Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County

Section: Employment Matters
Subject: Conferral of Title
Policy: System
Code: 316
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Policy Statement:
Under New York State County Law 224 and relationship with the United States Department of Agriculture, Cornell University serves as agent for the state for the cooperative management of county and regional Cooperative Extension Associations. This law grants the responsibility upon Cornell University to set standards and properly oversee professional staff. To fulfill its obligation under applicable statutes, laws and agreements, the Director of Extension confers the title of professional educators, upon employment by the Cornell Cooperative Extension Association, in the following classifications:

- Association Executive Director
- Association Program Director
- Association Issue Leader
- Association Senior Educator
- Association Team Leader
- Association Senior Resource Educator
- Association Resource Educator

A current conferred title in the appropriate classification is required for all county association professional staff classified as listed above. Cornell Cooperative Extension professional titles will expire automatically upon separation of employment from the extension association, promotion to a new title or transfer to another association. The title of Executive Director must be renewed at least every 4 years. Professional title may also be terminated at any time, for any reason, via written communication from the Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension to the employee and Executive Director. Conferral of title is not employment. However, it is a system standard that anyone in certain professional educator positions is required to have a current title conferred by the Director of Extension.

Background:
County Law 224 of the State of New York requires Cornell University to serve as agent for the state for the cooperative management of county and regional Cooperative Extension associations and the proper supervision of professional staff. That law confers on Cornell the responsibility to set standards for all professional staff. The memorandum of agreement between Cornell
University and the United States Department of Agriculture obligates Cornell to assume responsibility for the conduct of educational work authorized by Smith-Lever and other acts and USDA programs. Conferral of Title recognizes an individual’s connection to the state extension system and is separate from the employment of the individual with the association. Title may be terminated at any time for any reason, including the individual’s not meeting the professional or performance standards expected of extension educators.

**Limitations and Requirements:**
Conferral of title from the Director of Extension shall be granted upon the initial employment of a professional educator by an association. For Executive Directors, conferral of title must be renewed at least every 4 years as part of the in-depth review process.

**In-Depth Review:**
At least every four years, in lieu of the required annual performance review process, the association will schedule and conduct an in-depth review of the professional educator. The in-depth review shall include, at a minimum:

- Evaluation of the educator's body of work over time
- Professional standards and credentials
- A survey of stakeholders including at least two faculty or associates employed by Cornell University.
- A Plan of Work covering the next review period.

Documentation of the assessment shall be maintained by the association and will be periodically audited by extension administration. The Director of Extension may request certification from the Executive Director that annual performance reviews and in-depth reviews have been completed. Performance or other issues that arise from the in-depth review should be communicated to the Director of Extension and the appropriate State Extension Specialist.

For the Executive Director the appropriate State Extension Specialist will be involved in the in-depth review process. This must occur at least every 4 years and include action by the association board on whether or not to request renewal of professional title by the Director of Extension.