

# The North Carolina FFA Constitution

## Preamble

Whereas the Future Farmers of America (FFA) is a national organization, of, by, and for students of Agricultural Education, and

Whereas the FFA is an integral part of instruction in Agricultural Education, and

Whereas the North Carolina FFA Constitution and Bylaws cannot be in direct conflict with those of the National FFA Organization,

It is, therefore, necessary that certain articles and sections of the State Constitution and Bylaws are beyond jurisdiction and discretion of FFA members, but reserved for the judgements and decisions of those adults who have authority and responsibility for guidance and direction of the FFA.

It is proper, however, for State Convention delegates, assembled in regular session to appeal to the Board of Directors concerning any portion of the Constitution and Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE I. NAME**

The name of this organization shall be "The North Carolina FFA Association." The letters, "FFA" may be officially used to designate the organization, its units, or members thereof.

## **ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The objectives of the association shall be consistent with the National FFA Organization's federal charter, Public Law 116-7 (formerly Public Laws 105-225 and 81-740). The association shall cooperate with national, state, and local government and education agencies and officials in career and technical education to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To be an integral component of instruction in agricultural education, including without limitation, agriculture, food, and natural resources. As such, the association shall be intra-curricular to the agricultural education program, and will work with contextual classroom/laboratory instruction and work-based experiential learning in furtherance of a complete and comprehensive agricultural education program;
2. To be an integral component in agricultural education, to prepare students for successful entry into productive careers in agriculture, food and natural resources, or connect students to relevant postsecondary educational pathways, focusing on the complete delivery of classroom and laboratory instruction, work-based experiential learning and leadership development;

3. To be a resource and support association that does not select, control or supervise local chapter or individual member activities. The association will develop educational materials, programs, services and events as a service to local agricultural education agencies;
4. To seek and promote inclusion and diversity in its membership, leadership and staff to reflect the association's belief in the value of all human beings;
5. To create, foster and assist agricultural educational programs and chapters throughout the state of North Carolina;
6. To build character and develop competent and assertive agricultural leadership;
7. To increase awareness of the global and technological importance of agriculture, food and natural resources and its contribution to our well-being;
8. To promote the intelligent choice and establishment of a career in agriculture, food and natural resources;
9. To make available to local chapters and members, all official supplies, equipment, programs and services of the association;
10. To cooperate with others, including local boards and officials for career and technical education, in accomplishing the foregoing purposes; and
11. To engage in other activities, consistent with these purposes, determined by the governing body to be for the best interests of the association.

### **ARTICLE III. ORGANIZATION**

#### **Section A**

The North Carolina FFA Association is the State organization for students of Agricultural Education. It shall consist of chartered local chapters.

#### **Section B**

Active chapters of the FFA shall be chartered only in schools where recognized systematic instruction in Agricultural Education is offered. Such chapters shall operate as an integral part of the instructional program of Agricultural Education under the responsibility of the local school system.

### **Section C**

To secure a charter, students shall meet, organize, adopt a constitution not in conflict with the state constitution, elect officers, set up a program of activities, and submit the program of activities and state and national dues along with an application for charter to the State FFA Coordinator.

## **ARTICLE IV. PROCEDURE FOR DETERMINING STANDING OF CHAPTERS AND MEMBERS**

### **Section A**

A local chapter shall be considered in good standing with the North Carolina State Association when the following conditions are met:

1. Current state and national dues have been paid by not later than March 1.
2. All reports have been submitted as required by the State Association.
3. No provisions of the chapter constitution is in conflict with the State Constitution and the activities of the chapter are in harmony with the ideals and purposes of the FFA.

### **Section B**

The State FFA Coordinator shall identify chapters which have not paid dues by February 1 and such chapters will be notified of the deadline for paying dues.

