

## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

### BYLAWS

#### **Adopted and Amended**

Adopted January 17, 1991  
Amended December 17, 1993 (II.D.2)  
Amended March 24, 1994 (All Sections)  
Amended May 24, 1994 (III.C. and D.)  
Amended October 18, 1995 (IV.B.)  
Amended September 16, 1996 (IV.B.)  
Amended April 27, 2001 (II B.1.c.)  
Amended October 2, 2008 (All Sections)

#### **Preamble**

The purpose of these Bylaws is to set forth the governance responsibilities of the Department of Environmental Studies and to establish an organization and procedures necessary for the effective performance of such responsibilities and for the orderly transaction of departmental business.

These Bylaws are consistent with the policies adopted by the State University Board of Trustees for the organization and governance of the University as set forth in the *Policies of the Board of Trustees, State University of New York*, July 26, 2006.

## I. THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

A. Definition. The Department of Environmental Studies consists of:

1. All voting faculty members<sup>1</sup> holding half-time or more academic appointments to the Department of Environmental Studies;
2. College faculty members holding administrative positions in the Department's academic programs;
3. Faculty of qualified academic rank, such as "part-time," "clinical," "visiting," "adjunct," "temporary," or similar designations who are not considered voting faculty;
4. Departmental staff...; and
5. Students, including graduate students whose major, or co-major professor is a faculty member in the Department of Environmental Studies, and undergraduate Environmental Studies majors.

B. Responsibilities, Functions, and Powers<sup>2</sup>.

1. The *Policies of the State University Board of Trustees* oblige faculty to participate significantly in the initiation, development, and implementation of academic programs.

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<sup>1</sup> Voting faculty are defined in the SUNY-ESF Faculty Bylaws (April 2006) as "members of the academic staff (comprised of those persons ... having the titles of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, and assistant instructor...) of the College; senior research associates, research associates, research assistants, and other members of the professional staff who hold appointments, the primary responsibility of which, as determined by Faculty vote, is in the initiation, development, or implementation of the educational program." Those faculty with a qualified academic rank such as "clinical", "visiting", "adjunct", "temporary", or similar designations are not considered voting faculty. The departmental Chair is considered part of the voting faculty in College Bylaws. Faculty members who have, with the approval of the Provost and Chair, been temporarily appointed as "Visiting Faculty" with an appointment letter designating a date for return to full-time faculty will be considered "Voting Faculty" for the purposes of these By-Laws.

<sup>2</sup> Article X, "College Faculty", of the *Policies of the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York* (July 26, 2006) provide the authority for these departmental Bylaws, stating:

"(4) *Responsibility*. The faculty of each college shall have the obligation to participate significantly in the initiation, development, and implementation of the educational program.

(5) *Bylaws*.

(a) The faculty of each college shall prepare and adopt bylaws which shall contain: (1) Provisions for committees and their responsibilities; (2) Procedures for the calling and conduct of faculty meetings and elections; and (3) Provisions for such other matters of organization and procedure as may be necessary for the performance of their responsibilities.

(b) Bylaws shall be consistent with and subject to the Policies of the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York, the laws of the State of New York, and the provisions of agreements between the State of New York and the certified employee organizations established pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law. Provisions of bylaws concerning consultation with the faculty shall be subject to the approval of the chief administrative officer of the college. All actions under bylaws shall be advisory upon the Chancellor and the chief administrative officer of the college."

2. To meet these responsibilities, the Department of Environmental Studies shall:
  - a. Organize itself for the orderly transaction of departmental business;
  - b. Meet regularly to discuss matters of departmental interest;
  - c. Review existing departmental policies and programs;
  - d. Initiate and develop policies and programs;
  - e. Make recommendations to the Chair and other appropriate individuals and bodies regarding implementation of academic programs; and
  - f. Assist in the enhancement and development of excellence in the department, the College, and their programs.

### C. Officers<sup>3</sup>.

1. Department Chair. The Department Chair shall serve as the Department's Executive Chair.
  - a. The Department Chair or his/her designee shall preside at all Departmental Committee Meetings and shall exercise such other powers as are set forth in these Bylaws.
  - b. The Department Chair is empowered to report to the Department at all Departmental Committee meetings. The Chair shall receive for action all departmental recommendations and shall report their disposition to the Department. The Chair is an ex-officio, voting member of every standing committee.
2. Department Secretary. The Department Chair shall direct that the Departmental Secretary serve as Secretary. The Secretary shall record the minutes of all Faculty Meetings and distribute such minutes to the Faculty prior to the next regular meeting.

