BYLAWS
for
School of Natural Resources
University of Nebraska - Lincoln

CHAPTER I
FOREWORD

These bylaws shall be considered adjunct to the current bylaws of the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska; and bylaws of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR), the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources and the College of Arts and Sciences.

CHAPTER II
NAME

The name of the administrative unit governed by these bylaws shall be known as the School of Natural Resources, hereinafter referred to as the School.

CHAPTER III
ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Introduction: The overall management and leadership for the School shall be provided by an administrative team that consists of a director and associate director. The administrative team will be assisted and advised by a leadership team consisting of coordinators who shall be responsible for programs that address School-wide needs. The associate director and coordinators will be selected by the director following relevant IANR procedures that will include a written recommendation from faculty and staff search committee(s). These committee(s) will be responsible for obtaining input from all relevant parties related to the candidates’ qualifications and abilities to serve in these roles.

3.1 Administrative Team

3.1.1 Director: The School shall have a director who shall be selected in accordance with the Board of Regents and University of Nebraska-Lincoln bylaws. The director shall report to the deans in all colleges and divisions whose faculty are salaried in the School. He/she is responsible for the administration and leadership of the teaching, research, extension, survey, and public service activities of the School and for program and professional development of the faculty and staff. The director shall convene an external advisory group to help the School address current and future needs of stakeholders in natural resources.
The director shall designate qualified individuals within the School to serve as the State Geologist, the State Climatologist, and other leadership positions as necessary. The director’s annual evaluation will include input from faculty/staff.

3.1.2 **Associate Director:** The associate director shall have an administrative FTE. He/she will assist the director in the administration of the School, be an official administrative representative of the School, and will have signatory authority when the director is absent. The associate director shall be a faculty member with a majority of their appointment in the School. The associate director will advise the director and voice faculty input on decisions regarding the School. The associate director will provide leadership on specific tasks or agenda items delegated to him/her by the director.

The specific duties of the associate director will include, but are not limited to: providing leadership, vision and administrative oversight for School functions as specified by the director; providing leadership for undergraduate and graduate education in the School; fostering mentorship of faculty; acting as an *ex officio* member of the faculty advisory committee; providing input to the evaluation of faculty; serving as acting director in the absence of the director; and representing the School at functions that otherwise cannot be attended by the director.

His/her annual evaluation will include input from faculty/staff. An appointment will initially be for three years and will be annually renewable if the evaluations support this action, if he/she is willing to continue serving in this capacity, and if the director wants him/her to continue in this capacity.

3.2 **Leadership Team**

**Coordinators:** The School shall have coordinators to assist the administrative team in the management and leadership of the School. Coordinators shall be responsible for addressing School-wide needs in program areas that may include, but are not restricted to, outreach, research, survey, and undergraduate and graduate academic programs. School-wide needs shall be developed in consultation with School administration, relevant faculty committees, and the faculty at large. The goal of each coordinator shall be to propose and implement innovative approaches to addressing School needs. These needs and approaches will be evaluated annually.

A coordinator shall serve as a member of relevant committees and the committee may elect the coordinator as the committee chair. A coordinator shall be a faculty member who has a majority appointment in the School. Each coordinator's job description shall be modified to recognize a specific FTE commitment to this leadership position. Input from faculty/staff will be solicited to assess the coordinators' performance annually. Appointments will be for three years and will be annually renewable if their evaluations support this action, if he/she is willing to continue to serve in this capacity, and if the director wants him/her to continue serving as a coordinator.
The survey coordinator serves as the Director of the Conservation and Survey Division, and chairs the Survey Committee.

3.3 **Committees:** The School shall have standing committees that have specified responsibilities.

**CHAPTER IV**

**MEMBERS**

4.1 **School Membership.** Faculty and Staff are collectively referred to in these bylaws as the School Membership. Faculty shall consist of every person holding the rank of instructor or above who holds a full, joint, or courtesy/adjunct appointment in the School, including those with equivalent rank positions. Staff shall consist of regular managerial/professional and office/service personnel who have an appointment in the School.

4.2 **Voting Privileges.** All faculty and staff having a salaried position within the School or who are members of a directly associated unit such as the Nebraska Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit or the Great Plains Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit, shall have voting privileges on issues concerning operation of the School as defined by the bylaws. Issues specific to faculty or staff shall be voted on by the respective group. Examples of issues on which staff would vote could include, but are not limited to, staff evaluation procedures and staff professional development opportunities. Examples of issues on which faculty would vote could include, but are not limited to, curriculum and promotion and tenure. In the case, where it is not clear as to the extent to which an issue needs a faculty and/or staff vote, the director, in consultation with the associate director, coordinators, and the faculty advisory committee, shall make the determination and inform the School membership.