### **Section C**

1. Upon meeting the requirements for good standing, a chapter may be reinstated by the State Association Board of Directors not earlier than the close of the State Convention during which they were not in good standing.
2. In the event a local department of Agricultural Education is discontinued, its chartered FFA chapter may of officially operate for a period not to exceed three years (36 months) from the date of discontinuance, provided proper supervision is given by a person having the approval of the local school administrator and the State FFA Advisor. The chapter's charter must be surrendered to the State Advisor at the end of the three year period if a local department of agricultural education is not in operation in the school at that time.

### **Section D**

A student member shall be considered in good standing when:

1. The member attends local chapter meetings while enrolled in the school where the chapter is established.
2. The member shows an active interest in and takes part in the affairs of the chapter.
3. The member pays state and national dues regularly and acts in a manner consistent with the ideals of the FFA.

## **ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section A**

Membership in the State Association shall be of two kinds: student and adult.

### **Section B**

Student membership – Any student who is regularly enrolled in Agricultural Education is entitled to become a student member of his/her school's FFA chapter. In order to retain membership, the member must be enrolled in at least one Agricultural Education 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 preparation for an agricultural career. Student members may retain their active membership until November 30, following the fourth National FFA Convention after graduation from high school. A student member who is in good standing at the time of induction into the armed forces of the United States of America shall be in good standing during the period of active service without further payment of dues or attendance at meetings. Time spent in the armed forces shall not be considered as elapsed time in determining the maximum period of four conventions following graduation from high school or leaving high school. Student members using this waiver of service time for the purpose of maintaining active membership for application for advance degrees of membership must resume active participation within six months after having been honorably discharged from military service and indicate such a desire by paying dues and amending meetings. Student members participating in a six-month armed services program shall be eligible for one full year of extended membership. No individual may retain student membership beyond his or her twenty-third birthday.

### **Section C**

Adult membership – Adult membership shall be open to former student members, honorary degree recipients, present and former professional agricultural educators, parents of FFA members, and others interested in and supportive of the FFA.

## **ARTICLE VI. DEGREES AND PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section A**

There shall be five degrees of student membership based on individual achievement. These are the Discovery FFA Degree, Greenhand FFA Degree, the Chapter FFA Degree, the State FFA Degree, and the American FFA Degree. The National FFA Organization shall set the minimum qualifications for each degree.

### **Section B**

The Discovery FFA Degree – On meeting the minimum qualifications as set forth in the national constitution, the Discovery FFA Degree may be conferred by the chapter.

### **Section C**

The Greenhand FFA Degree – On meeting the minimum qualifications as set forth in the national constitution, the Greenhand FFA Degree may be conferred by the chapter.

### **Section D**

The Chapter FFA Degree – On meeting the minimum qualifications as set forth in the national constitution, the Chapter FFA Degree may be conferred by the chapter.

### **Section E**

The State FFA Degree – On meeting the minimum qualifications as set forth in the national constitution, the State FFA Degree may be conferred by the State Association. Written records of achievement of all requirements, verified by the chapter FFA advisor, shall be submitted to the State Association at least one month prior to the state FFA convention at which the State FFA Degree is to be received. The State FFA Advisor shall provide for review of the records and submit a recommendation to the State Association governing body, which shall nominate at the state FFA convention the candidates who have been found worthy to receive the honor. The State FFA Degree will be conferred upon the candidates subject to approval by the delegates at the state FFA convention.

### **Section F**

The American FFA Degree – On meeting the minimum qualifications as set forth in the national constitution, the American FFA Degree may be conferred by the National Organization.

### **Section G**

Honorary FFA Degree – Farmers, school superintendents, principals, members of boards of education, chapter advisors, teachers, staff members in agricultural education, business people, and others who are helping to advance agricultural education and the FFA and who have rendered outstanding service, may be elected to receive an honorary FFA degree by a majority vote of the members present at any regular meeting or convention.

The Honorary FFA Degree shall be limited to the Honorary Chapter FFA Degree in the local chapter, the Honorary State Degree by the North Carolina FFA Association, and the Honorary American FFA Degree in the national organization. All Honorary FFA Degree recipients will be considered alumni/adult members as part of their Honorary FFA Degree.

