

THE GAYLORD NELSON INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

March 2007

Mission and Vision

The MISSION of the Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies is to promote understanding of the environment and to define and solve environmental problems and issues through leadership in interdisciplinary instruction, research, and outreach at all levels, from campus to global.

Our VISION is that the Nelson Institute will help protect and enhance the environment for future generations by seeking environmentally sustainable ways to meet human needs in the 21st century. Specifically, the institute will

- promote environmental literacy among all UW-Madison students, faculty, and staff
- maintain and nurture academic excellence in a broad range of courses and in interdisciplinary degree and certificate programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels
- foster the development of integrated systems of thought and analysis involving concepts and methodologies in the humanities and the social and natural sciences
- define, analyze, solve, and prevent environmentally important problems through interdisciplinary research and scholarship
- help meet local, national, and international needs for environmental expertise by preparing managers, policy-makers, scientists, and scholars to work in interdisciplinary groups
- promote comprehensive understanding of environmental issues, problems, and their solutions through a proactive interdisciplinary outreach program for individuals and groups in the private and public sectors
- improve communication and cooperation within the university among groups involved in environmental instruction, research, and extension programs.

Background

A proposal for Academic Program Governance and Structure for the Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies (Nelson Institute) was approved on 22 January 1992, amended on 4 March 1992, and adopted on 3 February 1993. The document was revised during 1993 and approved on 25 October 1993. Major revisions occurred during 1995, and were adopted as "The Institute for Environmental Studies Policies and Procedures" on 26 April 1995. That document has been revised a number of times since 1995, including during the 1997-98, 2001-02, 2003-04, 2005-06, and 2006-07 academic years. All revisions are approved by the Nelson Institute Governance Faculty.

1. Academic Programs

The Nelson Institute administers an undergraduate Certificate in Environmental Studies, four graduate programs (Conservation Biology and Sustainable Development, Environmental Monitoring, Land Resources, and Water Resources Management), and three graduate certificates (Energy Analysis and Policy, Air Resources Management, and Transportation Management and Policy), offered under the Land Resources Program. The graduate degrees are "standing" degrees of the Graduate School.

2. Research

Professors, students, and staff researchers from across the campus conduct interdisciplinary environmental research on a multitude of topics through the Nelson Institute. The institute's Center for Climatic Research (including the Climate, People and Environment Program), Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment (including Environmental Policy Studies), and Land Tenure Center are the current focal points for this research. Recent topics of study within the institute include climate change and its potential impacts, local and regional water management, effects of pollution on human health, restoration of disturbed ecosystems, uses of new technology in environmental monitoring, and ecological sustainability and economic development.

3. Outreach

The Nelson Institute is committed to sharing its expertise and resources with local to global audiences. The mission of the Nelson Institute can only be achieved with a viable outreach effort. The institute sponsors public lectures and lecture series, organizes seminars, workshops, and conferences, and offers technical assistance in its areas of expertise.

Basic Premises

1. Environmental issues and problems are among the most urgent and serious concerns that society confronts. The university signaled the importance of and its commitment to the environment through the creation of the Nelson Institute in 1970. The institute advances the understanding of the environment and its problems by generating new knowledge (research), educating undergraduate and graduate students (instruction), and disseminating and applying knowledge for prevention or solution of those problems (outreach).
2. Environmental issues and problems are complex, and their understanding and solution require interdisciplinary approaches. The nature of its interdisciplinary mission argues that the Nelson Institute must be an intercollege program, rather than part of a traditional school or college. It also means it should act as a bridging organization, linking community to the university.
3. Under *Chapter 36.09(4) Wisconsin Statutes* and *Faculty Policies and Procedures (FP&P) 1.20*, faculty have the primary responsibility for: (1) developing, teaching, and ensuring the quality of the curricula, including individual courses and programs, whether certificates, majors or degrees; (2) matriculation and graduation of students; and (3) staffing, including recommendations for the hiring of faculty and staff, and promotion of faculty to tenure.