**CHAPTER V**

**MEETINGS AND VOTING**

5.1 **General School Meetings.** School membership shall meet as a body at least twice each year. Faculty meetings shall be convened at least twice each semester. Staff meetings shall be convened at least twice each semester. Additional meetings may be called as needed.

5.2 **Call of Meetings.** General School meetings (school membership, faculty and/or staff meetings) and standing committee meetings may be called by any of the following: (1) the director or associate director, (2) any member of the faculty advisory committee, (3) any standing or *ad hoc* committee, or (4) ten percent of the faculty and/or staff on relevant issues specific to faculty and staff.
5.3 **Presiding Over Meetings.** The director, the director’s designated representative, or relevant committee chairs may preside at general School meetings.

5.4 **Meeting Announcement.** All general school, faculty and/or staff meetings shall be scheduled at least one week prior to the meeting time. A written agenda shall be distributed at least 24 hours before the meeting. An emergency general school, faculty and/or staff meeting may be called in 24 hours by the director or associate director in concurrence with the appropriate advisory committee. All general and committee meetings shall be held in accordance with University rules concerning open meetings.

5.5 **Meeting Records.** Written minutes shall be taken to adequately record meeting discussions, and will be provided to faculty and staff prior to the next scheduled meeting.

5.6 **Agenda Items.** Agendas will be developed for general School meetings. Items may be placed on the agenda by: (1) the director, (2) associate director, (3) any member of the faculty advisory committee, (4) any standing or *ad hoc* committee, (5) any faculty or staff member may suggest items to the director for placement on the agenda, and (6) action from the floor of a meeting with approval of the majority of the faculty/staff at the meeting.

5.7 **Quorum.** A quorum for general school, faculty and/or staff consists of 35 percent or more of the appropriate school membership as defined in sections 4.1 and 4.2 of these bylaws.

5.8 **Meeting Participation.** Faculty, staff, and graduate and undergraduate students having majors in the School may participate in discussions at appropriate meetings. Discussion of confidential or sensitive issues will be limited to appropriate School membership.

5.9 **Voting Policy.**

5.9.1 Voting at general school, faculty and/or staff meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the latest edition of Robert’s Rules of Order. Each member in attendance shall have one vote. A simple majority will be used to pass an issue that comes to a vote.

5.9.2 Changes in the bylaws require submission to the members on a mail ballot. Other issues may be placed on a mail ballot by the director in consultation with the advisory committee or by a majority vote of the members attending any general School meeting.

5.9.3 Issues voted upon with a mail ballot, which includes email, shall be decided by a simple majority of a quorum of the appropriate School membership, except for changes to the School bylaws, which must be in accordance with section 7.2. Mail ballots shall normally be due 10 working days after the mailing.
CHAPTER VI
STANDING COMMITTEES

Introduction: Standing committees shall advise the administrative and leadership team on matters pertaining to areas of responsibility assigned to that committee. Committees will consist of members who are elected by an annual vote of the School Membership. Terms shall be staggered so that one or two new members are elected to each committee each year. A term is three years and committee members may serve two consecutive terms. Each committee shall annually elect a chair and a vice chair from the members of the committee. The chair shall plan the agenda for meetings and report on the meeting to the School membership. The vice chair shall function as the chair when the chair is not available. All committee members are expected to assist the chair in his/her specific duties.

The nominating committee will be responsible for facilitating voting and committee selection. The director, the faculty advisory committee, and standing committees shall have power to establish ad hoc committees and subcommittees with defined terms. With input from the School membership, a coordinator may be assigned by the director to serve as an additional member of a standing committee. Each committee shall maintain a record of its discussions and actions and make them available to School membership. Matters of a confidential or sensitive nature (e.g. promotion, tenure, or personnel issues), will not be recorded or posted in shared documents.

6.1 List of Committees. Standing committees for the School shall be:

1. Nominating Committee
2. Faculty Advisory Committee
3. Graduate Committee
4. Research Committee
5. Outreach Committee
6. Natural Resources Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
7. Survey Committee
8. Promotion and Tenure Committee
9. Safety and Facilities Committee
10. Staff Advisory and Professional Development Committee

6.2 Committees and Their Purposes. The purpose of each School committee (section 6.1) and its membership are as follows:
6.2.1 **Nominating Committee.**

The nominating committee shall consist of five faculty and two staff representatives appointed by the director in consultation with the faculty advisory committee. The members are to be representative of the broad spectrum of faculty and staff found in the School.