## **ARTICLE VII. EMBLEM**

### **Section A**

The official emblem of the National FFA Organization shall include five symbols, namely: the plow, representing labor and tillage of the soil; the owl, representing wisdom; the rising sun, representing progress; a cross-section of an ear of corn, representing common agricultural interests; and an American eagle surmounting the cross-section of the ear of corn, representing the national scope of the organization. The emblem shall also include the letters, "FFA" and the words, "Agricultural Education."

### **Section B**

The emblem shall be uniform in all chapters. All members shall be entitled to display the emblem.

### **Section C**

Discovery FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official blue emblem pin. Greenhand FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official bronze emblem pin. Chapter FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official silver emblem pin. State FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official gold emblem charm. American FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official gold emblem key.

### **Section D**

Honorary Chapter FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear either the official silver or gold emblem pin, Honorary State FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official gold emblem charm, and Honorary American FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the official gold emblem key.

### **Section E**

FFA advisors shall be entitled to wear the official gold owl pin.

## **ARTICLE VIII. STATE AND CHAPTER OFFICERS**

### **Section A**

The elected officers of the State Association shall consist of a President and five (5) vice presidents. Each vice president shall be in charge of one of the following stations: Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter, Sentinel. Each of the officers will be elected at large.

## **Section B**

A nominating committee shall be appointed by State FFA Advisor to study the qualifications and interview candidates for State Office and recommend a slate of candidates to the convention delegates for their consideration. State FFA Officers shall serve from one state convention through the next succeeding state convention and shall not be re-elected, nor be eligible for election to another state office. In the event a state convention is not held in any given year, the State Board of Directors shall make provisions for the appointment of state officers for the next succeeding year. The State FFA Advisor shall have the power to appoint a qualified member to fill any office that becomes vacant between state conventions.

## **Section C**

State officers must have the State FFA Degree by the time of their election. They will serve only one year.

## **Section D**

Chapter officers shall consist of at least a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter and Sentinel. They shall be elected annually or semi-annually at a regular meeting of the local chapter. Other officers may be elected as deemed appropriate by the local chapter advisor and/or the chapter governing body. The teacher(s) of agricultural education shall be the FFA advisor(s) of the local FFA Chapter, Federation and Region.

## **ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS**

### **Section A**

A state convention shall be held annually, except in case of extreme emergency. The purpose of the state convention shall be to conduct the business of the state association and to recognize outstanding achievements of FFA members and chapters. The time and place of the convention shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

### **Section B**

Each chapter is entitled to send official delegates from its active membership to the state convention based on the following formula: two delegates for the first 50 members; one additional delegate for each additional 50 members. A delegate is entitled to one vote.

### **Section C**

Local chapter, federation, region, and other such area meetings may be held as necessary in order to transact FFA business and activities.

## **ARTICLE X. STATE ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **Section A**

The governing body of the Association shall be the State FFA Board of Directors. This body is composed of the following voting members:

1. One teacher educator in agricultural education from each of the institutions of higher education in the state which prepare teachers of agricultural education.
2. One teacher of agricultural education from each of the recognized FFA regions.
3. The State FFA Officers.
4. The President, President Elect, and Past President of the North Carolina Agriculture Teachers' Association.
5. The State President of the North Carolina FFA Alumni Association as an ex officio voting member.

### **Section B**

The State Agricultural Education Leader shall serve as the State FFA Advisor and shall serve as a consultant to the State FFA Board of Directors. The Past President of the North Carolina Agriculture Teachers Association shall serve as the chairperson of the State FFA Board of Directors. The vice chair shall be the North Carolina Agriculture Teachers Association President.

