



# UTAH FFA ASSOCIATION

## State Officer Selection Process Handbook



**Growing Leaders**

**Building Communities**

**Strengthening Agriculture**



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## Introduction

Each year, the Utah FFA Association selects six student members to represent the organization as a state FFA officer. Throughout the year, these State officers wear a variety of hats. State officers are elected officials expected to represent the student membership during meetings with the advisory board. They teach various leadership skills to Chapter FFA officers and chapter members through individual workshops or as facilitators of State FFA leadership conferences. They are motivational speakers who inspire FFA members. They are communicators and public relations specialists for FFA, building positive relationships across the state. They are teammates to each other and to FFA staff. They are learners, eager to grow and fulfill their responsibilities.

Selecting the six best candidates, as defined by the FFA constitution and bylaws, is a challenging task for the eleven members of the nominating committee. To facilitate this committee's success in accomplishing the organization's goals, a process exists – the State FFA Officer Selection Process. This handbook details that process.

There are six sections to the handbook. All the information is valuable, and we encourage current candidates, chapter advisors and prospective candidates to give everything careful consideration.

### SECTION 1 – JOB DESCRIPTION

The primary responsibility of a State officer is to serve. When you become a state officer, you agree to dedicate one year of your life to service with the organization. Your year of service as a State officer is one of profound growth—you will change in ways you never imagined. This may be the greatest personal benefit of serving as a State officer, along with knowing that you alone make a positive difference in the lives of thousands of FFA members, advisors, partners, state leaders and others.

If you are elected to serve the organization as a State officer, a great deal will be expected of you. A State officer's schedule resembles that of a business professional, traveling more than 10,000 miles and meeting thousands of new people. Many people—including state and National FFA staff and, most of all FFA members—will require your time and talents. There will be little time left to call your own.

Midnight bedtimes and early mornings become a part of your everyday life. It will be a challenging year full of joys and discomforts—with the joys far outweighing the discomforts. Decide now if you are up for this challenge. If you would rather live the life of a college student — follow your own schedule, see your friends and watch television—State office is not going to be a good fit for you.



## State Officer Roles and Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of a State officer is to serve the organization in local, state, and national activities in a way that will inform, motivate and inspire FFA members, advisors, teachers and others to achieve the mission, strategies and core goals of the organization.

### State Officer Job Description

Being elected to State office is making a commitment to service that is unique to most student organizations. In addition to serving and representing more than seven thousand FFA members, you will represent the image and direction of the organization to teachers, advisors, teacher educators, agriculture executives, government leaders, the media and the general public. You will also be a teammate to five other officers and a co-worker to State FFA staff.

There are eight roles State officers play. Those who commit their time, energies and passions toward learning, living and modeling these eight keys to success will not only successfully complete their term of service, they will move toward excellence professionally. The following is a summary of each of the roles, along with already-established procedures that will help you achieve success.

#### BE THE BRAND

State FFA officers are committed to representing and upholding the FFA brand. This includes communicating the FFA brand, vision and strategic plan to others as well as communicating key organizational messages (agricultural education, supervised agricultural experiences (SAEs), FFA, youth issues and agriculture). This requires the officer to be in his or her role 24 hours a day, seven days a week for 365 days. As part of the FFA brand, there will be general rules of behavior to follow, including projecting a professional image, using proper etiquette, interacting positively with the media, and promoting diversity of all FFA members and stakeholders.

1. Be dedicated and committed to FFA and the total program of education in agriculture/agribusiness.
2. Forego all alcohol, tobacco and illegal substances at all times during your year of service to FFA.
3. Avoid places or activities that in any way would raise questions as to one's moral character or conduct.
4. Use wholesome and appropriate language in all speeches and informal conversations.
5. Maintain proper dress and good grooming for all occasions.
6. Be willing to take and follow instructions as directed by those responsible for State FFA officers and State programs.

#### BALANCING ACT

A State FFA officer must also include personal health, wellness and stress management as keys to success. A State officer committed to these will position himself or herself to serve FFA members fully. Included in this commitment are flexibility/adaptability; personal reflection and growth; maintaining relationships with family and friends; keeping a realistic view of self; and preparing to transition back after your year of service.

1. Maintain and protect your health.
2. Regularly, and on time, write all letters, thank-you notes, emails and other correspondence, which are necessary and desirable.

#### STEP UP TO THE PLATE

Training and experiences will help officers gain confidence in their abilities and take measured risks. To achieve this, a State officer must be committed to trying new things, approaching failure as a learning experience, building team trust and resolving conflict.

1. Accept and search out constructive criticism and evaluation of your total performance.
2. Through preparation and practice, develop yourself into an effective public speaker and project a desirable image of FFA at all times.



## THIS IS IT

The training and experiences in this area center on life and time management. An officer should excel in these areas, so that he or she will be better able to give his or her full concentration and focus on the present. This includes:

- Logistics management (use of computer and technology, appropriate management of travel, completing vouchers properly and submitting on-time and excellent communication with teammates and staff).
- Meeting management (creating and following agendas, consensus building, bringing people back to task and keeping focus).
- Life management (prioritizing, meeting deadlines and timeliness).
- Financial management (maintaining your personal finances and understanding and following program budgets).
- Focus (listening and bridging — connecting conversation topics to FFA key messages/programs).
- Team (understanding roles on the team, following the team code of ethics, and following the team mission and vision).
  1. Commit the entire year to State officer activities.
  2. Travel and serve the State FFA.
  3. Consider FFA officer activities to be your primary responsibility.

