

Academic Governance Bylaws
State University of New York
College of Environmental Science and Forestry

(AMENDED) November 1, 1973, April 17, 1975, April 28, 1978, February 16, 1984, April 19, 1985, November 25, 1985, April 1988, April 2006, April 2009, March 2011, May 2012, April 2013, May 2014, May 2015, October 2021, March 2025

Preamble

It is the purpose of these by-laws to set forth the responsibilities of the Academic Governance of the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry and to establish organization and procedures necessary for the effective performance of such responsibilities and for the orderly transaction of college business.

These by-laws are consistent with policies adopted by the State University Board of Trustees for the organization and governance of the University as set forth in Policies of the Board of Trustees, State University of New York, 1973.

I. Organization

To meet these responsibilities, the Membership shall organize itself for the orderly transaction of business; meet regularly to discuss matters of College interest; review existing College policies and programs and cooperate in carrying them out; recommend to the President, or to other appropriate individuals or bodies, proposed new policies and programs and/or revisions to existing policies and programs; and assist in the enhancement and development of the College and its programs. The Academic Governance Standing Rules are the operating procedures under which this body functions.

A. Membership

1. Faculty.

The Faculty of the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry shall be composed of the Chancellor of State University, the President of the College, members of the College having academic rank, senior research associates, research associates, and research assistants. These Faculty members shall be members of Academic Governance.

2. Staff Representatives.

Thirty (30) members of the non-Faculty professional staff who are elected through a College-wide electoral process shall be members of Academic Governance. Those non-Faculty professional staff in Unclassified Service are eligible to be elected.

3. Student Representatives.

Sixteen (16) student representatives, eight (8) each representing the Graduate Student Association and the Might Oaks Students Assembly, shall be members of Academic Governance.

B. Voting Membership

All Members as defined in Section A are eligible to vote.

C. Ex-Officio Officers

1. Chair.

The President of the College shall be Chair of the Membership. The President’s designee shall act in the absence of the President. The Chair is empowered to call meetings of the Membership and to report to the Membership (with agenda priority) at all meetings. The President or their designee is a member of every standing committee. The President shall receive for action all recommendations about the instructional, research, and service programs of the College, and shall report their disposition to the Membership.

2. Past Executive Chair.

The immediate Past Executive Chair will serve on the Executive Committee for one year immediately following their last term as chair. In the event that the Executive Chair is unable to serve for more than one semester but not more than two semesters, the Past Executive Chair will serve as Acting Executive Chair until a special election can be held. The Past Executive Chair shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee.

D. Elected Officers

1. Executive Chair.

Biennially, in even-numbered years, the Membership shall elect one or two of its members to serve as Executive Chair(s) from among the voting Membership. The Executive Chair(s) shall preside over meetings of Academic Governance, chair the Academic Governance Executive Committee, represent Academic Governance at the College Board of Trustees meetings, represent Academic Governance as a voting member of Academic Council, and exercise other powers set forth in these by-laws. In the event of a brief absence of the Executive Chair(s), the Secretary shall act as Executive Chair. For their service to the College, the Executive Chair(s) will receive up to a 25% administrative assignment in their workload allocations. The Executive Chair is limited to two consecutive terms, but individuals may be re-elected after a one-term hiatus from the position.

2. Secretary.

Biennially, in odd-numbered years, the Membership shall elect one of its members to serve as Secretary. The Secretary shall: record the minutes of all Faculty meetings, distribute such minutes to the Membership prior to the next regular meeting and secure a substitute Secretary when necessary. In the event of a brief absence of the Executive Chair, the Secretary shall serve as Executive Chair. The Secretary shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee and shall act as Secretary of that committee. The Secretary is limited to two consecutive terms, but individuals may be re-elected after a one-term hiatus from the position.

3. SUNY University Faculty Senator and Alternate.

A University Faculty Senate (UFS) Senator and an alternate shall be elected every three (3) years. The Senator should be part of the Membership. Voting for the UFS Senator shall follow the SUNY Board of Trustees policy and is therefore not limited to the Membership as defined in Section I.A. The SUNY UFS Senator and Alternate shall be members of the Executive Committee.