## II. ORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT

- A. Structure. The Department of Environmental Studies shall be organized through Standing and Subordinate Committees.

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<sup>3</sup> At the present time, officers are as stated in these Bylaws, but provisions for the election of officers may be established by amendment.

1. Standing Committees include: (a) Executive Committee, (b) Departmental Committee, (c) Undergraduate Studies Committee, (d) Graduate Studies Committee, (e) Writing Program Committee, and (f) Qualified Faculty Committee
  2. Subcommittees. Standing Committees may establish or abolish Subcommittees, the functions of which must fall within Faculty prerogatives and responsibilities as specified in these Bylaws. Establishment of a Subcommittee will include a provision for its termination. Subcommittees are not automatically subject to a twelve month limitation.
  3. Ad Hoc Committees. Standing Committees may establish or abolish Ad Hoc Committees, the functions of which must fall within Faculty prerogatives and responsibilities as specified in these Bylaws. An Ad Hoc Committee shall be charged with a specific function and shall be dissolved immediately upon completion of its assignment or after twelve months, whichever comes first.
- B. Composition of Committees.
1. Standing Committees
    - a. *Executive Committee*, composed of Chairs of the Undergraduate, Graduate, and Writing Program Committees, and chaired by the Department Chair.
    - b. *Departmental Committee*, composed of Voting Faculty, the Representative of the Qualified Faculty Committee, and two student representatives. It is chaired by the Department Chair. For certain issues as determined by the Chair the Departmental Committee may convene in Executive Session consisting of Voting Faculty members only.
    - c. *Undergraduate Studies Committee* composed of (i) College faculty members holding administrative appointments as Study Area Coordinators in the Bachelors of Science in Environmental Studies degree program, (ii) up to two additional faculty who teach and advise lower division students, (iii) the Undergraduate Studies Coordinator, who shall chair the Committee, and (iv) two undergraduate students, preferably one each from the lower and upper divisions invited by the chair of the committee after consulting with faculty and students. The Undergraduate Studies

Coordinator shall be a faculty member holding a full-time appointment to the Department of Environmental Studies.

- d. *Graduate Studies Committee* composed of (i) up to four faculty members in the Department of Environmental Studies who serve as advisers for graduate students in the Environmental Studies Masters Programs and/or the Graduate Program in Environmental Science (GPES) and Environment and Natural Resource Policy (ENRP), (ii) the Graduate Studies Coordinator, who shall chair the Committee, and (iii) two graduate students, preferably one each from a Masters and Ph.D. program invited by the chair of the committee after consulting with faculty and students. The Graduate Studies Coordinator shall be a faculty member holding a full-time appointment to the Department of Environmental Studies.
  - e. *Writing Program Committee* composed of (i) Director of the Writing Program, who will serve as the chair and (ii) at least three full-time Writing Program faculty. The committee has the option of including adjuncts and students.
  - f. *Qualified Academic Faculty Committee* composed of those members of the Qualified Faculty as defined in I.A.3. The chair shall be selected by a vote of the committee and shall represent the committee on the Departmental Committee.
2. Standing Committees may determine how departmental members are selected for membership in Subcommittees and Ad Hoc Committees.
  3. Standing Committees, Subcommittees, and Ad Hoc Committees shall determine whether and how students are invited to participate on such committees and how participating students will be selected.
- C. Functions. The functions of Standing Committees are as follows:
1. Executive Committee
    - a. Act on departmental matters when a quorum of the Departmental Committee cannot be convened.
  2. Departmental Committee
    - a. Provide a forum for exchange of ideas for the improvement of policies and programs;

