

**RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTERS  
POLICY AND PROCEDURES  
RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND  
PROJECT REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS**

**PURPOSE**

The Research Advisory Committee (RAC) at each Center reviews and approves research and extension projects, and allocates available Center resources of land, labor, and facilities to approved projects. Each RAC is advisory to the Director - Research and Extension Centers (REC). The RAC members are appointed by the Associate Vice President (AVP) Agricultural and Natural Resources (ANR). The specific responsibilities of the committee are as follows:

- Review and approve research and extension project proposals based on scientific merit and other criteria.
- Allocate available Center resources of land, labor and facilities to RAC-approved projects based on ANR and Center specific criteria insuring the most effective use of resources in accomplishing ANR research and extension goals.
- Make recommendations to the Center Director and the REC Director on the need and priority for additional or improved resources, and on policy and procedures related to the support of research and extension activities.
- Make recommendations to the Center Director on Center programs and operational needs and issues.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

RAC membership will vary in size depending on the needs of the individual Center. Individual members will hold a fixed-term appointment. In general, members will be appointed for a three-year term. Appointments will be made and terms may vary to try and insure that no more than one-third of the members rotate off during any one year. RAC membership will possess the following characteristics:

- Academic credibility
- Applicable expertise with the types of research and extension activities at the Center
- Users and non-users
- Industry representation
- Research, extension, and program administration experience

The Center Director will serve on the RAC as an ex-officio member and as a recording secretary. Other members may be appointed ex-officio due to their special relationship to the RAC. Ex-officio members are non-voting members.

The REC Director will submit recommendations for the appointment of RAC members and RAC Chairpersons to the AVP.

## **NOMINATION PROCESS**

- The RAC, Center Director and REC Director will nominate potential new members.
- The Center Director will contact the nominees to discuss duties, time and travel commitments of a RAC member, and verify their willingness to serve.
- The Center Director will submit a list of willing nominees to the REC Director.
- The REC Director will review the list of nominees, and upon consultation with the Center Director and current RAC Chair, develop a recommendation.
- The REC Director's recommendation will be forwarded to the AVP.

## **RAC PROCESS**

An effective and equitable RAC process is critical to insure high-quality research, efficient use of resources, and good researcher/Center communications. The following elements of the RAC process must be followed systemwide:

- **New projects** - Submit [Research Project Proposal](#) and [Annual Request for Land, Labor and Facilities](#) forms. It is strongly recommended that the Project Leader (PL) meet with the Center Director prior to initiating a project.
- **Continuing projects** - Submit [Annual Progress Report](#) (not all Centers require this report) and [Annual Request for Land, Labor and Facilities](#) forms in the second and third year.
- **Projects requesting another three-year approval** - Submit [Three-Year Project Review](#), updated [Research Project Proposal](#), and [Annual Request for Land, Labor and Facilities forms](#).
- All submittals must be on forms available on [systemwide website](#).
- A "call" for project submittals will be published in the [ANR Report](#).
- Project submittals received after the published due date will not normally be considered during the annual review process (see "[Off-Cycle RAC Process](#)" below).
- It is the responsibility of the PL to effectively communicate the requirements of the

project, and the proposed role of the Center in supporting the project.

- Based on information provided, primarily in the Research Project Proposal, the Center Director is responsible for determining the resources required to provide the support requested including a reasonably accurate estimate of the land, labor and facilities.
- The Center Director is responsible for effectively communicating to the RAC the appropriateness of the proposed research project within the context of the Center's ability to successfully accomplish the work.
- The Center Director is responsible for effectively communicating to the RAC the available land, labor and facilities for allocation by the RAC to approved projects.
- The RAC is responsible for reviewing proposed research projects for merit and appropriateness based on established criteria as developed by the RAC and approved by the REC Director. Criteria may include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:
  - Scientific merit including the assessment of specific objectives, experimental design and techniques, and likelihood of success
  - ANR program priorities
  - Regional and statewide relevance/significance including potential benefit and transferability of information
  - Availability of resources (both Center and PL) to complete the project
  - Ability (knowledge, experience, equipment, facilities) of both the Center and PL to successfully complete the project
  - Suitability of Center to meet the objectives of the project (appropriate location, other more suitable alternatives, necessary soil, water, pest, and/or climate conditions) without compromising long-term sustainability of the resource or integrity of other approved projects
  - Appropriateness to a Center's focus or emphasis
  - Continuing projects - evidence of productive progress
- Projects are approved for no more than three years. The PL may request a shorter approval period. The RAC may specify a shorter approval period.
- Projects that have been completed must submit a Project Completion Report. If a Project Completion Report is not submitted within a time frame appropriate to the project, the RAC may choose not to consider any current year project proposals, and current year allocation requests submitted by the same PL.