4. Syracuse University Senators.

Two Syracuse University Senators shall be elected to three (3) year terms. Both SU Senators shall be members of the Executive Committee.

5. At-Large Executive Committee Members

Three (3) At-Large Representatives shall be elected to three (3) year terms to represent the Membership on the Executive Committee. One At-Large Representatives shall be elected in each year to provide continuity of representation. One (1) At-Large Representative shall be a Faculty Member with continuing appointment. One (1) At-Large Representative shall be a Faculty Member without continuing appointment. One (1) At-Large Representative shall be a Staff Representative.

E. Appointed Officers

1. Parliamentarian.

A Parliamentarian shall be appointed biennially in even-numbered years from the Membership by the Executive Chair to advise the Executive Chair on matters of procedure. The Parliamentarian shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee.

2. Sergeant-at-Arms.

A Sergeant-at-Arms shall be appointed biennially in even-numbered years from the Membership by the Executive Chair to assist with Meetings and maintaining the membership roster. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall establish the existence of a quorum, provide ballots for voting, and generally expedite Membership voting. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall also exclude unauthorized persons from meetings and maintain order, appointing assistants from the Membership as needed. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee.

F. Eligibility for Officer Positions

All officers shall be members of Academic Governance. However, members holding Management Confidential positions, other than the SUNY Chancellor and Campus President, may not hold officer positions. The Executive Chair and the Secretary shall be either Faculty or Staff Representative Members.

G. Academic Units.

For the purposes of these Bylaws and Standing Rules, the Academic Units shall consist of those units on campus having academic offerings and associated faculty as defined in the standing rules.

II. Committees

The Standing Committees shall consist of the Executive Committee, the Academic Affairs Committee, the Student Experience Committee, the Faculty and Staff Advancement Committee, the Awards Committee, and the Research and Scholarship Committee.

A. Executive Committee.

The primary role of this committee is to facilitate communication across campus between faculty, staff, administration, and students and to organize the work of Academic Governance. To do this it will be concerned with:

1. studying and formulating statements of the philosophy and objectives of the College,
2. reviewing and revising College programs and policies,
3. presenting to the Membership all changes to policies and procedures of the College for endorsement,
4. reviewing College finances with the College President,
5. setting the agenda for each Governance Meeting,
6. reviewing and revising the Bylaws and Standing Rules of Academic Governance biannually and presenting changes to the Membership for endorsement,
7. overseeing elections including representatives to presidential and other search committees,
8. appointing and abolishing ad hoc committees,
9. designating members of the Membership to represent the Membership at various occasions,
10. communicate to the President all recommendations made by the Membership, and
11. serve as a conduit of information and advisement about campus technology matters and their effective implementation to all members of the College community
12. provide consultation in areas of academic technology and instructional spaces

B. Academic Affairs Committee

This committee is charged with all matters of the College's instructional program. The committee shall review and approve the College curriculum; set standards for evaluating student academic performance and academic integrity; create, review and approve academic policies from matriculation through graduation; promote and support instructional quality, review and consult on changes to academic programs, including creation and discontinuation of programs; and consult with ad hoc committees to review petitions, academic warnings, academic warnings, and dismissals.

C. Student Experience Committee

This committee is charged with considering all matters affecting student life. The committee shall provide consultation on policy directions and issues relating to students' co-curricular experiences, faculty-student-staff interactions, programs, and services throughout the college. These responsibilities may include, but are not limited to: considering and recommending policy or procedure changes that directly concern students; presenting Academic Governance with resolutions passed by Undergraduate and Graduate Student Associations; supporting and representing students and their needs for study, meeting, dining and socializing spaces; serving as a review body for ESF policy changes to the Student Handbook; and acting as liaison on matters that pertain to the interface between athletics and instruction and matters that pertain to the interface between ESF student housing and academic and student affairs. This committee will also organize the solicitation of nominations for recognition of exemplary students for the Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence.