- b. Monitor events and circumstances bearing on departmental business and academic programs;
  - c. Determine needs for administrative action at departmental and College levels to implement policies and programs; and
  - d. Provide coordination between other Standing Committees.
  - e. Recommend departmental representatives of the Department of Environmental Studies on committees of the College;
  - f. Develop and recommend, in consultation with the appropriate Academic Program Committee, course proposals for approval by College governance; and, in Executive Session:
  - g. Carry out provisions for Faculty Peer Review.
  - h. Meet Faculty responsibilities accruing to full-time faculty appointments in the Department of Environmental Studies from actions by the College administration.
3. Undergraduate Studies Committee.
- a. Study current departmental and College academic policies and programs;
  - b. Facilitate opportunities for departmental faculty, staff, and students to discuss policies and programs;
  - c. Supervise the Environmental Studies undergraduate program, its options and other undergraduate programs that the department mounts in accordance with College policies;
  - d. Form option area subcommittees for academic governance of the undergraduate options;
  - e. Receive, study, and evaluate proposals for improvement of policies and programs
  - f. Place before the Departmental committee proposals for revision and formulation of policies and programs;
  - g. Meet other responsibilities as are set forth in these Bylaws; and
  - h. In carrying out the above, to consult and cooperate on a permanent or temporary basis with appropriate persons, groups, and advisors.
4. Graduate Studies Committee.
- a. Study current departmental and College academic policies and programs;
  - b. Facilitate opportunities for departmental faculty, staff, and students to discuss policies and programs;
  - c. Supervise the Environmental Studies MS and MPS programs, the Certificate in Environmental Decision Making and other graduate

programs that the department mounts in accordance with College policies,

- d. Supervise departmental participation in the College's Graduate Program in Environmental Science and other interdepartmental graduate programs
- e. Receive, study, and evaluate proposals for improvement of policies and programs;
- f. Place before the Departmental committee proposals for revision and formulation of policies and programs;
- g. Meet other responsibilities as are set forth in these Bylaws; and
- h. In carrying out the above, to consult and cooperate on a permanent or temporary basis with appropriate persons, groups, and advisors.

#### 5. Writing Program Committee

- a. Receive, study, and evaluate proposals for improvement of policies and programs of the Writing Program;
- b. As appropriate, place before the Departmental committee proposals for revision and formulation of policies and programs; and
- c. Provide input to the Departmental Committee on policy decisions.

#### 6. Qualified Faculty Committee

- a. Provide input to the Departmental Committee on policy decisions and programs.
- b. Enhance communication between the Qualified Faculty and the Voting Faculty

#### D. Procedures.

1. The Undergraduate and Graduate Committees and the Writing Program Committee shall make proposals, as appropriate, with specific recommendations and present such proposals in writing to the Departmental Committee for timely review, evaluation, and action.
2. Proposals and recommendations submitted by Standing Committees at a departmental meeting do not require a second for discussion and action.
3. Committees shall inform the Department of their activities by regular reporting at Departmental Meetings.

### III. MEETINGS

#### A. Regular Meetings.

1. The Departmental Committee shall meet on a regular basis, at least twice each Fall and Spring semester, on a schedule set by the Department Chair and distributed to the faculty at the beginning of each academic year. An itemized agenda shall be distributed by the Department Chair in advance of each meeting.
2. The Department Chair may cancel any regular meeting but not two consecutive regular meetings.
3. The Undergraduate and Graduate Committees and the Writing Program Council shall meet as needed as determined by the Director of the respective committees or as requested by the Department Chair.

#### B. Special Meetings.

1. The President of the College or the Department Chair may call a special meeting of the Departmental Committee at any time. The Department Chair may call a special meeting provided that the voting faculty members are notified one week in advance of the meeting.
2. Special meetings of the Departmental Committee requested by a petition signed by at least two of the voting faculty shall be called by the Department Chair within two weeks of receiving the petition.
3. Special meetings of the Departmental committee may be held for discussions and votes in accord with functions set out in these Bylaws.

#### C. Conduct.

1. In general, meetings will be conducted in an informal parliamentary manner to attain full and free discussion. As needed, Faculty meetings shall be conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order (Revised)* except as otherwise specified in these Bylaws and in the *Policies of the Board of Trustees of the State University*.
2. All Regular Departmental Meetings shall be open to all College faculty and student representatives. When the Departmental Committee is in Executive Session, only Voting Faculty may be present.