## PAY IT FORWARD

Service is an important component to an officer's year. The training and experiences will help make service more realistic to you and will help you approach the year of service with a plan. This includes focusing on the future value of your current work (board work, business and industry tours, state FFA convention, etc.); building strategic relationships/partnerships; treating everyone with respect; teaching workshops in an engaging manner and teaching to meet all learner needs (learning abilities, diversity, etc.).

1. Strive to improve your ability to carry on meaningful and enjoyable conversations with individuals of all ages and walks of life.
2. Treat all FFA members equally by not favoring one over another.
3. Conduct yourself in a manner that commands respect without any display of superiority.
4. Maintain your dignity while being personable, concerned and interested in contacts with others.

## LIVE ABOVE THE LINE

This focuses on virtues and behavioral characteristics associated with a State officer. These include responsibility, integrity, keeping promises, speaking with purpose (communicate in a positive, honest and direct way), dealing in a constructive way with difficult people/teammates and seeking win-win solutions.

1. Evaluate periodically your personality and attitudes, making every effort to improve yourself.
2. Serve as a member of the team, always maintaining a cooperative attitude.
3. Work in harmony with fellow FFA officers and State staff.
4. Do not willingly engage in conversations detrimental to other FFA members, officers and adults.



## LEARNING FOR LIFE

This focuses on the importance of learning throughout the officer year in several subjects. Developmental topics will include communicating about agricultural education, the history and foundation of FFA and the future directions of FFA, the U.S./Utah Department of Agriculture, U.S./Utah Department of Education, etc. In addition, State FFA officers will learn advanced workshop and speech design and delivery methods. We know how important knowledge of yourself and your team members will allow you to perform more efficiently and effectively as an officer.

1. Become knowledgeable of agriculture, education in agriculture/agribusiness and FFA.
2. Keep yourself up-to-date on current events.

## FUEL THE FIRE

This focuses on passion. To achieve this, a State officer will discover and build on their personal interests and passions. The officer will use the team's passions to develop themes and will learn to share his or her passion by building individual and team relationships with teachers and state staff and through effective delivery speeches and keynote addresses.

## Officer Experience At-a-Glance

The following activities will consume the workload of the State officers' year of service. Adequate time will be provided for training, preparation, evaluation, self-improvement, relationships, rejuvenation and team building. This list is not entirely comprehensive, as several meetings are planned around the officer team's schedules.

Task	Month(s)	Time
State Officer Orientation	March or April	3 days
State Officer Training	June	1.5 weeks
Training Experience (and Preparation)	July	2 weeks
Chapter Officer Leadership Training	July	6 days
Business and Industry Visits	August-October	2 weeks
Officer Team Planning Retreat	August	3 days
Chapter Visits	August-November	12 weeks
State Fair	September	12 days
Area Leadership Training	September	2 days
National FFA Convention	October	1 week
Area Leadership Conferences	December	6 days
Industry Conferences	November & January	4 days
Area Contests	January	3 days
FFA Week	February	1 week
Convention Planning Week #1	November	3 days
Convention Planning Week #2	January	1 week
Convention Planning Week #3	February	1 week
Final Convention Prep	March	1 week
State FFA Convention	March	1 week
Officer Capstone Experience	March	3 days



## Attending College—Is it Right for Me?

We know how important continuing your education is, and we understand that there are certain scholarships that may not be able to be deferred so you will not be told that you cannot attend school during your year as a State officer. However, a few things should be taken into consideration before making a final decision about enrolling in any post-secondary schooling.

- 1- With the growing number of members and chapters in the Utah FFA Association, chapter visits and other responsibilities take more and more time every year. With well over 25 chapters assigned to each officer, chapter visit days are common, and off days are few and far between, especially during the first few months of the school year.
- 2- If you do decide to attend school, a block schedule is the only way you will be able to navigate and fulfill your officer responsibilities along with school. A Monday, Wednesday, Friday OR Tuesday, Thursday schedule is manageable but you are not advised to schedule courses for every day of the week.
- 3- Online courses are available and more flexible, but do keep in mind that they still require a large time commitment.
- 4- There **will** be days that you will be required to miss class.
- 5- Credit hours can be awarded to officers who choose to attend Utah State University (3 per semester).
- 6- Officers in the past have chosen to attend college, take online courses, and defer for the year. There is no right or wrong answer. Officer candidates are encouraged to discuss this decision and glean advice from their advisors and parents to help them make a decision upon election.



## Policies and Procedures Guiding State Officer Responsibilities

### Policies Regarding State Officers Roles and Responsibilities

The following is an excerpt from the State Officer Candidate Application (officer commitment form), approved by the Utah FFA Advisory Board. A commitment form is to be reviewed and signed by all candidates who submit an application for State office. The State officer manager, with support from FFA staff, will uphold the expectations outlined on the form. This form is built into the application process.

Being elected to State office is making a commitment to service that is unique to most student organizations. In addition to serving and representing more than 7,000 FFA members, you will represent the image and direction of the State FFA Organization to teachers, state staff, teacher educators, agriculture executives, government leaders, the media and the general public. You will also be a teammate to five other officers and a co-worker to State FFA staff.

