

BYLAWS
School of Natural Resources (SNR)
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN
Approved 3/18/2025

1) INTRODUCTION

These bylaws may be superseded by the bylaws of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR), the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR), the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), or the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska.

2) MEMBERSHIP

Faculty, staff, and graduate students are collectively referred to in these bylaws as SNR membership. Faculty shall consist of every person holding the rank of instructor or above who holds a full, joint, or adjunct appointment in SNR. Staff shall consist of all managerial/professional and office/service personnel who have an appointment in SNR. Graduate students shall include all students pursuing a post-baccalaureate degree administered by SNR. Undergraduate students shall consist of all students pursuing a baccalaureate degree administered by SNR.

3) VOTING PRIVILEGES

All faculty and staff, excluding undergraduate and graduate students, having a paid position appointed for one year or more in SNR and having an appointment in SNR shall have voting privileges in their respective meetings. 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(s) and the faculty advisory committee, shall make the determination and inform SNR membership.

4) DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION

4.1 Director

The school has a director who is the chief administrative officer of the department. Faculty and staff of SNR shall have the opportunity to provide input into the director's annual evaluation. The director is responsible for the administration, leadership, and development of the school including all undergraduate and graduate teaching, research, public service/extension, outreach/community service activities, and professional development of the faculty and staff.

4.2 Associate Director for SNR and Director of Conservation and Survey

The Director of Conservation and Survey shall serve as an associate director for SNR with an administrative appointment of .50 FTE. They will be a qualified geoscientist and will direct the activities of the Conservation and Survey Division and serve as the State Geologist. They will assist the director in the administration of SNR; will be an official administrative representative of SNR; will have signatory authority when the director is absent; and will provide leadership on specific tasks or agenda items delegated to this person by the director. The director of conservation and survey shall be a faculty member with a majority of their appointment in SNR.

4.3 Associate Director for Research

The associate director for research shall have an administrative appointment of .25 FTE. They will assist the director in the administration of SNR; oversee graduate recruitment, admissions, and advising; be an official administrative representative of SNR; will have signatory authority when the director is absent; and will provide leadership on specific tasks or agenda items delegated to this person by the director. The associate director for research shall be a faculty member with a majority of their appointment in SNR.

4.4 Associate Director for Undergraduate Education

The associate director for undergraduate education shall have an administrative appointment of

.25 FTE. They will assist the director in the administration of SNR; oversee undergraduate recruitment and advising; be an official administrative representative of SNR; will have signatory authority when the director is absent; and will provide leadership on specific tasks or agenda items delegated to this person by the director. The associate director shall be a faculty member with a majority of their appointment in SNR.

4.5 Coordinators

The director may have coordinators to assist with the administration of the school. Coordinators shall be faculty with a majority appointment in the school. Their focus area and length of appointment are at the director's discretion.

4.6 Faculty

SNR faculty shall include tenure-track and specialty track ranks, e.g., lecturer, postdoctoral research associate, senior research associate, extension educator, geoscientist, research professor. SNR faculty shall maintain discipline/expertise areas to organize faculty, staff, and students. These areas shall be referred to as "Program" areas.

4.6.1 Program Areas and Program Area Leaders

Each program area shall select a leader and co-leader in consultation with the director. The leader shall be responsible for improved communication between the faculty and director, shall enhance interaction and discussion within and among program areas, shall call regular meetings of the program area (minimum of two per semester), and shall work with the director and program area faculty to establish and complete goals each year. Each program area shall identify an individual to serve as the curriculum chair for all degree programs within the program area; if no one is identified, the program area leader shall serve in this capacity. The leader shall serve a two-year term and may succeed themselves for a second term. The co-leader shall serve a two-year term which should be staggered with the leader's term and may serve multiple successive terms. Faculty in a program area may approve, by vote, a leader to serve more than two terms.

4.7 Graduate Student Association

SNR shall support a graduate student association (GSA) that will serve as a representative voice of students in graduate degree programs in SNR. The SNR GSA will annually elect officers and select representatives to serve on SNR Committees with a graduate student seat.

