Preparation for State FFA Degree Checks

Some of the phrases that are more and more commonly heard at the degree check are:

“I gave them that sheet that had what they needed, I don’t know why it’s not there.”
“I told them to go through that check sheet and make sure it said met.”

Or my all-time favorite: “When did we change that rule? I didn’t know we were supposed to have that.”

Don’t throw your students under the bus! Take the responsibility to make sure that YOU have what is required! If you don’t take responsibility, someone else needs to be cashing your pay check each month.

WHAT TO DO NOW!

• Order Portfolio and/or scrapbook. Go to www.ffa.org to order items.
  o The portfolio is called a “Notebook” and is item #00651-0000 ($6.00)
  o The Scrapbook is item # SBK6 for the 2” book ($39.50)
  o You can also use the corduroy scrapbook for either – item CRDBK ($19.50)
  o There are also refill pages for each on the FFA website.

• Go over the requirements for the State FFA Degree (page 36 of Constitution in Blue Book on website), and make sure that students will qualify before you start the process of application and portfolio and/or scrapbook.

• Check with the school counselor and make sure the student(s) meet the requirements for the GPA. 3.0 in Ag, 2.0 overall.

• Identify the three individuals who will be writing the letters of recommendations. One has to be a Supt. or High School Principal. (THE ADVISOR IS NOT ONE OF THE THREE!) (Also note: Assistant Supt., Assistant Principal, nor a school counselor count)

• Make sure their AET records are current and accurate before Christmas break so that they can easily be closed out as soon as school resumes in January.

• Guidelines for Portfolios, Scrapbooks, and Degree Requirements are listed in the Blue Book on the www.okffa.org website. Click the tab that says “State FFA Degree”

WHEN IT COMES TIME FOR THE DEGREE CHECK:

• You bring to the Degree check: application and portfolio or scrapbook.

• Make sure that you have all attached documents that are required for the degree:
1. Official Transcript with the application
2. Letters of Recommendations (3) in scrapbook or portfolio (See mentioned above)
3. Employer’s Verification- Required if dependent on wage earning to meet $2,000 net profit requirement with application.
4. Bank Documentation – Validating investment on Dec. 31, 2019 if a savings or checking account are required to meet $2,000 investment with the application.

- A transcript must be included with the application.

- If you have students wanting to apply for the Academic Excellence recognition, they need to complete that application and attach an additional transcript with this. Have it separate from the State FFA Degree Application, do not put it with the application. *(Make sure GPA is un-weighted and ACT test score and class rank is included)*

- State FFA Degree applications should not to be in an award folder. Staple on the upper left hand corner. Star Candidates do need to be in an awards folder for star judging.

- Make sure that the 20 FFA activities are credible activities that are sanctioned events above the local level. *Just putting “judging contest” or “speech contest” will not fly.* Make sure they fit the area that they are put into. The 20 activities must be from two separate categories, only 10 per category can count – (See application).

- Remember that 25 hours of community service are required from 2 separate and different Community service activities.

**Common Issues with the State FFA Degrees in 2019**

1. Make sure the experiences that are finished are shut off. Only the experiences that are active, with livestock and/or other items on hand currently should be open.

2. Do not run experiences continuously in current experiences. Label experiences as “spring 2019 swine” or “fall 2019 swine.” Do not run 4 years of show animals in one experience. Each set is different. For one, it creates a false inventory value at the end. You will have to correct them if you do this. Each set of livestock have different costs of production/prices/winnings, etc. You should be teaching students to determine the profit/loss of each experience.

3. Make sure the student(s) change the scope to reflect the number of head a student owned throughout the year. Go to the clipboard on the experience manager to do this.

4. **KNOW** the difference between “investment” and “profit.” Investment is the dollar value you have invested on Dec. 31, 2019. Net profit is money earned minus losses over the students’ time in Ag Ed. Profit is cumulative over the four/five years; investment is not. Both must be $2,000.
### EXAMPLE ON NET PROFIT:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Lincoln Riley</th>
<th>Mike Gundy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$450</td>
<td>$525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>-$250</td>
<td>-$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$1,250</td>
<td>$1,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL NET PROFIT: $1,950       $2,100
NOT MET     MET

5. All non-current assets that have been purchased should have some depreciation expense.

### Community Service Issues

This was one the more common issues last year and somewhat overlooked on the State FFA Degrees. Keep these things in mind:

1. **Activity includes tangible community involvement by the applicant.** This is a voluntary donation of one’s time for the positive impact of improving one’s community.

2. **Community Service activities can be organized by a group the applicant is a member of (FFA Chapter, Church, Sports Team, etc.) but the activity CANNOT be for the benefit of the group itself.**

   Exception: If the applicant is a member of a group whose SOLE purpose for existing is to provide service (March of Dimes, United Way, Cancer Society, etc.) an event put on by the group may benefit its own service mission. (Example: The chapter donated time during the State FFA Convention as a group at the Regional Food Bank).

Read the remaining guidelines for FFA Degree Community Service on the National FFA website, [wwwffa.org](http://wwwffa.org).