#### QUALIFICATIONS AND PREREQUISITES

State Officers are required to participate on a very time consuming and continuous basis. Those aspiring to become officers must be highly qualified, able and willing to perform. Read and study the following rules, qualifications and prerequisites carefully. If, without reservations, you will be fully able to obey the following rules and carry out the role and responsibilities of a State FFA Officer; then sign this form and return it behind the completed State FFA Officer Application Form to the State FFA Executive Director.

#### ROLE OF A STATE FFA OFFICER

In order for present and future members of the state officer team, as well as chapter and state staff and the membership at large, to have an understanding of the state officers' role, the following major areas of responsibility are assumed by all elected state officers:

- 1 The state officer shall be a member of various boards which fulfill the governance functions of the Utah FFA Association.
- 2 The state officer shall execute the Utah FFA Association Program of Activities and shall assist the chapters in the execution of their program of activities.
- 3 The state officer shall be a disseminator of specific agricultural education and FFA information to the membership.
- 4 The state officer motivates, inspires, and encourages FFA members to participate in agricultural education and FFA programs. They assist members in their advancement of agricultural knowledge and development of leadership abilities.
- 5 The state officer shall maintain positive relationships with members, agribusiness organizations, educational organizations, personnel within the agribusiness sector, the public, and others interested in agricultural education.
- 6 The state officer shall project a positive image as a leader among American youth representing those qualities members and society accept as a life style role model.

#### STATE FFA OFFICER COMMITMENTS

If elected to State FFA Office I will carry out my responsibilities in accordance with all of the following statements. I understand that I may be removed from office by the FFA Advisory Board if I do not adhere to these established standards.

I will:

- 1 Be totally dedicated to the programs of Agricultural Education, SAE, and the FFA.
- 2 Be willing to commit the necessary time to state officer activities, realizing that your FFA duties will come before any other personal activities. This will include a great deal of time away from employment.
- 3 Be willing and able to travel in serving the state association.
- 4 Become knowledgeable of the SAE program, the FFA and the many opportunities available in the field of Agriculture as well as keeping up to date on current local and national events.
- 5 Work diligently through preparation and practice to develop effective public speaking skills and project a desirable image of FFA at all times.
- 6 Seek constructive criticism and evaluation of my performance. Constantly evaluate my personality and attitudes, making every effort to improve myself.
- 7 Serve as a member of the **TEAM**, always maintaining a cooperative attitude.
- 8 Take and follow instructions from those responsible for me.
- 9 Complete the goals of the FFA Officer Team.

Further more, I understand that I **WILL** be removed from office, by the FFA Advisory Board, if I do not completely adhere to the

I will:

- 1 Be free of military or other full time commitments that would interfere with my year in office.
- 2 Be regular, and on time, write all letters, thank-you notes, reports and other correspondence which are necessary and desirable.
- 3 Not become married or engaged during my term of office.
- 4 Follow the State Officer Code of Ethics:

- A. Not use any alcohol, tobacco or illegal substances during my term of state office.
  - B. Treat all FFA members equally by not favoring one over another.
  - C. Behave in a manner which conveys and commands respect without any air of superiority.
  - D. Maintain dignity while being personable, concerned and interested in my fellow citizens.
  - E. Avoid places or activities which in any way would raise questions as to my moral character or conduct.
  - F. Consider girl or boy friends secondary to officer responsibilities.
  - G. Use wholesome language in all speeches and informal conversations.
  - H. Maintain proper dress and good grooming for all occasions.
  - I. Avoid participation in, and actively discourage conversations which belittle or downgrade fellow FFA members, officers and adults.
  - J. Realize that you represent the Utah FFA Association at all times not just while on official business.
5. Attend and assist in planning and conducting all of the following required FFA activities.
- A. State FFA Career Development Events  
Officer Training Activities (*State Officer Training, CTSO Leadership Training Institute, State Officer Continuum*)
  - B. State Officer Summit (*President & Vice-President only*)
  - C. Summer Chapter Officer Leadership Training Camps
  - D. Utah State Fair
  - E. National FFA Convention
  - F. Area Leadership Conferences
  - G. State FFA Convention
  - H. State Officer Meetings (at least monthly)
  - I. Chapter Visits (25 or more visits to chapter activities/classroom visits)
  - J. Additional activities as assigned by the State Advisor/Executive Director or by the State Officer Team.



## State FFA Officer Policies and Procedures

### Expenses and Reporting

A State officer will find that many requests will be made of him/her to travel and participate in activities. It is important that the officer understand the travel process.

**Funded by State FFA** is travel authorized by the Utah FFA Association and generally includes participation in FFA activities on a state, regional or National level. This travel is assigned, thus funded by the State FFA Association. This travel generally includes state activities, leadership conferences, banquets, field days, contests, fairs, school visits or camps.

Reimbursement forms need to be clear, accurate and complete. The State Executive Director will review all expense reports, discuss items of concern with the individual officer and make adjustments if necessary. If the report must be entirely re-done, it will be returned to the officer to be done correctly and re-submitted.

Receipts must be attached to each report to substantiate all expenditures. A receipt must accompany every expense that is recorded on the report, with the exception of mileage. If a receipt does not accompany the expense, the expense may not be reimbursed.