5) STANDING COMMITTEES

The administrative work of the department is conducted, in part, through a system of standing and ad hoc committees, which are elected, appointed, or renewed by the Director. The chair of each committee is responsible for keeping adequate records of committee decisions. Committee assignments are July 1 through June 30.

5.1 Faculty Advisory Committee

The faculty advisory committee will be comprised of an odd number of members: each of the program area leaders, program area co-leaders, and one member or more to be elected at-large. At least one faculty member will be specialty track. The number of at-large members shall be determined by the director and committee chair. Faculty representatives at-large must have greater than 0.50 FTE of their appointment in SNR. The committee shall have one member from each of the following: staff, graduate students, and centers. The associate directors shall serve as ex officio members.

The faculty advisory committee shall advise the director on SNR budget, facilities, committee

nominations, general operation issues, and shall work with the director on matters of concern to faculty, staff, and students. The faculty advisory committee shall meet with the director no less than twice each semester.

Each spring semester, the faculty advisory committee shall identify candidates for the SNR committee ballots. The committee shall seek broad, equitable representation from SNR's voting members (see section 3). 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. Faculty will vote on faculty committee positions, and staff will vote on staff committee positions. A simple majority vote (see section 7.3) shall be used. In the case of a tie, a runoff election shall be held. If circumstances warrant and with approval from the faculty advisory committee, the director shall appoint SNR committee members in lieu of a vote.

5.2 Graduate Committee

The graduate committee shall provide oversight for post-baccalaureate degree programs in natural resource sciences, graduate program curriculum, and graduate student admissions and success. The committee shall be composed of seven faculty members, one non-voting graduate student, and two non-voting ex officio members: the associate director for research and the teaching coordinator. Six of the voting faculty members must have their graduate faculty home in SNR. One member may have a courtesy or adjunct appointment in SNR. 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 SNR graduate student association shall elect the graduate student representative to the committee. The graduate student shall participate in discussions on the matters of graduate policy and procedure matters, but will not be involved in admissions decisions, awarding of assistantships, reviews of graduate student academic performance or progress, and changes in graduate student status. The committee will elect a chair.

The committee shall approve applications for admission; review applications for SNR assistantships when available; review graduate student academic performance and progress at the request of the faculty advisor; recommend to faculty necessary changes in graduate student status; make recommendations pertaining to curricular changes in graduate courses; award graduate teaching assistantships; suggest and modify graduate degree programs and areas of specialization; modify, as needed, the SNR website on graduate student policies and procedures; work with the director to identify a graduate student ombudsperson; and carry out other assignments as requested by the director.

5.3 Promotion and Tenure Committee

The promotion and tenure committee shall be composed of an odd number of members: two elected representatives from each of the program areas and one or more members to be elected at-large. The director and committee chair will determine the number of at-large members. All members shall be elected by the full faculty and serve three-year terms. Five members of this committee must be fully promoted (i.e., rank of full professor or equivalent rank). Five members of this committee must be tenured. All members of this committee must have greater than 0.50 FTE in SNR. The director and associate directors cannot serve on the promotion and tenure committee. No individual, whether in a supervisory role or otherwise, shall exert any inappropriate influence on any member of the committee or on its deliberations.

The promotion and tenure 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 with tenure home in SNR is being considered for a faculty position 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. All recommendations of the promotion and tenure committee shall be independent of the recommendations of the SNR director. The SNR Promotion and Tenure Committee will follow published IANR guidelines on review of faculty with split appointments between SNR and other academic units.

SNR will follow the Executive Vice Chancellor's guidelines for post-tenure review. The director will assign three fully promoted SNR faculty to serve as ad hoc post-tenure review. Members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee may be among those appointed to the ad hoc review panel.

5.4 Undergraduate Committee (SNRUC)

The undergraduate committee shall be composed of an odd number of members and shall include the curriculum committee chairs (or designee) for majors administered by SNR, the science literacy coordinator (or designee), the teaching coordinator, and one or two members elected at-large to ensure an odd number. At-large committee members shall be elected for staggered three-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms. The SNR teaching coordinator (or designee) shall serve as the chair of this committee, represent SNR on the CASNR curriculum committee, and coordinate all university level assessments. The associate director for undergraduate education, teaching coordinator, and advising coordinator shall serve as non-voting ex officio members of the SNRUC.