The nominating committee shall select candidates for membership on the various committees of the School and conduct elections for the various committees on an annual basis. The committee shall seek broad, equitable representation from the School’s resource and program areas. Nominations from the faculty and/or staff at large will be accepted by the committee. Where more than one position is available, paired nominations will be presented where possible to ensure diverse representation on the committee. Candidates will be elected by popular vote. In the case of a tie, a runoff election shall be held.

6.2.2 **Faculty Advisory Committee**

The faculty advisory committee to the director shall consist of five faculty members. Faculty serve a three-year term and may not succeed themselves. The associate director shall serve as an *ex officio* member. Faculty representatives must have greater than 0.50 FTE of their appointment in the School. One staff representative from the staff advisory and professional development committee shall serve as liaison between the two committees.

The advisory committee shall advise the director on budget development and general operation of the School. The committee shall have the responsibility of working with the director on matters of concern to students, including grade appeals. The director shall meet with the advisory committee at least once every three months.

6.2.3 **Graduate Committee**

The graduate committee shall be composed of five faculty members and one graduate student. Four of the faculty members must have their graduate faculty home (as defined by the Graduate College) in the School. The fifth member may have a courtesy, adjunct, or partial appointment in the School. Committee members shall be elected for staggered three-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms. The graduate student shall serve a one-year term. The School's graduate student body shall recommend the graduate student representative to the committee who will be responsible for approving the recommendation. This representative shall be on the committee for graduate policy and procedure matters, but not be involved in admissions decisions.

The graduate committee shall approve applications for admission to graduate study; annually review graduate student academic performance and progress; recommend to
faculty necessary changes in graduate student status; make recommendations pertaining
to curricular changes in graduate courses; suggest and modify graduate degree programs
and areas of specialization; modify, as needed, the School's handbook on graduate
student policies and procedures; and carry out other assignments as requested by the
director.

6.2.4 Research Committee

The research committee shall be composed of: (1) two faculty appointed by the director
to represent the School’s centers (currently, the Center for Advanced Land Management
Information Technologies, Great Plains Regional Center for Global Environmental
Change, High Plains Regional Climate Center, National Drought Mitigation Center, and
Water Center); (2) four faculty holding research appointments reflecting the diverse
research interests of the School; and (3) one representative from the School’s
managerial/professional staff. Committee members shall be appointed or elected for
staggered three-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms.

The research committee shall foster and facilitate basic and applied research within the
School. The committee shall advise the director on research matters within the School,
identify and implement actions to enhance the physical and institutional infrastructure to
support research, propose actions to increase the quality and volume of School research,
seek ways to assist School members in the acquisition of external funding, develop ways
to enhance recognition of the School's research capabilities and expertise within and
among funding agencies and School clientele, encourage recognition of faculty and staff
excellence, and carry out other assignments as requested by the director.

6.2.5 Outreach Committee

The outreach committee shall be composed of five elected faculty, two elected staff
representatives, and as many as three additional persons appointed by the director. All
committee members must have their primary home in the School. Elected committee
members shall serve for staggered three-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms.
The director shall determine the term length for those appointed to the committee.

The outreach committee shall encourage and promote outreach functions within the
School, including communications and program marketing strategies. Outreach broadly
defines our linkages with clientele, other stakeholders and the general public. Extension
is outreach supported through University of Nebraska Extension and focused on
educational programming. This committee shall contribute to an overall University goal
to move outreach toward engagement that involves greater two-way interaction with
clientele. The outreach committee shall advise the director on matters related to outreach,
provide support for faculty and staff outreach activities, set the School’s outreach
priorities, provide oversight for the School’s website, encourage recognition of faculty
and staff excellence, and carry out other assignments as requested by the director.
6.2.6 Natural Resources Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

The School has administrative responsibility for the Natural Resources Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (NRUCC) in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR). This committee shall be composed of the chairs of each of the majors that comprise the Bachelor of Science degree in Natural Resources in CASNR, plus two members elected at-large from the faculty of the School. At-large committee members shall be elected for staggered three-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms. A member of the NRUCC shall be elected to represent this committee to the CASNR curriculum committee. The associate director of the School shall serve as an ex officio member of the committee.

The NRUCC shall foster and facilitate undergraduate teaching within the School and CASNR by advising the director on matters pertaining to undergraduate education and assisting the director or his/her designee in identifying and implementing actions to enhance the physical and institutional infrastructure required to support teaching. The Committee shall review curricular proposals; propose measures and actions to improve the quality, volume and relevance of undergraduate education in natural resources within CASNR; seek ways to assist faculty in acquisition of external support to improve teaching; work to develop recognition of the natural resource majors; hear appeals from students; develop and promote recruitment, retention and assessment plans for natural resources majors; encourage recognition of faculty and staff excellence; and carry out assignments as requested by the director of the School.