Mileage will be reimbursed at \$0.25 per mile up to 10,000 miles. This includes official use of an officer's privately owned automobile to travel to and from official events. All officers must have current car insurance and registration.

### Technology

FFA will make available to each officer the appropriate computer hardware (size and composition suitable for easy traveling), software and email accessibility to allow for electronic communication with each other, FFA members, and advisors.

Each State officer is provided an FFA-issued laptop with all expenses covered. The officer is responsible for any loss or damage to the laptop. The FFA-issued laptop must be returned at the end of his or her year.

### Officer Correspondence

Trip reports on all chapter, regional and state activities are to be submitted on the appropriate form monthly. State officers are to report on noteworthy programs, activities, concerns, general comments and information that will be helpful for the next team of State officers in preparing for the event.

The Executive Director will confirm or decline requests made by individuals, groups, businesses, and chapters for a State officer visit. All follow-up correspondence and communication regarding the event will become the responsibility of the State officer(s) assigned.

Prompt reply to correspondence is a must. Officers should be a credit to themselves and FFA, being neat and using good form.

Follow-up notes of congratulations and encouragement are a must. Officers should note names and addresses of FFA members, advisors, sponsors and others with whom he/she wishes to follow up. Officers should be generous in this endeavor and send out notes frequently. A system should be maintained for keeping and remembering the names of those to whom correspondence is sent.

The officers will check their FFA email daily.



## Officer Uniform and Other Supplies

The State FFA Association shall provide to each State officer, at no expense, the following items:

1. Within one month of election, each officer will receive the following
  - One pair of khaki pants
  - One FFA polo shirt
  - Two sponsored button-up shirts (dependent on sponsors)
  - One white shirt or blouse
  - One black pair of slacks or skirts
  - One to two pairs of black dress shoes depending upon wear
  - One official FFA jacket
  - One scarf or tie if needed
  - A laptop
  - Adequate supply of basic office supplies
  - Adequate supply of official stationery, envelopes, business cards, FFA thank-you notes and FFA holiday cards as requested by officer



## State Officer Competencies

What does it take to perform this job effectively? FFA has identified five competencies required for fulfilling the job description of a State officer.

Competency — a defined behavior, in combination with skills and knowledge, that enables evaluation of the candidates.

The following is a listing of the essential competencies required for serving as a State officer. The officer selection process is designed to screen candidates to find those who demonstrate these competencies consistently. It is expected that officers continue to demonstrate these and also work to develop and refine their skill set in each area throughout their year of service. The competencies are listed in no particular order.

### **Competency #1 — Communication**

Demonstrates the effective use of various forms of communication, i.e., nonverbal, listening, written, speaking and facilitation to convey a message in both large group and one-on-one settings.

### **Competency #2 — Team Player**

Demonstrates the ability to work in a team setting, values diversity of opinion, works to be inclusive in the process and is willing to put others above self.

### **Competency #3 — Areas of Knowledge**

Demonstrates the ability to articulate the systemic nature of food, fiber, agricultural and natural resources issues, FFA, educational issues and all respective current issues.

### **Competency #4 — Character**

Displays a disposition that is genuine, responsible, honest, mature, confident, respectful and has a positive outlook on life.

### **Competency #5 — Influence**

Demonstrates the ability to influence others through modeling expectations, building relationships and growing the organization.



## SECTION 2 - GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR STATE OFFICER SELECTION PROCESS

After reading Section 1, you know the roles and responsibilities State officers play, the competencies required of each individual selected for this job and the policies that guide their functioning. This section will orient you to the principles, objectives and philosophy that guide the group of individuals that are responsible for selecting the officer team. It would be simple to say that the only purpose of this process is to elect six State officers to serve the membership of the State FFA Association. However, it is more complex than that. The selection process is a tremendous experience for more than the six candidates elected to State office.

The Utah FFA Association sees the selection process as a tremendous experience for all candidates and nominating committee members involved.

This process most certainly impacts lives for all involved. Though the results of the process may be most apparent for six of the candidates, the benefits of being involved in such an endeavor will most certainly be realized for all involved for many years to come.

Such a process must be guided by a core philosophy. The process is also greatly influenced by the constitution and a set of policies enacted by our advisory board to ensure fairness to all involved during the selection process.

### Philosophy and Objectives for State Officer Selection Process

#### Guiding Objectives for State Officer Selection Process

The primary goal of the State officer selection process is to select the six best student representatives for the Utah FFA Association as outlined by the constitution and bylaws.

We accomplish this goal through:

- Selecting and developing a highly qualified student nominating committee.
- Using a structured process to identify and surface the six candidates who most reflect the competencies required by the role of State officer.

A secondary goal of the State officer selection process is to provide a State leadership experience to eleven students selected for service on the nominating committee.

We accomplish this goal through:

- Employing a fair and transparent process for the current State officers to select this group of students.
- Engaging the nominating committee in a professional interviewing experience.
- Providing the nominating committee members with access to high quality learning and development experiences.

Another secondary goal of the State officer selection process is to provide all officer candidates with a positive developmental experience.

We accomplish this goal through:

- Employing a fair and transparent process for all candidates.
- Providing all candidates access to current and relevant resources in preparing for the selection process.
- Providing all candidates with a current, relevant and challenging interviewing experience during State convention.