### **Section C**

The Board of Directors is responsible for keeping the Association consistent with all laws, rules and regulations pertaining to the FFA. The Board has the authority to veto any action of delegates assembled in convention other than those matters concerning the election of State FFA Officers and additions or deletions to the Constitution as long as they are consistent with all laws, rules and regulations of the FFA. The Board of Directors must carefully consider all proposals and recommendations passed by the convention delegates.

### **Section D**

The Board of Directors shall meet each year at a time and place to be decided by the Board. Special meetings may be called as needed by the Board chair.

### **Section E**

Only in special cases or emergency circumstances, the State FFA Board of Directors Governing Committee shall have the authority to take appropriate action for the entire Board. The Governing Committee shall consist of the board chair and three other Board members elected annually by the Board, one of whom shall be an FFA member. If this authority is utilized, Board Members shall be notified and a report of action taken shall be presented to the next meeting of the Board.



## **Section F**

In carrying out its responsibilities as set forth above, the Board may involve various resource persons. Such individuals may be invited to Board meetings, but shall have no vote. Appropriate school administrators, representatives of agricultural organizations, and other individuals with specific expertise that may be helpful to the Board may be appointed for specified terms by the Board chair.

## **ARTICLE XI. DUES**

### **Section A**

Annual dues in the State Association shall be fixed by a two-thirds vote of delegates assembled in convention. The Board of Directors shall submit their recommendations concerning dues to local chapters at least thirty days prior to the state convention.

## **ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENTS**

### **Section A**

Proposed amendments to the State FFA Constitution may be submitted by local chapters, State Officers, or the State Board of Directors. Proposed amendments from chapters must be submitted in writing to the State FFA Coordinator by December 15. Proposed amendments will be reviewed by the Board of Directors to determine the constitutionality of such amendments. These amendments, if constitutional, are then distributed to local chapters at least thirty days prior to the next succeeding state convention, and submitted to the official delegates for final action. An amendment to the State Constitution may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the delegates.

### **Section B**

Amendments to the Bylaws may be proposed by a local chapter, an official delegate, or the State Board of Directors. Amendments to the Bylaws must be in harmony with the FFA constitution and can be adopted by a majority vote of the official delegates.

## **BYLAWS**

### **Article I – Relationship between Constitution and Bylaws**

#### **Section A**

All provisions of these Bylaws shall be considered a part of the State FFA Constitution.

### **Article II – Procedures for Electing Teacher Members of the State FFA Board of Directors**

#### **Section A**

Each of the recognized FFA regions shall select a teacher to serve on the Board of Directors. Each region shall determine its method of selection.

#### **Section B**

Terms of office of teacher members of the Board shall be three years beginning and ending with the conclusion of the State FFA Convention. A teacher serving on the Board as a regional representative cannot serve two consecutive terms. A rotation system will be followed whereby teachers complete their terms on a staggered basis.

#### **Section C**

Teacher members shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred while attending meetings of the Board.

### **Article III – Duties of State Officers**

#### **Section A**

The President – It shall be the duty of the President to preside at the State FFA Convention and at meetings of State Officers. The President shall direct the work of the State Convention Committees and otherwise provide leadership to the State Association.

#### **Section B**

Vice Presidents – Each Vice President shall perform the duties consistent to the office to which elected and such special duties as agreed upon by the State Officers.

#### **Section C**

The major role of the State Officers is to plan and conduct the State FFA Convention and help in planning and conducting other activities on the state level with direction and assistance from the State Agricultural Education Staff, Board of Directors and other appropriate individuals.

## **Section D**

At least one State Officer shall serve on every committee appointed by the Board of Directors.

## **Section E**

The State Agricultural Education Leader shall be the State FFA Advisor. The State Advisor shall:

1. Serve as a consultant to the Board.
2. Advise the State Officers, State FFA Board of Directors, delegates and committees on matters of policy and assist the State Officers in conducting meetings and carrying out programs.
3. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees.
4. Approve all applications for the State FFA Degree as submitted by chapters.