- Upon approval of the projects, the RAC is responsible for allocation of available resources. RAC must allocate resources in accordance with ANR policy and based on established procedures and criteria as developed by the RAC and approved by the REC Director. Criteria may include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:
  - An upper limit on resources dedicated to a single PL
  - Incentives to promote new or unique projects such as new PL, new commodities, unique cultural practices, etc.
  - Weighted allocation based on statewide, regional or Center priorities
  - Restricting allocation of Center labor hours or materials to support typical cultural operations versus high-intensity, high-cost operations
- Quorum: At least 51% of the total number of voting members, currently appointed to the committee, must be present to approve projects and allocate available resources.
- All Center support requirements of the project as described by the project proposal, agreed to by the Center Director, and as approved by the RAC, will be the responsibility of the Center to implement.
- The PL is responsible for supplying materials, equipment, or other resources that are outside the Center's ability to furnish, as determined by the Center Director, and communicated to the PL prior to RAC review.
- Resources furnished by the Center, needed to complete a project, which are in addition to those allocated by the RAC, will be recharged to the PL.
- The RAC's approval, allocation, and estimated amount of recharge will be communicated to the PL following the RAC meeting. The PL shall acknowledge the RAC's decision and agree to any conditions or amendments to the project before any work can begin on the project.
- The RAC's non-approval of a project will be communicated to the PL in a timely manner following the RAC meeting with a brief explanation of why the project was not approved.
- Any substantive change in a RAC-approved project will require RAC review.

## **THE ROLE OF RAC MEMBERS**

- **RAC Chair** - Conduct the meetings to insure efficient, respectful and equitable process; work with Center Director to develop agenda and meeting format; responsible for official correspondence from RAC; and limited authority for approving projects in off-cycle process.

- **Center Director** - Recording Secretary for the RAC; initiates call for project proposals, receives project proposals; reviews for completeness, and distributes to RAC members; work with Chair to develop agenda and meeting format, sets meeting dates and distributes agenda; work with Chair to develop and distribute RAC correspondence; maintains current RAC membership roster including length of service and date for rotation off of committee; and limited authority for approving projects in off-cycle process.
- **Voting Members** - Open, frank, and active participation.
- **Ex-Officio Members** - Ex-officio members are non-voting members, but are expected to actively participate in all committee discussions and deliberations.

## **ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL RAC MEETING**

- Order of Business
  - Review Agenda
    - [Draft Template Agenda](#)
  - Review proposed projects
  - Review three-year review projects
  - Allocate available resources to approved projects
    - [Available Labor for RAC Allocation Worksheet](#)
    - [RAC Allocation Spreadsheet](#)
  - Other business
- Where possible, assuming there are no conflicts or impacts to other projects, Center Director makes facility and land assignments before RAC meeting.
- Center Director reviews the projects and meets with PL to resolve obvious problems and limitations before the RAC meeting.
- Continuing and completed projects should be placed on a consent agenda (items approved as a block at the beginning of the meeting) unless review of specific project(s) is requested by a RAC member, or others as appropriate.
- Center Director shall record meeting minutes
  - [Draft Template for Meeting Minutes](#)

## **OFF-CYCLE RAC PROCESS**

[Research Project Proposals](#) and [Annual Request for Land, Labor and Facilities](#) forms submitted to the RAC outside of the normal project proposal process (including projects submitted late or incomplete) are considered to be Off-Cycle projects. These projects will be considered if the PL requests that the project start during the current program year. The following minimum process will be followed:

- Center Director will review the project to determine whether there are Center

resources available to begin the project. Center labor hours are not normally available off cycle.