## Guiding Principles for Structuring the Selection Process

Those revising the State officer selection process for 2018 did so with the following guiding principles in mind:

### Overall

- Maintain student officer authority in selecting the nominating committee.
- Maintain student committee authority in selecting the six State officers.
- Provide systems, parameters and resources to support student officers and student committee members in carrying out their role.
- Distribute resources, opportunities and information regarding the selection processes among all chapters.
- Create growth opportunities for a larger group of student members.

### Nominating Committee

- Select nominating committee members using a rigorous process that results in highly qualified committees.
- Equip members of the nominating committee with the right knowledge and tools to select quality State officers.
- Ensure that training of the committee is rigorous and equips the committee to execute flawlessly the task of selecting State FFA officers.

### State Officer Candidates

- Familiarize candidates with roles and responsibilities of a State office, outline selection process and provide direction for preparation.
- Evaluate all candidates on a common, well defined and agreed upon set of competencies identified through research.
- Determine the top candidates overall early in the selection process, instituting a cut, if needed
- Improve the quality of time spent evaluating the top candidates if a cut is made and overall, as individuals perform realistic State officer activities.



## Board Policies and Constitutional Provisions

The State FFA Officer Selection Process is provided for by the Utah FFA State Constitution. Policies established by the State FFA Advisory board are in place to guide the selection process in an effort to ensure fairness to all involved.

### Constitutional Provisions for State Officer Selection Process

The State FFA Constitution outlines specific features of the State officer selection process.

#### Article VII. Officers and Procedures for Election

##### Section A

1. The officers of the State Association shall consist of a President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter, Sentinel, and Advisor. The State Specialist for agricultural education shall assume the responsibilities of State Advisor. An Executive Secretary/Treasurer may also be named, where necessary, by the State Advisor, subject to the approval of the State Executive Committee. Only members who hold the State FFA Degree and are at least in their final year of high school at the time of running for state office may hold an office in the State Association.
2. The six State FFA Officer candidates, selected by the official nominating committee, will be elected by a majority vote of the delegates present at a regular state convention of the Utah FFA Association.

##### Nominating Process:

A nominating committee consisting of eleven official State convention delegates—one chairperson selected at large and two from each of the ten areas if possible—shall study and review the qualifications of each eligible candidate. This committee shall submit its nominations to the delegates assembled at the State convention.

State FFA officers shall serve from one State convention through the next succeeding State convention and shall not be reelected, nor be eligible for election to another State office.

### Policies Regarding State Officer Selection

The following policies are excerpted from the Utah FFA Association Policy and Procedure Handbook. These policies deal directly with candidate eligibility, restrictions and selection at the state level.

#### Restrictions on Candidates

The practice of soliciting support for a candidate for State FFA office is not permitted.

#### Selection at the Chapter Level

A chapter may recommend only one candidate for State FFA office each year.

#### Eligibility

- Each State officer candidate shall be an active FFA member and eligible to retain active membership in the organization until the member completes the term of office.



## SECTION 3 - THE SELECTION PROCESS

Selecting six officers is no easy task.

The process is more rigorous than many interviews you will encounter in your professional life. In it lies a tremendous opportunity for personal and career growth. Preparation for the process begins months in advance — some would argue that it begins when you become an FFA member. One thing is certain: The process will certainly provide an adequate test of your ability to serve in the capacities outlined.

The competencies explained above are evaluated in a number of different ways ranging from your performance on a writing exercise to your performance with real stakeholders in an interview setting.

The selection process provides a method to carry out this important task. All the details are provided for your help in preparing. It may be cliché, but ask most past State officers — regardless of what you know about each round — what is most important to your success: Staying true to yourself!

### Nomination, Application and Submission Procedures

**Submit the application in final form by January 15<sup>th</sup> by 11:59 p.m.**

#### The Application

The application will be reviewed and scored by the committee and can be used as evidence during the deliberation process. It is suggested that candidates should complete large text field portions of the application in a word processing program to establish formatting, run spell check and ask trusted mentors to review and provide feedback. Once all entries are finalized, copy and paste the text into the appropriate fields in the application.



The application is online and submitted electronically. There are six sections to the application.

### 1 – Candidate Personal Information

This section collects general contact information used by State FFA for communication throughout the process, as well as to create press releases and online and printed materials.

### 2– High School Information

This section collects information used by the State FFA for validating eligibility and for scoring purposes.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Each State officer candidate shall be an active FFA member and eligible to retain active membership in the organization until the member completes the term of office. **PLEASE double check with your advisor that you will qualify for ACTIVE membership during your term in office, should you be elected.**

### 3– Leadership Activities

This section collects information regarding your leadership activities both inside and outside of FFA.

### 4 & 5 – SAE Program & Future Plans

These sections collect information regarding your SAE projects, a one-year plan, and school leader recommendations.

### 6– Commit Form & Recommendations

The State Officer Commitment form must be read thoroughly and signed. It will then need to be uploaded to the bottom of the online application along with your school leader recommendations.

### 7– Essay

The essay question should be answered in 500 words or less and be submitted as a PDF. Essay will be uploaded online in this section.



## Interview Rounds and Procedures

The interview process is divided into six main sections. They may or may not be completed in this order.

