resource to your extension program target audiences and clientele. Foreshadow your impacts.

Suggested length no more than **1 half page**.

B. Initiative Teams and Priority Work Groups

Which IFAS Extension Initiative Teams and Priority Work Groups do you report under? If none, explain why. This is a list, not a description of service (which should appear in Sections 19 and 20.) Examples: Initiative 2: Enhancing and protecting water quality, quantity, and supply. Priority Workgroup: Agriculture water conservation, quality, and awareness.

C. Target Audiences

List the primary target audience(s) for your extension programming (all programs). Examples: extension agents, farmers/growers/producers, industry, consultants, state/federal agencies, governmental officials, non-governmental organizations, homeowners/HOAs, residents, public,

other (identify). Indicate if the audience represents underserved or underrepresented populations.

D. Extension Program Context, Importance, and Need (formerly Situation Statement and Role and Activities of Advisory Committee)

- *This section is a single situation statement that encompasses all programs.*
- *Describe the need for your extension programming using data (including needs assessments) and evidence from county, state, national, or global scales if appropriate and relevant. Justify why it is important to address these issues.*
- *Describe how you engage stakeholders to guide your programs.*
- *Illustrate how you are addressing the issues described above.*
- *Describe why you teach what you do.*
- *Describe how what you teach is important to your target audiences, clientele, and the county/state.*

Suggested length **1 half to 1 page.**

E. Program Titles, Objectives, Educational Methods, and Activities (formerly Program Objectives and Educational Methods and Activities)

Extension Agents should spend a minimum 20% time on any individual extension program.

Guide to the number of major extension programs state extension specialists should have as related to the amount of extension assignment:

Up to 29% extension – 1 program

30 to 59% extension – Up to 2 programs

60 to 100% extension – Up to 3 programs

Program 1 (Repeat the format below for additional programs)

- Title
- Objective 1
- Objective 2... etc.

Write a maximum of four SMART objectives - <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/FY1327>.

Explain how each objective will be measured ... (evaluation method examples, a pre-post-test, a self-reflective survey for knowledge gain, a follow-up survey (list the time frame 3, 6, 9 months), observation for behavior or practice change).

- Educational methods and activities

For example: Single classes, webinars, workshops, in-depth series, certification classes, webinars, field days, web-based communication, consultations, deliberative discussions, plus innovative features you have developed. Describe your role in collaborative teaching efforts as appropriate.

Suggested length 1 to 2 pages per program.

F. Extension Teaching Events (formerly Summary of Group Learning Participants)

List extension activities and events for **Program 1** since hire or since your last promotion. Capture facilitation and moderation under “self.” Avoid duplication with other sections of the packet. Please use the following format. Add or delete lines as needed.

Instructor	Topic	No. of Events	No. of Participants
Self*			
Program Assistant			
Volunteers			
Interns			
Graduate Students			
	Grand Total		

* Including moderator for Zoom/Teams-like events. Do not include your role as an organizer in this table but mention it in the educational activity’s narrative.

Create a separate teaching events table for each additional extension program.

G. Summary of Clientele Reached (combined for all programs)

*Report your educational materials, clientele contacts, and volunteer data from Workload by year since hire or since your last promotion. **Create your own table for this purpose.** (See below for an example.)*

Total number of educational materials prepared (excluding EDIS publications)

Total number of field consultations for all programs

Total number of office consultations for all programs

Total number of group learning participants for all programs

Total number of telephone consultations for all programs

Total number of email or text message consultations for all programs

Total number of website contacts for all programs

Total number of social media contacts for all programs

If you worked with any adult or youth volunteers, enter the total number of volunteers and the total estimated volunteer hours worked for all programs. (Volunteer headcount is an unduplicated count – count each volunteer once regardless of how many programs or activities the volunteer participated in.)

- Number of volunteers __
- Volunteer hours worked __

Example table for use in Section G:

Category	Numbers for Current Year	Add a column for each previous year since last promotion
Educational materials (excluding EDIS publications)		
*Group learning participants		
Field Consultations		
Office Consultations		
Telephone Consultations		
E-mail or text consultations		
Web site visits		
Social Media		
Number of volunteers		
Volunteer hours worked		

**Faculty may include in-service training sessions in group learning, or create a separate line for ISTs.*

H. Outcomes and Impacts

Describe notable outcomes and impacts for each of your extension programs identified in Section E.

- **Outcomes** include short to medium term results like measured knowledge gain and changes in actions/behaviors. You may report your Workload indicator data (<https://pdec.ifas.ufl.edu/workload/WorkloadIndicators.pdf>) here if you have used those indicators to evaluate your program outcomes. This is the recommended approach, but you are not required to use workload indicators here. Show **outcomes by objective**.
- **Impacts** reflect long-term change in social, economic, or environmental conditions or the potential for meaningful change in those conditions. Answer the question “why does my program matter?” (Impacts do not have to be foregone conclusions, but they do need to reflect the realistic long-term potential of your extension work and how it can facilitate positive change.) Summarize or expand past Workload statements. Show **impacts by program**.

Suggested length no more than **2 pages per program**.

SUMMARY

The presentation of each of the major program should be preceded by a brief description of job duties, affiliation with Extension initiative team(s) and priority work group(s), target audiences, and context, Importance, and need encompassing all programs. The narrative of each of the major program should contain a title, a concise statement of SMART objectives expanded in changes to occur in clientele, a summary of educational methods and activities, a summary of clientele reached, and a statement of outcomes and impacts or progress to date. There should be a clear and obvious relationship or common thread among these components, i.e., the objectives should clearly relate to the importance and need, the educational methods should contribute to reaching the identified objectives, and the outcomes and impacts should provide evidence of reaching or making progress toward the objectives. A well-written Extension Program Section does not guarantee success in achieving tenure or promotion. However, a well-written program section can greatly facilitate “putting one’s best foot forward” as the faculty member’s total accomplishments are being considered.