- Center Director, with concurrence of the RAC Chair and the PL, may temporarily approve a project based on the following:
  - Proposed project would have no adverse impact on other approved projects.
  - The requested land and facilities resource is available.
  - PL agrees to furnish or be recharged for the direct cost of all or a portion of the required material and labor for the current program year.
  - The project must be submitted for full RAC review during the next regular project review cycle, and the fact that the project has begun will not prejudice the RAC in their review of the project.
- Center Director, RAC Chair, or PL may request a full RAC review of the project. RAC may:
  - Review the project at an off-cycle meeting or via correspondence for the current program year. The project must be resubmitted for RAC review as a new project during the next regular cycle.
  - Allocate available resources.
  - PL agrees to be recharged for the cost of all material and labor, for the current program year, in addition to the allocation.
- New [Research Project Proposals](#) and [Three-Year Project Review](#) submitted after the published due date, but before the RAC meeting, may be reviewed by the RAC during the regular meeting only if the Center and RAC have had adequate time to properly review the project. These projects may receive a reduced allocation.
- Continuing project required forms submitted after the published due date, but before the RAC meeting, may receive a reduced allocation.

## **RAC PROCESS - SPECIFIC CENTER PROCEDURES**

Each Center will maintain Center specific RAC procedures that have been adopted by the RAC and approved by the REC Director. The Center procedures will include the following minimum information:

- Project submittal procedures and dates
- Project review and allocation criteria
- Off-cycle procedures
- Procedure for orientation of new RAC members

# DRAFT TEMPLATE

## AGENDA

\_\_\_\_\_ RESEARCH & EXTENSION CENTER  
RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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*Confidential*

- Introduction of new RAC Members *(if any)*
- Review/Approve Agenda *(requires RAC action)*
- Review/Approve Minutes *(requires RAC action)*
- Review RAC Process and Procedures
  - Meeting Procedures
  - Approval Criteria
  - Allocation Criteria
- Presentations by Project Leaders *(if any)*
- Project Reviews - New and Third Year *(requires RAC action)*
- Center Director's Report on Continuing Projects *(possible RAC action)*
- Center Director's Report on Availability of Resources
- Resource Allocation *(requires RAC action)*
- Old Business
- New Business

\_\_\_\_\_ RESEARCH & EXTENSION CENTER  
AVAILABLE LABOR FOR RAC ALLOCATION  
WORKSHEET

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**ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES** (NOTE #2) \_\_\_\_\_

**LEAVE/TRAINING/PROF. DEV.** \_\_\_\_\_

**OMP** (NOTE #3) \_\_\_\_\_

**OUTREACH/EXTENSION** \_\_\_\_\_

**RESEARCH SUPPORT** (NOTE #4) \_\_\_\_\_

**RAC PROJECT (allocated)** \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL LABOR DISTRIBUTION =** \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTES:**

1. Does not include Center Director
2. Includes office staff time on business services, financial and human resources
3. Includes supervision, EH&S, buildings and grounds maintenance, utilities, janitorial, residence and dorm maintenance
4. Includes supervision, EH&S, uniform crop, non-chargeable farming, general animal care, field maintenance, vehicle/equipment maintenance, and any other project support not chargeable to a project



# DRAFT TEMPLATE

## MEETING MINUTES

\_\_\_\_\_ RESEARCH & EXTENSION CENTER

RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### Attendance and Introduction of New RAC Members *(if any)*

The Center Director/RAC Chair welcomed new member(s).

RAC Members Present: **List attendees**

RAC Member(s) Absent: **List absentee(s)**

Other(s) Present: **List attendee(s)**

### Review Agenda

The Center Director/RAC Chair presented and reviewed the agenda. (Final agenda is attached)

**ACTION:** RAC-Approved Agenda

### Review/Approve Minutes

The Center Director/RAC Chair asked the committee for comments, clarification(s) or change(s) to the minutes from the previous meeting, dated \_\_\_\_\_.

**List clarification(s)/change(s) approved by RAC.**

**ACTION:** Previous meeting minutes, dated \_\_\_\_\_ were reviewed and approved **[with changes] or [as written]**.

### Review RAC Procedures

Reviewed the RAC process and procedures as refresher for the existing members **[and as an orientation for the new member(s)].**

## Project Presentations by Project Leaders

The following Project Leaders presented their projects as follows:

Project Leader	Project No. & Title	Comments (if any)

## Project Reviews – New and Third Year *(requires RAC action)*

Project No. & Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved    Approved w/Condition(s)    Not Approved

Condition of Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for "No" Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments from the RAC: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Center Director's Report on Continuing Projects *(possible RAC action)*

**Center Director reported on availability of resources, hours available for allocation, and other resource issues.**

## Resource Allocation *(requires RAC action)*

**Project No., Project Title, and hours allocated  
- or - See attached spreadsheet.**

- **Comment on allocations.**

## Old/New Business

**Complete information**