4. Since environmental studies programs are interdisciplinary and gain their academic strength from the disciplines, it is necessary to create a structure that facilitates interdisciplinary interaction. The viable modus is "joint executive committee appointments," and "affiliate faculty" appointments. (*FP&P 5.12.* and *5.13.*; see Appendix.) It also means that the Nelson Institute should lead in the development of effective processes and methodologies for integrating knowledge from different disciplines.
5. Because faculty participation in the Nelson Institute is based largely on voluntary contributions of time, and because the governance and administration of the institute cut across several schools and colleges and many disciplines, the role of the institute staff in coordinating these efforts is crucial. They provide integrative functions and serve as coordinators for campuswide efforts.
6. Consistent with its past procedures, the Nelson Institute will continue to be enriched by seeking, as appropriate, input from its students in the design and delivery of its programs.
7. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of environmental studies, the process of affiliation should be inclusive rather than exclusive. There is no target number of individuals to be involved. It is expected that the number will be larger than most disciplinary departments and may exceed the number in some existing UW-Madison division-level schools.
8. One of the great strengths of the UW-Madison is the unification of instruction, research, and outreach. Structures that integrate these functions are, by definition, strong structures. Historically, these functions have not been as fully integrated in the Nelson Institute as is desirable.
9. The UW-Madison has great strength in faculty governance, supported by pan-departmental review committees, including curriculum committees and admissions policy committees at the college, school, and campus levels, procedures for review of graduate degrees in the Graduate School, divisional committees at the campus level responsible for review of tenure proposals, and divisional committees and the interdivisional conference committee at the campus level responsible for review of courses. The UW-Madison does not have a comparable committee structure to facilitate and review interdisciplinary programs.

Organization

1. Faculty Appointments in the Nelson Institute

There are three types of faculty membership in the Nelson Institute: (1) Faculty, (2) Governance Faculty, and (3) Executive Committee. Faculty appointments in the institute are consistent with UW-Madison *FP&P*.

a. The Nelson Institute Faculty

FP&P 5.13. Affiliations allows a faculty member to be associated with a department without governance rights or a continuing departmental commitment. An individual who wishes to become Nelson Institute Faculty is asked to submit a letter stating the nature of her/his interest and a current curriculum vitae to the institute director, who will forward it to the executive committee for action at its next scheduled meeting.

Nelson Institute Faculty serve renewable three-year terms. They may serve on standing committees that allow their participation, but they are not required to do so.

By simple majority vote of the executive committee, the Nelson Institute Faculty comprises those faculty who:

- Advise one or more Nelson Institute undergraduate certificate students
- Serve as major professor for a Nelson Institute graduate student
- Teach a course that fulfills requirements for one or more Nelson Institute academic programs
- Participate in Nelson Institute research center activities
- Participate in the Nelson Institute outreach program

By simple majority vote of the executive committee, the Nelson Institute Faculty also comprises:

- Other faculty whose scholarly interests and activities intersect with those of the institute, who are recommended for membership by the Nelson Institute director or the chair of the institute's Academic Programs
- Academic staff whose scholarly interests and activities intersect with those of the institute, who are granted renewable zero dollar appointments in the institute and are recommended for membership by the Nelson Institute director or the chair of the institute's Academic Programs

b. The Nelson Institute Governance Faculty

FP&P 1.02.A. University Faculty states that "The university faculty consists of all persons who hold the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or instructor with at least a one-half time appointment in UW-Madison, or with a full-time appointment jointly between UW-Madison and UW-Extension."

FP&P 5.10. Departmental Faculties: Membership states that "All university faculty members as defined in 1.02. holding probationary appointments, tenure appointments, or joint governance appointments in a department shall have the right to vote and otherwise participate in the governance of that department."

Therefore, the automatic members of the Nelson Institute Governance Faculty comprises those individuals who are:

- Faculty who hold tenure/tenure track and/or funded appointments in the Nelson Institute

FP&P 5.12. Joint Governance Appointment allows a faculty or academic staff member in one department to participate in the governance of another department without a continuing commitment or tenure relationship with that department. Such individuals must agree to participate actively in institute activities. This participation should include attendance at governance faculty meetings and service on at least one ad hoc or

standing committee of the Nelson Institute.

By simple majority vote of the executive committee, the Nelson Institute Governance Faculty also comprises those faculty and academic staff who fall under one or more of the following conditions. Such individuals are granted renewable one-year terms:

- Associate director of the Nelson Institute
- Chair of the Nelson Institute's Academic Programs
- The chairs of the Nelson Institute's graduate and certificate programs
- The directors of the Nelson Institute's research centers

Other faculty or academic staff, who do not meet any of the above conditions, may request membership on the Nelson Institute Governance Faculty, and by simple majority vote of the executive committee may be granted renewable one-year terms.