D. Faculty and Staff Advancement Committee

The Faculty and Staff Advancement Committee serves the College community to provide input, insight, recommendations, and review of the policies and procedures that pertain directly to faculty and staff. The responsibilities of the committee will include contribution to and review of policies and procedures that affect faculty performance, development, evaluation, promotion, tenure, engagement, academic freedom, involvement in governance, professional standards, ethics, access to College resources, faculty and staff welfare, and other similar issues that may arise. The committee is an advocate for the promotion and advancement of equitable practices that support the growth, vibrancy, and quality of all faculty and staff members.

E. Research and Scholarship Committee

This committee shall be concerned with the development of and updates to policies regarding research development, support, and administration. It shall liaise with various college units that support research activities. This committee shall work to establish policies and initiatives pertinent to graduate student research, the management of research proposals related to funding initiatives administered by the Office of Research Programs (ORP), and the recognition of research achievements. This committee shall also work with other committees to raise awareness of the college's research program through the organization of the annual conferences.

Additionally, this committee will work to ensure the ESF community has access to the resources needed to further ESF scholarship. This can include advising and informing decisions, problem-solving content and access to content issues, and serve to facilitate two-way communication between faculty and students and administration at the College level.

F. Awards Committee

This committee, in order to exercise its responsibility for the nomination and solicitation of awards on behalf of the Membership, shall be concerned with: the solicitation of nominations and testimony for (1)

SUNY Chancellor's Awards for Excellence for a) faculty service b) librarianship c) professional service d) scholarship and creative activities and e) teaching, (2) SUNY Distinguished Professorships, (3) SUNY/ESF Honorary Degrees and (4) other awards designated by the Executive Committee of Academic Governance, in accordance with SUNY and ESF guidelines, as appropriate; the review of nominations and supporting documentation; making recommendations to the President for the above-mentioned awards; the oversight of nomination package preparation; and the maintenance of college-wide records of awardees.

G. Subcommittees and Ad hoc Committees.

The Executive Committee may appoint or abolish subcommittees and ad hoc committees necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of Academic Governance. Each Standing Committee, to fulfill its responsibilities as outlined herein, may recommend to the Executive Committee the establishment of subcommittee or ad hoc committee to more effectively organize its work or carry out a special project. The chair of each subcommittee or ad hoc committee must be a member of a Standing Committee.

III. Meetings

A. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings shall be held each semester to carry out normal membership business on a schedule to be set by the Executive Committee. The Executive Chair(s) shall distribute a schedule of these meetings to the Membership at the beginning of each semester. The Executive Chair(s) will distribute an itemized agenda at least five (5) working days prior to each Academic Governance meeting. After consultation with the Chair of the Membership, the Executive Committee may cancel any regular meeting, but two consecutive meetings may not be cancelled. Regular meetings are open to the entire College community.

B. Special Meetings

The Chancellor of State University of New York (SUNY), the Chair, or the Executive Chair may call special meetings at any time, provided the Membership is notified by email at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. The Executive Committee shall call special meetings within two weeks of petition by at least ten percent (10%) of the Membership. The Executive Chair shall notify the Membership of such a meeting's time and place and shall distribute an itemized agenda. Business transacted at special meetings shall be limited to the items on the agenda.

C. Meeting Conduct

Meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order (Revised) except as otherwise specified in these by-laws and in the Policies of the SUNY Board of Trustees. The Chair and the Executive Chair may, at their discretion, invite visitors and recognize them in discussions.

D. Meeting Quorum

A quorum at a regular meeting shall consist of the Membership present at the meeting, providing that at least one representative from half of the Academic Units is present, at least two staff members who are part of the Membership are present, and 15% of the Membership is present. A quorum at Special Meetings shall consist of one-third (1/3) of the Membership.

E. Voting

Each member of the Membership shall have one vote. Decisions shall be made by no less than a majority of the voting members present.