## **Section F**

The State FFA Coordinator shall:

1. Issue charters to local chapters, upon the meeting of minimum requirements.
2. Keep the official records of membership and progress of the State Association.
3. Receive all reports from chapters, review them, and inform the State Board of Directors of any proceedings that appear to be in conflict with the provisions of the State FFA Association.
4. Keep or have kept correct and complete minutes of the proceedings of the meetings of State Officers, the Board of Directors, and any other committee or officially convened meeting of members or officers charged with the transaction of business affecting the Association, furnishing copies to appropriate persons.
5. Keep a record of all officers of the Association, their terms of office, and of all members.
6. Be responsible for working with and coordinating the activities of the State FFA Officers.
7. Be in charge of arrangements for the annual State Convention and other state association programs and activities.
8. Perform other duties as directed by the State Board of Directors.

## **Section G**

The State FFA Board of Directors shall elect a State FFA Treasurer to a three-year term. The duties of the State FFA Treasurer shall be to:

1. Maintain the financial records of the FFA Association according to generally accepted accounting practices.
2. Prepare financial records as deemed necessary by the FFA Board of Directors.
3. Submit the annual budget of proposed expenditures to the State FFA Board of Directors for their approval.

## **Article IV – State Association Committees**

### **Section A**

The Association will annually appoint members to serve on the Nominating Committee, which shall place in nomination the candidates for state office. Other committees may be appointed by the State FFA President as deemed necessary.

### **Section B**

Selection of FFA committee members. Committees will be made up of regional officers. Assignment of officers to specific committees shall be handled by the State FFA Coordinator and the State FFA Officers. Each region will be represented on all committees. The chair of each committee shall correspond with the members of their committee regarding its function, items for consideration, and any other pertinent information.

### **Section C**

Recommendations will be finalized by each committee during the State FFA Convention and will be presented to the convention delegates for their disposal.

### **Section D**

The State Officers and State FFA Coordinator may appoint teachers and/or other appropriate persons to work with committees. Not more than two such persons will be assigned to a committee. These persons will serve in an advisory (ex-officio, non-voting) capacity.

## **Article V – Honorary State FFA Degree**

### **Section A**

The Association will grant this Degree to one agricultural education teacher per region annually. Teacher nominees must complete an application for the degree. A screening committee will review and select the teacher Honorary State Degree Recipients.

### **Section B**

The Association may annually award Honorary State Degrees to non-teachers equal to and not exceeding two times the number of regions in the state. Degrees will be awarded at large. Non-teacher nominees must complete an application for the degree. A screening committee will review the non-teacher Honorary State Degree candidates.

### **Section C**

All parents of State FFA Officers will receive the Honorary State FFA Degree.

## **Article VI – Participation by the State Association in National FFA Convention Activities**

### **Section A**

National FFA Convention Delegates – The Association's delegates to the National FFA Convention shall be the State President, Vice President and other officer(s) in order of rank as needed to fill the State's delegate quota. The president and vice president shall serve as the chair and vice chair of the state delegation. Should the Association's quota of delegates exceed the number of State Officers, additional delegates shall be selected by the Association.

### **Section B**

Candidates for National FFA Office – The candidacy shall be open to any member of the immediate past two state officer teams. If more than one person seeks the nomination, the candidate shall be chosen by a reviewing committee consisting of: the State FFA Coordinator, who shall chair the committee; four members of the State FFA Board of Directors, two of whom shall be teachers; two members of the State FFA Alumni Council; and two FFA members. The State FFA Advisor shall choose the members of this committee. No teacher, FFA member or FFA Alumni member of the reviewing committee shall be from the same FFA Chapter as any of the candidates. Prospective candidates shall submit application to the State FFA Coordinator not later than July 1.

## **Article VII – Policies of the North Carolina FFA Association**

### **Section A**

The State FFA Coordinator shall maintain a record of all policies adopted by the State FFA Board of Directors. These policies shall be used to manage the daily operations of the association, and shall be in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws.