

2014

Bylaws for Graduate Program in Environmental Sciences (GPES)

SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

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Bylaws for Graduate Program in Environmental Sciences (GPES)

Article 1. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

- 1.1 Program.** The Graduate Program in Environmental Science (GPES) is an interdepartmental graduate program housed within the Division of Environmental Science. The Division is overseen by the Director of the Division. The GPES program is overseen by the Director of GPES.
- 1.2 Areas of Study.** The program is organized into groups of faculty around core interests, referred to as Areas of Study (AOS). Each AOS is led by a faculty leader responsible for overseeing review of graduate applications (the counterpart to graduate coordinators within individual Departments) and promoting communication and cooperation within the AOS.
- 1.3 GPES Committee.** The GPES Committee consists of the Director of the Division of Environmental Science, the Director of GPES, and the AOS leaders.

Article 2. VISION STATEMENT AND MISSION

- 2.1 Vision.** GPES is a unique response to emerging institutional and analytical challenges of developing environmental problems. The program, which draws upon faculty from throughout the College, emphasizes a multidisciplinary approach to environmental understanding and stewardship. It maintains a strong academic orientation, facilitating student and faculty engagement of fundamental environmental challenges such as resource utilization and sustainability, the uses and limits of scientific prediction, risk and sustainability, and a systemic concern for the health of the environment.
- 2.2 Mission.** The mission of GPES is to provide interdepartmental training to graduate students to prepare them to address environmental concerns and problems, investigate practical solutions to them and foster effective environmental stewardship. The program provides for the following:
1. Multidisciplinary approach: recognition of the necessity to approach environmental problems with input from several disciplines and professions,
 2. Holistic perspective: awareness of and deference to the interdependence of elements within broadly defined ecosystems, including physical, biological, social and economic systems,
 3. Topical grounding: competency to understand and apply the principles of a particular subject of environmental inquiry in sufficient depth to interact with other disciplines and professional fields,
 4. Realistic experience: internships, focused projects, theses, and dissertations provide opportunities to apply skills obtained in graduate training to problems of societal and scientific importance.

Article 3. GOVERNANCE AND OPERATION

- 3.1 Faculty.** Faculty are admitted to GPES by application to specific Areas of Study, subject to approval by the GPES Committee. Appointments are for 3 years, contingent on satisfactory performance, and may be renewed for any number of additional 3-year appointments. Faculty must meet the definition of “graduate faculty” as described in the SUNY ESF Bylaws.

Responsibilities: GPES Faculty serve as major professors for graduate students enrolled in the GPES program. Only GPES Faculty can serve as MPs for GPES students, but anyone can serve on steering committees for GPES students. The GPES Faculty approve curriculum and bylaw changes by majority vote.

- 3.2 Area Leaders.**

Appointment: Area Leaders are appointed by the President upon the recommendation of the Provost and the approval of the GPES Committee for renewable 3-year terms.

Responsibilities: Area Leaders are responsible for communications with the Faculty who are members of their respective Areas. They are responsible for coordinating the review of graduate applications and making application decisions. Area Leaders are also responsible for recruiting and assessing MPs in the Area, approving appointments to graduate steering committees, programs of study, and petitions pertaining to students in their Area. They should convene Faculty within their AOS at least once per semester.

- 3.3 GPES Committee.**

Membership: The GPES Committee consists of the Area Leaders, the Director of GPES, and the Director of Environmental Science.

Responsibilities: The Committee is responsible for GPES policies and programs. The Committee oversees the actions of the Area Leaders in graduate admissions and monitoring the progress of graduate students. The GPES Committee approves Faculty membership in the program and forwards proposals for curriculum and bylaw changes to the Faculty for approval. The GPES Committee normally meets monthly during the academic year.

- 3.4 Director.** The program's Director shall be appointed by the Provost in consultation with the GPES Committee and shall be an ex officio member of the program's Steering Committee with voting privileges.

- 3.5 Subsidiary bodies.** The GPES Committee shall have the power to create such subcommittees, advisory boards, working groups, and other subsidiary bodies as it deems to be needed to carry out the work of the program.

- 3.6 Conduct of meetings.** A motion is passed when it receives an affirmative vote from more than half of the committee members. Disputes over conduct of a meeting shall be resolved by reference to the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

3.7 *Motions.* A permanent record shall be kept of all motions passed, which shall be available to the GPES Committee and all GPES Faculty.

Article 4. AMENDMENT OF THE BYLAWS

4.1 *Amendment of the Bylaws.* These bylaws may be amended or repealed by vote of a majority of the GPES Faculty, after introducing the proposed changes at least one week in advance, normally at a GPES faculty meeting.

4.2 *Severability.* If any provision of these bylaws is held to be illegal, unenforceable, or inconsistent with University rules, that provision shall be automatically severed and removed from these bylaws, the remainder of which shall remain in force.

This document was approved by the GPES Committee on October 28, 2014.

It was approved by the GPES Faculty on November 20, 2014.