

Constitution of the College of Natural and Social Sciences University of Nebraska at Kearney

Preamble.

The College of Natural and Social Sciences is committed to providing students the opportunity for education of the highest quality within the discipline areas of the Natural and Social Sciences. Students will learn to develop an understanding and appreciation of scientific and humanistic perspectives within and between the college disciplines. Students will learn the major findings and methods in the natural and social sciences that have influenced our culture and be able to demonstrate that understanding. They will participate in an intellectual atmosphere that explores the relationship of self and the world and will be able to demonstrate that relationship in their formal work. They will develop the personal and intellectual standards necessary to achieve competence in their chosen field of endeavor and demonstrate that competence in their formal work. To accomplish these ends the College will provide instruction of scholarly and professional excellence at the general studies and advanced levels that illuminates opportunities and limitations of the natural and social sciences, encourages application of the methods and findings of science to the human condition, and prepares students to matriculate as life-long learners who will continue to educate themselves about the role of the natural and social sciences in their lives.

Article I. Faculty

Section 1. Responsibilities.

Subject to the powers vested in the Board, or delegated to its administrative officers, the immediate government of the College shall be by its faculty.

Section 2. Voting membership.

Those who qualify as voting members of the Faculty of the College of Natural and Social Sciences (hereafter referred to as faculty or the Faculty)-must meet all of the following requirements:

- The individual must hold a faculty rank of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor.
- The individual's employment status with the University of Nebraska at Kearney must include eligibility for 1.0 full-time-equivalent (FTE) fringe benefits.
- The individual's non-administrative workload assignment within the College must be equal to or greater than 0.5 FTE.
- The individual's administrative workload assignment cannot exceed 0.5 FTE.

Qualifying individuals with workload responsibilities in more than one college will declare in which college they desire to be a voting member. Qualifying individuals with workload responsibilities in more than one division within the College will be a voting member in the division with the greatest workload share. If there are equal workload shares in more than one division, the individual will declare in which division he or she desires to be a voting member.

Section 3. Ex officio membership.

The Dean of the College of Natural and Social Sciences and such other persons as may be designated by the Faculty shall be ex officio members of the Faculty, without voting privileges.

Section 4. Meetings.

a. Regular business meetings will be held in October and March, at a time designated by the Dean with at least two weeks notice given to the Faculty.

b. Special meetings may be called by the Dean of the College. Special meetings must be called by the Dean within ten work days after petition by at least ten Faculty members, by request of the Advisory Committee, or by vote of the Faculty when in regular or special session.

c. Thirty percent of the Faculty constitutes a quorum at any meeting of the Faculty. When voting is conducted via mail, faculty are assumed to be absent unless they cast a vote. In this case, a quorum is met when at least thirty percent of the Faculty cast a vote.

d. Meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised where not in conflict with the Constitution or By- of the College Laws

Article II. Committees.

Section 1. Standing Committees.

There shall be four standing committees: the Advisory Committee, the Educational Policy Committee, the Rank and Tenure Committee, and the Oversight Committee.

a. The Advisory Committee shall:

1. advise the Dean on matters initiated by the Committee or by the Faculty;
2. advise the Dean of matters he or she refers to it;
3. advise the Dean on implementation of policy;
4. review the long term and general aspects of the College's activities, including staff, faculty and facility requirements;
5. formulate policy for presentation to the Faculty;
6. have general review responsibility and make recommendations concerning leave of absence and sabbatical policies within the College.

b. The Educational Policy Committee shall:

1. advise the Dean on all matters of educational policy;
2. exercise general responsibility for the College's academic standards;
3. recommend to the Faculty proposed policy concerning admission and graduation requirements, including changes in degree requirements, new programs, and new degrees;
4. be authorized by the Faculty to pass on student petitions for relief from College rules; determine addition of courses, deletion of courses, changes in course names and numbers. After acting under this authorization, the Committee will circulate its decisions in writing to the Faculty. These decisions will be considered approved unless, within fifteen work days of issuance, action is initiated under Article 1, section 4,b.
5. receive from the Dean the names of students who have completed the requirements for graduation. Faculty members of the Committee are authorized by the Faculty to recommend to the Chancellor, the President, and the Board of Regents that respective degrees be awarded.
6. serve in an advisory capacity to the Dean for students who believe that evaluation of their academic progress has been prejudiced or capricious. Committee procedures shall provide for changing of a student's evaluation, upon the committee's finding that an academic evaluation by a member of the faculty has been prejudiced or capricious.

c. The Rank and Tenure Committee shall:

1. review departmental rank and tenure recommendations.
2. work with the Dean to determine rank and tenure recommendations for the College.
If the recommendation of the Rank and Tenure Committee differs from the department or the Dean's recommendation, the Dean shall so inform the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Chancellor. Members of the committee shall not be eligible to serve during the academic year they present themselves for promotion. Department chairs who are members of this committee must step aside when a member from their department is being considered for promotion or tenure.

3. advise the Dean on other personnel matters.

d. The Oversight Committee shall:

1. advise the Dean on matters relating to the philosophy of the College as outlined in the Preamble of the Constitution.
2. exercise general oversight to insure that the College's policies and procedures adhere to the philosophy of the College.
3. organize and conduct elections within the College.

Section 2. Special Committees.

Special committees for the purpose of holding elections, solving grievances, etc., may be created by the Dean, by the Faculty, and by the Standing Committees.

Section 3. Committee membership.

a. The Dean is an ex officio member of committees of the College, without voting privileges.

b. The members of the Rank and Tenure Committee will be tenured faculty at the rank of associate professor and/or professor. The Advisory Committee and the Oversight Committee will have faculty as members, and the Educational Policy Committee will have faculty and students as members.

1. Means of election and the number of faculty and student members of the standing committees will be as prescribed in the by-laws .
2. Each division shall elect three members to each of the standing committees, and no standing committee shall have more than one member from a department. Department chairs shall be considered members of the faculty. Terms of service shall be for three years with staggered terms so that one-third of the faculty membership is elected every year. To ensure staggered terms for each college division, the Advisory Committee shall be empowered to set terms shorter than three years; however, incumbent members' terms shall not be shortened .
3. Student members of the Educational Policy Committee will be Natural and Social Sciences juniors or seniors with each division equally represented.

c. Faculty members of the Advisory Committee, the Educational Policy Committee, and the Oversight Committee shall not be eligible for more than two consecutive 3-year terms or for membership on more than one standing committee. Members of the Rank and Tenure Committee may, however, serve an unlimited number of terms if re-elected.

d. In case of a vacancy on a standing committee, a special election will be held for the purpose of electing a replacement.

e. Members of special committees will be appointed by the Dean, unless otherwise determined for special committees created by the Faculty.

Article III. Office of the Dean

Section 1. Responsibilities.

The Dean of the College shall provide educational leadership; shall be the officer primarily charged with the administration of the College; serve as intermediary between the College and the University; be the presiding officer at Faculty meetings; appoint a parliamentarian after consultation with the Advisory Committee; shall report to the Faculty at regular business meetings on the status of past College policy; serve to resolve grade appeals with the aid of an appointed appeals committee if deemed necessary.

Section 2. Selection of the Dean, Associate Deans and Assistant Deans.

Appointment of the Dean, Associate Deans, and Assistant Deans shall be recommended to the President and the Board of Regents by the Chancellor, following procedures specified in the by-laws of the Board. At least every third anniversary year of appointment, the Advisory Committee shall make recommendations to the Chancellor or designated representative concerning

continued appointment of the Dean, Associate Dean, or Assistant Dean.

Section 3. Temporary vacancy.

In case of incapacitation or other temporary vacancy in the office of the Dean, the Advisory Committee shall confer with the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs on the appointment of an Acting Dean.

Article IV. Departments.

Section 1.