It is understood that expiring terms continue until the next meeting of the executive committee is held at which action on renewal can be taken.

c. The Nelson Institute Executive Committee

Pursuant to *FP&P 5.20.A. 1. and 2., Departmental Executive Committees: Membership*, the Nelson Institute Executive Committee comprises tenured faculty who have:

- 50 percent or more of their tenure in the Nelson Institute
- less than 50 percent of their tenure in the Nelson Institute but for whom the Nelson Institute was the principal sponsor of their appointment

Pursuant to *FP&P 5.20.A.3.*, by simple majority vote of the executive committee, the Nelson Institute Executive Committee also comprises those tenured faculty in the following categories. Such individuals are granted renewable one-year terms:

- Faculty to whom the Nelson Institute has a continuing (tenure) commitment of less than one-half time, including zero percent tenure, and for whom the Nelson Institute was not the principal sponsor of the appointment
- Faculty who have a permanent budgetary commitment in the Nelson Institute but who do not have a tenure appointment in the institute
- Chair of the Nelson Institute's Academic Programs
- Directors of the Nelson Institute's research centers

It is understood that expiring terms continue until the next meeting of the executive committee is held at which action on renewal can be taken.

Elected members of the executive committee by nature of their agreement to serve in this capacity participate actively in institute and executive committee business and

activities, particularly the hiring and promotion of faculty.

d. Participation

Terms on the governance faculty and executive committee may vary according to their category. It is expected that appointments will continue as long as the individuals hold the positions that qualify them for membership on the governance faculty and/or executive committee. It is the goal of the Nelson Institute that each of the four major divisions (biological sciences, humanities, physical sciences, social studies) be represented among the members of the governance faculty.

It is expected that all faculty on the governance faculty agree to advise graduate and/or undergraduate students, and that all faculty and academic staff members of the governance faculty agree to participate in Nelson Institute governance activities, including regular attendance at faculty meetings and service on one or more standing committees. Meetings of the governance faculty (and executive committee, as needed) will be held monthly (September, October, November, February, March, and April) during the academic year. Additional meetings, and those occurring during summer months, will be called by the Nelson Institute director or the chair of Academic Programs as needed, or at the request of at least 25% of the automatic members of the governance faculty.

The agenda for governance faculty and executive committee meetings will be drafted by the director with input from the chair of Academic Programs. For faculty meetings:

- i. The designated parliamentary authority is defined by *FP&P 5.11.*;
- ii. a quorum is defined as a majority of the voting membership;
- iii. a simple majority vote is defined as more than half of those present and voting, and is required for votes on all motions except those provided in v. below or as state above;
- iv. abstentions have no effect on calculations of votes, and are considered blanks;
- v. an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the voting membership is required for adoption of motions dealing with personnel matters involving new faculty hires and promotions (including tenure decisions); and,
- vi. in votes dealing with promotion to full professor, the candidate is traditionally expected not to participate in the balloting.

2. Administration

- a. The Nelson Institute **Director** is appointed by the Chancellor and reports to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs/Provost. The Director is a member of the Nelson Institute Governance Faculty, and chairs meetings of the Governance Faculty and the Executive Committee.
- b. The Nelson Institute Governance Faculty conducts an annual preferential ballot from among its membership for a **Chair** of Academic Programs to provide oversight of the undergraduate and graduate programs. The result of the ballot is transmitted to the

Nelson Institute Director. The time commitment of the chair is at least 50%, funded by the Nelson Institute, and subject to budget negotiations.

- c. Each **Nelson Institute research center** is administered by a faculty director who is appointed annually by the Nelson Institute Director.
- d. Oversight for the **Nelson Institute Public Information Office (PIO)** is provided by an academic staff member who is charged with that task.

3. Staff Involvement

The Nelson Institute recognizes the importance of staff input into governance and policy-making. Staff provide support to the institute's committees as needed. One staff member serves as a voting member of the institute's Academic Planning Council (see 5.a. below). In addition, the Director will invite the institute's academic staff to elect one or more representatives to serve on appropriate standing and ad hoc committees. Staff attendance at meetings of the governance faculty is strongly encouraged.