The committee approves undergraduate curriculum proposals including course changes, new courses, and new programs. The committee shall foster and facilitate undergraduate teaching within SNR by advising the director on matters pertaining to undergraduate education. This includes assisting the director or their designee in identifying and implementing actions to enhance the physical and institutional infrastructure required to support teaching and offer recommendations to increase recognition of SNR.

6) OPERATIONAL AND AD HOC COMMITTEES

The school shall have committees whose function is operational in nature. The director may, with input from the associate directors and the faculty advisory committee, add, remove, or change these committees as needed. Information about operational, standing, and ad hoc committees shall be maintained on the SNR website.

In the absence of a related standing committee, the director shall make use of ad hoc committees that consider important departmental issues and problems. The director shall create the ad hoc committee and assign a charge and deadline.

7) MEETINGS

General SNR, faculty, and/or staff meetings are held to keep faculty and staff informed of departmental matters and to take action, as necessary, to implement or modify departmental functions. SNR shall meet as a body at least twice each year. Program Areas shall meet twice each semester, at a minimum. Staff meetings shall be convened at least once each semester. Additional meetings may be called as needed by the director, associate directors, the faculty advisory committee, or the staff advisory committee.

Committee chairs are responsible for calling meetings for standing and ad hoc committees. Appropriate notice of the meeting must be given.

7.1 Meeting Announcement

All general SNR, faculty, and/or staff meetings shall be announced via email at least one week

prior to the meeting time. A written agenda shall be distributed in advance of the meeting. The director may call an emergency meeting that violates the one-week notice requirement.

7.2 Meeting Attendance

SNR membership with voting privileges are expected to attend faculty, staff, and SNR general meetings and actively engage in discussions and voting decisions. Graduate and undergraduate students having majors coordinated by SNR may participate in discussions at appropriate meetings; students in attendance may engage in discussion and participate as non-voting members.

7.3 Meeting Records

Written minutes shall be taken to adequately record meeting discussions and will be provided to faculty and/or staff, as appropriate. Confidential or sensitive issues will not be included in any published meeting minutes.

8) VOTING

8.1 Quorum

A quorum consists of 35 percent or more of the appropriate SNR membership with voting privileges as defined in section 3 of these bylaws. Each voting member in attendance shall have one vote. A simple majority of those present will be used to pass an issue that comes to a vote. Normally, voting will be voice vote. Any member may request a show of hands or paper ballot, but the latter must be supported by a majority of members present.

8.2 Confidential Ballot

Voting by confidential ballot shall be conducted electronically. Normally, ballots will be due 10 calendar days after the initial distribution.

8.3 Bylaw Changes

Voting on changes in the bylaws will be by confidential ballot. Fifty percent of SNR's voting members identified in section 3 must vote. A two-thirds majority will be required.

8.4 Other Issues that call for a vote

Other issues may be placed on a ballot by the director in consultation with the faculty advisory committee or by a majority vote of the members attending any general school meeting. These issues shall be decided by a simple majority vote.

9) AMENDING THE BYLAWS

Changes to the bylaws may be initiated by the director, associate directors, faculty advisory committee, or by a petition of 10 percent of SNR faculty with voting privileges. Changes will *shared electronically with the SNR faculty and a discussion will be scheduled one week after the distribution date. If no changes are made by the end of business on the date of the scheduled discussion, they will be immediately distributed for a vote. If changes are made by the end of business on the date of the scheduled discussion, we will repeat from * until no changes are needed and the vote is initiated. A confidential ballot will then be distributed electronically. Amendments to the bylaws will become effective following approval by SNR faculty with voting privileges (per section 8.3). Changes to standing committees may become effective with the next regular election of committee membership, except in situations where a special election is necessary as determined by the director or the faculty advisory committee. In lieu of a special election and with approval from the faculty advisory committee, the director shall appoint members.

10) OPERATING GUIDELINES

SNR shall designate and maintain a platform on which to share operating policies and procedures.