1. Personal Round I
2. Writing Exercise (test and writing prompt)
3. One-on-One Interview round
4. Advocacy Stand and Deliver practicum (extemporaneous speech).
5. Workshop Facilitation I and II
6. Personal Round II (may not be necessary)

A cut may be instituted if the Nominating Committee feels as though they need to focus on a smaller group of individuals. This will be dependent on the number of candidates.

At the end of the interview process, the nominating committee will utilize the data collected to make evidence-based decisions in forming a slate of six State officers. The process for deliberation is outlined in this section.

## State Officer Selection Process

The following explains each of the scored rounds in the process in detail. The eleven student nominating committee members will evaluate candidates' performance using the competencies such as: Communication, Team Player, Areas of Knowledge, Character and Influence.

### Personal Round I

In this six-eight minute one-on-eleven format interview, candidates should capitalize on this time by making their first impression a lasting impression. The nominating committee will create a personalized question for each candidate directly from his or her application to assist with getting to know the candidate better. In addition, candidates can expect to answer three or four behavioral-based interview questions posed by the nominating committee and to expound on their goals, motivations and/or desire to be a State officer. Candidates should be able to share who they are and why they are here as a result of this round.

### Writing Exercise (Written test and writing prompt)

Candidates will take a written test on topics relevant to agriculture, FFA, Parliamentary Procedure, and the American education system. They will also be given a writing prompt such as a thank you card, newspaper article, or social media post.

### One-on-One Interview

This round will consist of eleven 5-minute interviews, each with a different member of the nominating committee. The interview is focused on two objectives. First, this is an opportunity for individual committee members to develop rapport and get to know candidates in a one-on-one setting. Second, this will provide an opportunity for evaluation of several targeted competencies through structured questions and follow-up questions. For each of the eleven interviews, should a candidate finish early, he or she should remain seated; it is encouraged the candidate and committee member have casual conversation with each other until the adult consultant calls time. Once the adult consultants call time, the candidate should end their conversation and leave the interview room.

Advocacy Stand and Deliver



This round will be 30 minutes in length.

- Twenty minutes are given to candidates to plan, organize and prepare a spoken presentation.
- The topic will be related to either FFA or agricultural education areas of knowledge and will be up to the committee to decide which topic area.
- Five minutes focused on the candidate's ability to deliver spoken presentation.
- Five minutes focused on the candidate's ability to respond accurately to questions regarding topic and presentation.

Candidates will have 20 minutes in a private preparation room to prepare for delivering a five-minute speech on either FFA or the American/agricultural education system. When preparing their speech, candidates should plan as if they are advocating for this topic and its supporting ideas. When candidates arrive to the preparation room, they will receive the topic and instructions regarding the setting and audience to which the speech will be directed. Candidates will have a full 20 minutes to formulate their remarks. No materials will be allowed in the room during this time other than a pad of paper and a pen, which will be provided.

Candidates will promptly move from the preparation room to the interview room to deliver their five-minute speech. Regardless of where the candidates are in their times, time will be called at the end of five minutes. Candidates must stop their speech and wait for questions.

An outside expert in the area the committee selects may be in the interview room and will ask targeted content relevant questions to the candidate about their speech. Candidates have a total of five minutes to respond to the questions asked. The number of questions and nature of the questions asked by the expert will be different for each candidate during this five-minute period. Time will be called at the end of five minutes regardless of where the candidate is in his/her response. Should a candidate finish early, he or she may leave the interview room.

Committee members will be able to ask yes or no questions to the expert in the room. The expert in the room will not give their personal opinion on any speech during this round, nor will they be able to score any of the candidates or attempt to influence the committee in any way.

## **Facilitation Practicum I and II**

Practicum I: The purpose of this round is to evaluate the candidate's ability to plan and facilitate a 10-minute portion of a student workshop in a group setting. Candidates will be put into groups and given an overall objective for a workshop. The candidates will then develop and deliver a 10-minute portion of that workshop. Candidates should include an experience and opportunity to process the experience. It will be the candidate's responsibility to use the materials provided for them to plan, craft and implement appropriate methods for engaging the audience and addressing the key points. No electronic media may be used.

This round will be 25 minutes in length: Candidates will have 15 minutes to prepare and 10 minutes to facilitate. During their 15 minutes of preparation time, candidates can expect to be provided with all the materials they will need, along with a sheet of instructions outlining the specific objective for the workshop. Candidates will be observed by the Nominating Committee as they plan and prepare their workshop. Tear sheets that are created in the preparation room may be taken into the interview room. No outside materials may be taken into the preparation or interview room.

Practicum II: The purpose of this round is to evaluate the candidate's ability to plan and facilitate a 5-minute portion of a student workshop individually. The candidate will receive their topic the evening prior to facilitation.



## **Casual Activity (NOT SCORED)**

As an opportunity to build rapport, this event will be a game night type event for candidates, nominating committee members, adult consultants and State FFA staff. The event is focused on providing a setting for nominating committee members and candidates to interact outside of the interview room. The event will NOT be scored; however, the committee can use this opportunity to collect evidence on establishing a sense for candidate behavior outside of the interview room. This evidence will be allowed to be used during the deliberation process.

## **Personal Round II—Final Word**

The purpose of this interview is to ask a final set of questions developed by the committee for each candidate, as well as one standard question all candidates will answer year to year. Each candidate will have 10 minutes with all eleven of the committee members.

## **Expectations for All Rounds**

Candidates are expected to report at the scheduled group meeting time. If a candidate is not present for their scheduled time, they will forfeit their opportunity to participate and be scored for that round.