Academic staff from outside the Nelson Institute who actively participate in one or more of the activities listed in 1.a. above may request affiliate status. Those interested are encouraged to submit a letter of request and a current curriculum vitae or resume to the institute director, who will forward it to the executive committee for action at its next scheduled meeting. Affiliate status will be granted for renewable one-year terms and will confer zero-dollar, honorary associate/fellow appointments on the affiliate academic staff. They may serve on standing and ad hoc committees that allow academic staff participation, but are not required to do so.

4. Student Involvement

The Nelson Institute recognizes the importance of student input into governance and policy-making. Students in each of the institute's graduate programs annually elect one or more of their members to represent them at meetings of their graduate program committee. The Director will invite the institute's students to elect one or more representatives to serve on appropriate standing and ad hoc committees. Student attendance at meetings of the governance faculty is encouraged.

5. Committees of the Nelson Institute

All members of a committee are voting members unless specifically stated otherwise.

a. Academic Planning Council

In accordance with FP&P 3.08, an Academic Planning Council (APC) is established to advise the Director on "programs and budgetary planning" and "to present departmental, school, or college views and opinions" to the Director. The APC is intended to be a central governance vehicle for faculty and staff input into a broad range of planning and decision-making affecting Nelson Institute programs and budgets, and the Director has an obligation to engage in meaningful consultation on a broad range of policy decisions with the APC.

The APC is charged with (1) advising the Director on matters such as program review and future expansion or contraction of academic programs within the Nelson Institute;

(2) advising the Director in developing strategic plans and long-range planning for the institute; (3) considering any other factors relevant to the capacity of the institute to fulfill its missions; and (4) advising the Director on program decisions likely to affect promotions to tenure or nonrenewal of probationary faculty appointments.

The APC consists of seven Governance Faculty members, one academic staff member, and the Director, who chairs the APC and serves as a member ex-officio. Six of the faculty members are nominated by the Personnel Committee, approved by the Governance Faculty, and serve staggered, three-year terms. The remaining faculty member is appointed annually by the Director. The academic staff member, whose primary responsibilities are instruction, outreach/extension, and/or research, is nominated by the Personnel Committee, approved by the institute's academic staff, and serves a three-year term. At least three of the four major divisions (biological sciences, humanities, physical sciences, social studies) must be represented among the seven voting faculty members. The APC will meet at least three times each semester.

b. Instructional Committee

The Instructional Committee is charged with general oversight of the Nelson Institute's Academic Programs. Included in its responsibilities are the following:

- i. Coordination of the Nelson Institute undergraduate and graduate programs.
- ii. Review of admissions criteria, size of the programs, recruitment and placement activities, fellowship and other types of support.
- iii. Curricular and course changes recommended by the individual academic programs.
- iv. Development and coordination of budget and course offering requests in support of the academic programs.
- v. Alumni activities.
- vi. Assisting the Chair of Academic Programs with the preparation and dispersal of the annual budget for the Academic Programs.
- vii. Other matters that affect the academic programs.

The committee is authorized to make final decisions regarding course change proposals and new course offerings, except for courses that are funded by the Nelson Institute, in which case it makes recommendations to the Governance Faculty. It may also consider other matters that deal with the institute's undergraduate and graduate course offerings and curricula.

The committee consists of the Chair of Academic Programs, who chairs the committee, and the chairs of the graduate and undergraduate programs. Up to six additional members may be appointed by the Director from among the Governance Faculty, and academic staff and students in the Nelson Institute.

c. Outreach Committee

The Outreach Committee is charged with identifying outreach opportunities for the Nelson Institute, with providing advice on the institute's lectures and colloquia, and with recommending outside speakers. It prepares reports, as appropriate, on priorities and opportunities for interdisciplinary environmental outreach activities and may solicit recommendations for the institute from public and private agencies. It could appoint a non-university advisory council from among these groups and from Nelson Institute alumni. It also helps develop long-term goals for outreach activities, provides general oversight for outreach activities, and assists in the preparation and dispersal of the annual budget for the institute's outreach programs.