F. Committee Meetings

All Committee meetings committees shall be open to the membership. At their discretion, the Committee Chairs may invite visitors and recognize them in discussion. A quorum at committee meetings shall consist of one-half (1/2) of the committee membership. At a committee meeting, a member of the committee shall take notes on meeting decisions and discussions. Notes will be shared with the Executive in a common and easily accessed format.

IV. Consultation

In all matters affecting the academic mission the Membership of Academic Governance must be consulted. Consultation refers to a mutual, publicly shared governance process of deliberation between the President and/or their official designee(s) and the Membership.

A. Consultation Concerning Academic Policy

Detailed procedures for consultation on academic, non-academic and SUNY policy can be found in the Academic Governance Standing Rules.

B. Consultation Concerning Appointment of the President

The Membership shall assist the College Board of Trustees in seeking candidates for the office of President of the College according to the SUNY Board of Trustees Guidelines for Presidential Searches.²

C. Consultation Concerning Appointment and Re-appointment of Academic Vice-presidents and Deans

Before the President of the College appoints, re-appoints, or recommends the appointment or re-appointment of academic vice-presidents, and Deans, the President shall consult with Academic Governance concerning the involvement of the Membership in search and/or review processes for positions at the level of Dean and above.

D. Consultation Concerning Appointment and Re-Appointment of Department Chairs

Appointment and re-appointment of Department Chairs will be handled at the Department level according to the procedures adopted by the Department and in consultation with the chief academic officer.

E. Consultation Concerning Appointment, Re-appointment, and Promotion of Faculty Members

Academic Governance delegates the responsibilities concerning appointments and re-appointments of Faculty Members to the academic departments. Promotion and continuing appointments of faculty members will be handled according to the College-wide Promotion and Tenure Guidelines.

V. Bylaws and Standing Rules Revisions

A. Amendments to the Bylaws

Proposals for amendments to these by-laws may be made by one of the Membership, at an Academic Governance meeting. They shall then be distributed to the Membership within ten (10) days after the meeting. Balloting will occur not less than seven (7) days, nor more than fourteen (14) days after the date of circulation of the proposed amendment. Passage of a vote on the amendment shall require a majority of the votes cast.

B. Amendments to the Standing Rules

Proposals for amendments to the Standing rules may be made by one of the members at a meeting of the Academic Governance Executive Committee. Changes to the Academic Governance Standing Rules require at least two-thirds approval vote of the members present. The Executive Committee will announce all changes to the Membership at the following regular meeting and will post them to the Academic Governance website. The Membership may call for a vote to endorse or retract any Standing Rules change made by the Executive Committee at the meeting at which the change is announced. The Membership's vote will be binding.

C. Adoption

These by-laws and subsequent amendments shall become effective immediately after the adoption by the Membership, except that those provisions concerning presidential consultation with the Membership shall be subject to approval by the President.

VI. Definitions

Academic staff. Those persons having academic rank or qualified academic rank. (*Policies of the Board of Trustees* (SUNY). 1973, Article II)

Academic rank. Rank held by those members of the professional staff having the title of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, and assistant instructor, including geographic full-time faculty members having such titles and rank held by members of the professional staff having the titles of librarian, associate librarian, and assistant librarian. A geographic full-time Faculty member is a person serving on the faculty of a medical center who is not employed on a full-time basis for the purpose of fixing compensation payable by the State but all of whose professional services and activities are conducted at the medical center or its affiliated hospital and are available to the State on a full-time basis for clinics and instructional purposes. (*Policies of the Board of Trustees* (SUNY). 1973, Article II)

Professional staff. All persons occupying positions designated by the Chancellor as being in the unclassified service. (*Policies of the Board of Trustees* (SUNY). 1973, Article II)

Qualified academic rank. Rank held by those members of the academic staff having titles of lecturer, or title of academic rank preceded by the designations "clinical" or "visiting", or other similar designation. (*Policies of the Board of Trustees* (SUNY). 1973, Article II)