A department is an academic community of interest and an administrative unit of the College. Subject to the jurisdiction of institutions that have overall responsibility for the University of Nebraska at Kearney and in conformity with the policies of the College of Natural and Social Sciences, a department shall determine its policies and programs through means adopted by the department. The chair of the department or the departmental staff may make recommendations to the Dean and Faculty of the College concerning the welfare of the department or its relations to other departments. Before making such recommendations the chair of the department shall consult with the departmental faculty. Where the recommendation of the chair differs from the advice given by the departmental faculty, the chair shall so inform the Dean. Meetings of the departmental staff may be called by the Chancellor, the Dean, the chair, or by a majority of its members.

Section 2. Chair.

- a. The department chair shall be responsible to the Dean for departmental administration; be the department's official representative in all matters except those delegated to other members of the department; and serve as intermediary between the department and other individuals and units of the university.
- b. Chairs shall be appointed by the Board of Regents, upon recommendation of the Dean, after appropriate consultation with the departmental faculty and concurrence by the Chancellor and the President, for a term not exceeding five years but eligible for reappointment. Prior to recommending the reappointment of a chair, the Dean shall take a closed ballot of the department members on the question of reappointment of the incumbent.
- c. In case of a vacancy existing or pending in a department chair, the Dean will request the department to provide suggestions and the name or names of candidates, a request which shall be fulfilled through means adopted by the department.

Section 3. Council of Department Chairs.

- a. The Council of Department Chairs shall consist of chairs of all departments of the college. The Dean and Assistant and Associate Deans of the college and the directors of schools or programs administered by the college shall be non-voting members of the Council. In the event a member must be absent from a council meeting, a representative to the council meeting may be appointed by the absent member.
- b. The Council shall:
 1. advise the Dean in matters relating to administrative policies and procedures within the College of Natural and Social Sciences and its departments or other administrative units. These advisory duties shall not supersede those delegated to the Advisory and Educational Policy Committees as defined in Article II, Section 1.
 2. make recommendations to the Dean in matters relating to university administrative policies and procedures which affect the College of Natural and Social Sciences and its departments or other administrative units.
 3. provide a forum for discussion of mutual problems and concerns relating to the administration of departments or other units within the College of Natural and Social Sciences.
- c. The Council shall convene at regular intervals to be determined by the membership at the beginning of each academic year. Any member may request the presiding officer to include an item in the agenda of a regular meeting. Special meetings of the board may be called at the request of the Dean, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Chancellor, or any member of the Council.
- d. The Dean is the presiding officer of the Council. In addition to chairing meetings of the Council, the Dean shall be re-

sponsible for:

1. establishing a meeting time for the Council and calling special meetings at the request of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Chancellor, or Council members.
2. receiving agenda items for Council meetings and distributing agendas to Council members.

Article V. Supra-Departmental or Inter-Departmental Units.

Supra-Departmental or Inter-Departmental units, such as divisions, schools, interdisciplinary programs, may be established. Channels of administrative communication shall be defined when such units are created.

Article VI. Amendments.

Section 1. Proposal of Amendments.

Amendments to the constitution or by-laws may be proposed by the Advisory Committee, or by at least twenty Faculty members to the Advisory Committee, but in either case no later than ten work days before a regular Faculty meeting or a special Faculty meeting.

Section 2. Approval of Amendments.

- a. Proposed amendments to the constitution will be circulated in writing to the Faculty by the Advisory Committee at least five work days prior to the next regular Faculty meeting or a special Faculty meeting. Voting will be by distributed ballot either at the meeting or by subsequent paper mail or electronic mail, as determined by the Oversight Committee. A simple majority approval of the Faculty voting on the question will be necessary for resolution of the question.
- b. Proposed amendments to the By-Laws will be circulated in writing to the Faculty by the Advisory Committee at least five work days prior to the next regular or special faculty meeting. Voting will be by distributed ballot either at the meeting or by subsequent paper mail or electronic mail, as determined by the Oversight Committee. A simple majority approval of the Faculty voting on the question will be necessary for adoption.