The committee consists of the institute's Director or designee, the manager of the Public Information Office, and at least two faculty members active in outreach activities, who are appointed by the Director. Faculty may be drawn from either the Faculty or the Governance Faculty. Alumni, community members, academic staff, and student members are encouraged to serve on the Outreach Committee. The committee chair is elected annually by committee members.

d. Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee is responsible for personnel issues, awards, and nominations. The responsibilities of the committee include the following:

- i. Review of candidates and recommendation of hiring of all new faculty who will have a budgeted and/or tenure/tenure-track appointment in the Nelson Institute.
- ii. Review and/or concurrence in recommendations for faculty tenure, faculty promotion, extension of faculty appointments, and, when appropriate, for academic staff appointments and changes in same.
- iii. Review and recommendation of faculty leaves of absence and their extensions.
- iv. Annual evaluation of faculty and instructional academic staff funded for their involvement in Nelson Institute activities, as part of the merit review process, and ranking of evaluated faculty and staff for the purpose of assisting the Chair and Director in negotiating salary increases.
- v. Preparation of an annual evaluation of the Chair of Academic Programs in order to provide guidance and feedback to the Chair and the Director.
- vi. Handling graduate assistant policies, procedures and grievances.
- vii. Offering advice to the Director and the Chair of Academic Programs on nominations for various student, faculty, and staff awards.
- viii. Annual solicitation and evaluation of nominations for the Chair of Academic Programs and for members of committees that have elected members, including the elected members of the Governance Faculty; recommendation of appointed members to committees and program-specific program committees.
- ix. Organization of post-tenure review efforts and review of the results.

The committee is composed of five members of the Nelson Institute Executive Committee appointed jointly by the Director and the Chair of Academic Programs. The committee chair is elected annually by the committee members. When graduate assistant policies and procedures are discussed, the committee may invite Nelson Institute graduate assistant representatives to participate.

e. Research Committee

The Research Committee is charged with identification of research opportunities for the Nelson Institute. It prepares reports, as appropriate, on priorities and opportunities for interdisciplinary environmental research and solicits recommendations for the institute from public agencies, the private sector, and peer institutions. It assists the Director with the preparation and dispersal of the annual budget for the institute's research programs. It may appoint a non-university advisory council from among these groups and from Nelson Institute alumni.

The committee consists of the Associate Director, the research center directors or their designees, and at least three faculty members or research academic staff, appointed by the Director. Academic staff and student members are encouraged. The Director of the institute serves as an ex officio member of the Research Committee. The committee chair is elected annually by committee members.

f. Degree-Specific Academic Program Committees

Each Nelson Institute graduate degree program, graduate curriculum (e.g., Energy Analysis and Policy; Air Resources Management; Transportation Management and Policy), and the Undergraduate Certificate Program may have its own program faculty. All members of each degree-specific academic program faculty are also members of the Nelson Institute Faculty and agree to advise students in that program.

Each Nelson Institute academic program has a Program Chair who is appointed by the Chair of the institute's Academic Programs in consultation with the Instructional Committee and the Director. Each graduate and undergraduate program chair recommends a **Program Committee**, subject to the approval of the Chair of Academic Programs and the Director. In the case of the graduate programs, the Dean of the Graduate School must approve the appointments of both the Program Chair and Program Committee members. Graduate curricula may also have a program committee if deemed advisable, subject to the approval of the Chair of Academic Programs and the Director of the institute. Each committee consists of 6-15 members, a majority of whom are Nelson Institute Governance Faculty. Each member serves a one-year term that may be renewed for additional terms. Involvement by students and their attendance at committee meetings are encouraged. Program and curriculum chairs are funded, subject to budget negotiations. Responsibilities of each Program Committee include:

- i. General administration and overview of the program/curriculum/certificate.
- ii. Admissions decisions following guidelines established by the Nelson Institute Instructional Committee and approved by the Program Committee of the relevant academic program.

- iii. Selection of candidates for university and other fellowships.
 - iv. Appointments of members to the program faculty. A faculty member may be involved in more than one program, and must be a member of the Nelson Institute Faculty.
 - v. Recommendation of curriculum and course changes, subject to review by the Nelson Institute Instructional Committee.
 - vi. Preparation of budget requests, including requests for course offerings necessary to support the program.
 - vii. Approval of student requests for variances from the published curriculum.
 - viii. Preparation/updating of program brochures, handbooks, and other relevant documentation.
- g. Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees will be created by the Director as needs arise, for specific lengths of time, normally not to exceed one year. Membership and charge will be determined at the time an ad hoc committee is created.