## **Scheduling of Rounds**

The creation of the interview schedule is guided by the time requirements for each round. The order of the candidate interviews within each round is determined by random assignment. In addition, breaks are scheduled between the groupings to provide the nominating committee members a chance to stretch and refresh themselves. No consideration is given FFA chapter, gender or ethnicity in the random assignment.

The interview schedule for each round will be posted in a designated area the evening before the round or given in a paper schedule to the candidate. Individual interview times will not be announced any further in advance.

## **Deliberation and Selection**

Following the final interview round, the nominating committee will take a break to relax and unwind before beginning the daunting task of selecting a slate of six officers. A considerable amount of time and thought goes in to this decision. Students are encouraged to base all decisions on evidence generated throughout the entire selection process using the data provided to them and firsthand experiences during the interview process. No outside or secondhand evidence will be discussed to provide an objective and fair view of each candidate.

## **Deliberations**

After the committee's break, Nominating Committee Adult Staff will provide a brief orientation of the score reports available for all finalist candidates from the week. Some data sources provided include:

- Scores overall
- Scores by competency
- Notes taken during application review
- Notes taken during interviews



The nominating committee makes initial recommendations for a slate of officers. Members share the recommendations and evidence that supports their decisions. From this point, much of the work is discussion-based. The emphasis on providing evidence remains the norm for making comments.

Discussions continue until a slate is finalized. Once the nominating committee members reach agreement, students sign off on a final slate of six officers and a committee report is produced.

## SECTION 4 - THE SCORING SYSTEM

To facilitate the evaluation of the competencies throughout the rounds, a scoring system is needed. This system is designed to ensure scores collected throughout the rounds are reflected in the end score and how well a candidate demonstrated the actual competencies, not just how they did in each round. This helps to ensure selection of the most qualified candidates for the job description outlined in section one. The interviewing system is designed to screen for the five effective officer competencies. This section details the scoring processes used throughout the rounds described in the previous section.

### The Scoring Scale for Each Competency

The scale used to evaluate each of the competencies is a 0-1-2-3-4-5 scale.

A score of "0" indicates "Negative or Contradictory Evidence the Skill/Attribute Is Not Present."

A score of "1" indicates "Strong Evidence the Skill/Attribute Is Not Present."

A score of "3" indicates "Some Evidence the Skill/Attribute Is Present."

A score of "5" indicates "Strong Evidence the Skill/Attribute Is Present."

This scale focuses committee members to search for verifiable evidence of the competencies.

### Competency Index

The following index reflects each competency's relative importance in the selection process.

Competency	Scoring Percentage
Communication	20%
Team Player	20%
Areas of Knowledge	20%
Character	20%
Influence	20%

The overall cumulative score will be used for determining the top 50 percent of candidates in each region and top 50 percent overall at the end of phase one. Finalists will continue to contribute to their overall cumulative score though it will not be used as an absolute determinant of who is selected.



## Scoring Calculations

The overall cumulative score is determined by a simple process.

As shown in the previous section during each round particular competencies will be evaluated using a 0-1-2-3-4-5 scale. The score recorded for each of these competencies will be entered into the scoring system.

The sum of the scores for each competency will be accumulated into an overall score after each round. An average value between 0 and 5 for each of the five competencies will be calculated. This is achieved by dividing the cumulative sum of the competency by the total number of data points collected on that competency in that round.

The overall cumulative score for each of the five competencies (a value between 0.0 and 5.0) will be multiplied by the scoring index above to determine the contribution that competency will make to the overall score (a value between 0.0 and 5.0 points).

For example, the candidate's averaged Communication score (3.59874) is multiplied by the index for this competency (20 percent) to yield an indexed score of 0.719748. This value is added to the other indexed competency scores to yield the overall score.

### NOTE

The scoring system will carry out all points to at least seven decimal places to reduce any inflation/deflation in a number that may occur as a result of rounding.

This system offers several benefits:

- First, it allows the overall cumulative score to build throughout the process.
- Second, it reduces the influence one round may have on the candidate's overall score.
- Third, it focuses the process on performance related to the competencies.

## Score Reporting

A score reporting sheet may or may not be provided to the candidate after State Convention has ended. This will be determined by the adult coordinator for the Nominating Committee.



## SECTION 5 - NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Facilitating the process outlined in the previous section requires a talented and dedicated group of individuals. Keeping with the traditions of a student-run organization, a committee of eleven FFA members is selected to carry out the responsibility of interviewing and selecting the State officer team. Being a part of this unique group requires a sense of commitment to the betterment of the organization and a heart for service. The committee will put in many hours in preparation for State Convention.

The student nominating committee is assisted by a number of adults who serve as consultants to the process and student committee. The adults involved must have a desire to see students grow. This is essential in releasing control to the student committee and allowing them to do much of the thinking. Asking questions, probing committee members' understanding, and advising when necessary, requires patience and a strong commitment to student success.

Together the student committee and the adult consultants make up an important part of the selection process. In fact, they bring the process to life and shape the look and feel for all involved. Wielding this much influence on the process requires the right people for service in the roles outlined in this section.