Article VII. Approval of Policy

“Policy” under this constitution is defined as any substantive rule that governs College operations, arises under the jurisdiction of one or more of the standing committees of the College, and is not normally contained in the College Constitution or Bylaws. Any member of the College with voting privileges has the right to propose policy. Policy is adopted by a simple majority of the faculty casting votes on the question.

Article VIII. Acceptance of the Constitution.

Majority approval of the Faculty voting on the question will be necessary for acceptance of this Constitution, which will become effective upon promulgation by the Chancellor of the University of Nebraska at Kearney and the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska.

CNSS Constitution amended and approved by a vote of the faculty 4/18/11
Article I, Section 2
Article II, Section a and b
Article III, Section 1
Article VIII

Bylaws

Section 1. Creation of two divisions within the College of Natural and Social Sciences.

As provided for by Article V of the Constitution of the College of Natural and Social Sciences, departments and courses offered by the Faculty are hereby partitioned into two divisions: Natural Sciences and Social Sciences. Natural Science departments are Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Computer Science/Information Systems, and Physics/Physical Sciences. Social Science departments are History, Political Science, Criminal Justice/Social Work, Psychology, and Sociology/Geography/Earth Science.

Section 2. Faculty membership on standing committees.

The election of standing committee members shall be conducted during spring semester in two steps: divisional faculty shall select two representatives in the primary election, and the College faculty shall elect the representative for each division. In the primaries, the Dean or designate shall submit to the faculty members of each division a list of all eligible divisional faculty members for each committee. Members of the faculty may request that the ballot indicate their preference not to serve on the committee. The final election for the seat to be filled from each division for each committee will be between the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes in the primary election. The elections shall be conducted in sequence: in even numbered years the Advisory Committee and Rank and Tenure Committee elections will precede, but in odd numbered years the Educational Policy Committee and Oversight Committee elections will occur first. Runoff elections will decide ties where appropriate. Eligible persons receiving the highest number of votes in the respective divisions shall be deemed elected to the respective committees. Elected members shall assume their duties at the beginning of the academic year and shall serve for three years.

Section 3. Student membership on ~~standing~~ Educational Policy Committees.

Student members will be appointed by September 1 of each year by the Oversight Committee from among the junior or senior students who have been elected to the Student Senate as representatives of the College. Students will serve one-year terms

Section 4. Standing Committee size.

- a. The Advisory Committee shall be composed of three faculty members from each division.
- b. The Educational Policy Committee shall be composed of three faculty members from each division and two student members.
- c. The Rank and Tenure Committee shall be composed of three faculty members from each division.
- d. The Oversight Committee shall be composed of three faculty members from each division-

Section 5. Policy Approval Process

The approval process for Policy, as defined in Article VII, will follow a semester timeline as outlined below:

Faculty proposes new or modified policy to the Oversight Committee no later than the end of the third week of the semester. Proposed policies submitted after this deadline may not be considered until the next semester.

The Oversight Committee determines if the proposed policy is constitutional and if it falls under the purview of one or more standing committees. If affirmative, the proposed policy is sent forward as described below. If not, the proposed policy is returned to all faculty with comments.

The Oversight Committee forwards the proposed policy to the Dean who forwards it along with his or her comments to the standing committees.

The Rank & Tenure, Oversight, and Educational Policy Committees forward their comments to the Advisory Committee for
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compiling of all comments no later than the end of the eighth week of the semester.

The Advisory Committee presents the proposed policy and comments by the Dean and the standing committees for discussion and action (amendments) at a College meeting to be held no later than the end of the twelfth week of the semester.

The Oversight Committee will arrange for a final vote to be completed no later than the end of the thirteenth week of the semester.

Proposed policy is passed by a simple majority of the votes cast. Approved policy is forwarded to the Dean for implementation.

CNSS Bylaws amended and approved by a vote of the faculty 4/18/11
Section 5