6.2.7 Survey Committee

The survey committee shall be composed of five faculty members and two staff members distributed among the program areas (Geology, Water, Soils, Biology/Ecology, Land Use/Land Cover and Climatology). All committee members must have their primary home in the School. Committee members shall be elected for staggered three-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms.

The survey committee shall encourage and promote survey functions within the School and ensure that the legislatively mandated functions of the Conservation and Survey Division are maintained. Survey broadly defines any activity involved in the systematic collection, organization, compilation, and interpretation of basic natural resources and natural history data, as well as curatorial responsibilities and maintenance of relevant collections, including, but not limited to, such materials as well cores and borehole cuttings. The committee shall generally oversee all survey activities; identify and implement actions to enhance the physical, institutional and financial infrastructure to support survey activities; seek ways to assist School members in the acquisition of funds to support survey activities; compile a yearly evaluation of survey activities; increase meaningful interactions between survey programs and the other research, education and outreach programs within the School; encourage recognition of faculty and staff
excellence; facilitate the process of survey publications; and carry out other assignments as requested by the director.

6.2.8 Promotion and Tenure Committee

The promotion and tenure committee shall be composed of seven faculty members. Four members of this committee must be fully promoted, i.e., rank as full professors or equivalent rank. At least three members must be tenured. All members of this committee must have greater than 0.50 FTE in the School. The director, associate director, and coordinators can not serve on the promotion and tenure committee. Members shall be elected to staggered three-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms.

The committee shall report annually to the director on recommendations for promotion of faculty, granting of tenure, reappointment of faculty, and progress toward tenure and/or promotion. If a faculty member is to be hired into the School with tenure, the request for granting of tenure must be presented to the promotion and tenure committee for its recommendation prior to the offer of tenure to the candidate. This committee shall facilitate post-tenure reviews where appropriate. All recommendations of the promotion and tenure committee are to be independent of those of the School’s administration.

For faculty with less than a 0.50 FTE appointment in the School, the promotion and tenure committee shall communicate their evaluations of the faculty member to the home unit. The School’s promotion and tenure committee likewise has the responsibility to seek input from promotion and tenure committees in units where the School faculty member has less than a 0.50 FTE appointment.

6.2.9 Safety and Facilities Committee

The safety and facilities committee shall be composed of at least four faculty and three staff representatives. Committee members shall be elected for staggered three-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms. The chair will serve as the School’s safety liaison to the University's office of Environmental Health and Safety.

The committee shall serve in an advisory role to the director on matters relating to safety and facilities. It shall serve as the point of contact for safety-related planning for the School. It shall develop recommendations for the director on School policies related to the assignment and allocation of space to School members and programs. The committee shall promote a safe work environment, shall develop and annually review School policies regarding the assignment and allocation of space, develop a safety plan for the School, perform an annual assessment of safety within the School, assess the safety plan every five years, provide an annual report to School members, and carry out other assignments as requested by the director.

6.2.10 Staff Advisory and Professional Development Committee
This committee shall be comprised of five staff members with representatives from both office/service/technical and managerial/professional employees. The associate director shall serve as an *ex officio* member. One faculty representative from the faculty advisory committee shall serve as liaison between the two committees. Members shall be elected to staggered three-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms.

The committee shall advise the director on matters relating to staff. The committee shall encourage recognition of staff excellence; encourage and promote professional development for staff; encourage and promote open lines of communication between staff, faculty, the director, associate director and, if applicable, coordinators; serve as a point of contact for staff in the School; make recommendations to the director on the process for evaluation of staff; and carry out other assignments as requested by the director.

**CHAPTER VII**

**AMENDMENT OF THE BYLAWS**

7.1 **Bylaws Conformance.** These bylaws are intended to conform to bylaws of the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska, the Bylaws of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and the Bylaws of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources and the College of Arts and Sciences. Changes in bylaws of the above groups imply necessary change in the School bylaws.

7.2 **Bylaws Amendments.** These bylaws may be amended only by mail ballot, which includes email. Such amendments must be in accordance with section 7.1. Discussion of any proposed changes shall occur at a School membership meeting(s) before ballots are mailed. Proposed amendments shall be presented to the School membership in writing two weeks prior to the general School meeting in which they will be discussed. Changes in the School bylaws can be initiated by the director, the faculty advisory committee, or by a petition of 10 percent of the School faculty. Approval of amendments to the bylaws requires a two-thirds majority vote, provided that fifty percent of the School membership votes.

7.3 **Counting Mail Ballots.** The associate director and the chair of the faculty advisory committee shall tabulate the votes and report the results of the voting.