### Nominating Committee

Selection of the nominating committee is a critical first step in the State officer selection process. To ensure that the nominating committee is qualified to select the next year's State FFA Officer slate, specific board policies and procedures have been established to guide the selection and conduct of the nominating committee. Beyond these board policies, FFA has implemented several administrative procedures to further ensure that the nominating committee is prepared for the task of selecting the State officers.

### Nomination, Application and Submission Procedures

FFA Members apply to be on the Nominating Committee by filling out a written application. There is no limit to the number of nominations a chapter can submit, but the following restrictions are in place:

1. The committee will consist of at least one member from each area, and should not be selected from chapters that have state officer candidates unless necessary to meet the required number of quality committee members.
2. Nominating Committee members should be FFA members who understand the importance of their responsibility. Although it is not required, it is suggested that Nominating Committee members be in their Junior or Senior year of high school.
3. When possible, all 10 areas of the Utah FFA Association will be represented on the Nominating Committee. A chairperson at large will be selected.

### Committee Selection

The State FFA Officers conduct an individual review of all submitted nominating committee applications. The State officer team then convenes to deliberate every submitted application, providing evidence for/against the nominee. The result of this deliberation process is the recommended eleven nominating committee members.



## Committee Responsibilities

As a standing delegate committee, the eleven members of the nominating committee have the responsibility to present a slate of six officers. To complete this task, the committee members conduct a series of written and oral interviews (described in Section 2).

The committee members are also responsible for being prepared mentally and physically for the selection process. The process can be gruelling for the committee members, as they will typically work many long hours. Members are strongly encouraged to come to state convention fully prepared and rested.

## Committee Preparation Prior to State Convention

Once selected, the work of the committee begins almost immediately. Committee members are responsible for reviewing portions of all the candidate applications prior to state convention.

Committee members are also to complete a study of issues related to the State officer selection process. A study guide is provided to nominating committee members prior to the convention. The study guide provides questions for reflection related to preparing for evaluating candidates in each round (i.e., agricultural issues, education issues, and effective officer competencies). The study guide also suggests reference materials (articles, books, etc.) to review, with questions for applying the information to the selection process.

Nominating committee members also develop an initial list of questions to use in the interviews. They may not be the actual questions used; however, it provides an experience in developing quality questions that will be valuable during the convention and expo experience.

In addition, a conference call may be conducted between the nominating committee members and the adult consultants. The purpose of this call is to:

1. Provide the participants an opportunity to get to know each other prior to convention.
2. Assist the committee members in their preparation processes.
3. Answer any questions that the committee members may have.

## At State Convention

The nominating committee begins work during the first day of State Convention. The committee will meet prior to the arrival of the State officer candidates and will be expected to be ready to begin as soon as the committee convenes. This is not the time to review applications and begin thinking about the candidates—those things should be done long before arriving at convention.

Committee members will participate in guided practice on recognizing each of the five competencies. Practice scenarios using the rubrics provided for each competency include video and live simulations. Experts will also train the nominating committee on agricultural and education issues. The experts provide guidance and support in preparing for the rounds that will assess candidates' areas of knowledge.

The committee will also meet with the current year's State officers as part of their training. This meeting will provide the committee members the opportunity to gain an understanding of the job of being a State officer.

In addition, the nominating committee will spend time practicing their interview techniques as well as determining the layout of the interview room(s).



## Role in the Interview Processes

The interview process begins on Thursday afternoon and concludes with the final scheduled round on Friday night. Interviews may be conducted Saturday morning if needed. The nominating committee is provided with scorecards to independently input scores without consultation with the other committee members at the conclusion of each interview.

An adult consultant will verify and supervise that scorecards are completed and submitted into the system after each interview and round.

The final scores are only provided to the nominating committee as they begin their deliberations.

## Role During Deliberations

As described in Section 2, a cut may be instituted if necessary. This administrative step accomplishes two purposes. First, it provides the nominating committee with a smaller group of highly qualified candidates to consider more intensely for the creation of the final officer slate. Second, by letting the interview process select the top candidates, it removes the potential of considering a candidate on personal preferences alone.

During the creation of the officer slate, the nominating committee will use all the information at their disposal to create the final slate — the candidate's application form, the scoring summary of each viable candidate and personal notes made during the interviews.

It is unlikely that six candidates will emerge who possess all five competencies to a high level. What the nominating committee will do is seek to create a slate that is highly knowledgeable and skilled and is balanced in the desired State officer behaviors. The entire committee approves the final slate of the best six officers with the committee report presented to the delegate body during the final State convention session.

## Adult Roles in State Officer Selection Process

Adults play a supportive role in the State officer selection process. Adults are available to support and advise the student nominating committee in fulfilling their responsibilities. The roles adults play can be divided into two categories: formally appointed adult consultants and adults who assist with interviews or scoring.

### Formally Appointed Adult Consultant Roles

- Trainers
- Legitimizers
- Scoring overseers
- Voice of consciousness
- Managers of candidates
- Tabulators
- Advisory committee
- Review objectives/competencies to be assessed with the nominating committee before the round
- Allow three to five minutes following the round for the committee to revisit the round and objectives/competencies; then encourage committee to synthesize independent notes on what they saw.

### Adults Assisting with Interviews or Scoring

- Making recommendations qualitatively
- Interviewers or experts giving qualitative feedback
- Facilitators
- Writing exercise examiners
- Ensuring the fairness of the process and adherence to board policies
- Three adults will participate as voting members.