#### D. Student Representation

1. Student representatives to the Standing Committees must be full-time students.
2. Student representatives to the Standing Committees that have student representation shall be selected by the respective committee Chairs during the Spring semester for a one-year term beginning in the Fall after consulting with faculty and students. Consultation may include a student vote, an open student meeting to discuss student representation to the Standing Committees, or other means of consulting with faculty and students.
3. Student representatives will serve a one-year term and have the following responsibilities:
  - a. Each representative is expected to attend all meetings of the Standing Committee on which he or she serves and must inform other representatives and the Committee Chair if unable to do so.
  - b. Each representative may vote on Committee agenda items with one vote per student representative.
  - c. Student representatives are expected to serve as a liaison between their respective constituency and ES Faculty.

E. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of a majority of voting members.

F. Voting. Each voting member<sup>4</sup> shall have one vote in the Faculty Meeting, even if that member represents more than one position, such as a faculty member holding a full-time Environmental Studies position who also is Coordinator of an option area. The results of any vote shall be established by count if requested by a voting member. The Department Chair can vote as any other voting member when the vote is by ballot. In all other cases the Department Chair can (but is not obliged to) vote whenever his or her vote will affect the result, that is, the Department Chair can vote either to break or cause a tie. A secret ballot may be requested by any voting member.

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<sup>4</sup> Voting members include those defined in footnote 1 in section I.A. plus the chair of the Qualified Faculty Committee.

#### IV. DEPARTMENTAL APPOINTMENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES

A. Administrative Appointments. Before the Department Chair appoints or reappoints curriculum directors, program coordinators, or similar positions, the Chair shall:

1. Announce by written memorandum to each Faculty member that a vacancy exists or an appointment or reappointment is contemplated.
2. Invite Faculty members to submit nominations.
3. Present the nominations to faculty members for their evaluation or recommendation.

B. Election of Departmental Representatives to College Committees.

1. Elections. Prior to the last regularly scheduled Spring departmental meeting, the Department Chair shall solicit consenting nominees from the Departmental Committee for each of the elected college-wide offices. The Department Chair may also invite nominations from the floor at the regular Departmental Committee meeting.
2. Balloting.
  - a. Voting in departmental elections shall be by secret ballot. In each contest, the nominee receiving a majority of votes cast shall be elected. If no nominee among three or more candidates receives a majority of votes cast, a run-off election will be held for the two (or more, in cases of ties) nominees receiving the largest number of votes.
  - b. The preparation, distribution, collection, and counting of ballots, and the reporting of results, shall be the responsibility of the Department Chair or an appointed teller.
3. Terms of Office. Members elected as a Faculty representative to a College committee shall serve for not more than two consecutive two-year terms.
4. Taking Office. A Faculty member elected to serve on a college committee shall assume the post on June 1. However, faculty with

academic-year appointments are not obliged to participate in governance activities outside the academic year.

5. Vacancies. In case of vacancies in any elected position, the Department Chair will arrange an election to fill the remaining term as soon as practicable. Faculty who serve less than two years of an unexpired term are eligible to succeed themselves in office.

## V. PEER REVIEW

- A. Faculty responsibilities regarding peer review are a part of Faculty governance. Peer review recommendations are made for contract renewals, permanent appointments, and promotions.
- B. Faculty peer reviews are carried out by the Standing Departmental committee.
- C. A separate statement describing Faculty peer review policies and procedures has been prepared by the Department of Environmental Studies, and reviewed and accepted by the College administration as an appropriate evaluation instrument. This statement of *Criteria and Procedures for Faculty Evaluation* is considered an attachment to this Bylaw.

## VI. BYLAWS AMENDMENT

- A. These Bylaws remain in effect until revised or replaced by action of the Departmental Committee.
- B. Proposals for amendments to these Bylaws may be made by any two members of the Voting Faculty at a departmental committee meeting. Proposals must appear on the agenda of one departmental committee meeting for discussion. They shall then be distributed to the voting members accompanied by a mail ballot to be returned to the Secretary in a timely manner. Passage of any amendment shall require a majority vote.
- C. Bylaws amendments shall be noted on the Bylaws cover page indicating the date of amendment and referencing the section of the Bylaws to which the amendment applies. The amendment itself shall be inserted in the Bylaws text, deleting any amended provisions if appropriate.