**BYLAWS**

**of the**

**Sustainability and Environmental Studies Program**

**University of Wisconsin‑La Crosse**

# I. Title: Sustainability and Environmental Studies Program, University of Wisconsin–La Crosse

**II.** **Organization and Operation**

Program members are governed by six interdependent sets of regulations:

1. Federal and State laws and regulations;
2. UW System policies and rules;
3. UWL policies and rules;
4. College policies and rules;
5. Shared governance by-laws and policies for faculty and academic staff; and
6. Program by-laws

A. Preamble

1. Mission:

The UW-La Crosse Sustainability and Environmental Studies Program educates and transforms students through interdisciplinary and experiential learning. We foster student engagement with the principles of sustainability, stewardship, justice, and citizenship, from local to global levels.

1. The Sustainability and Environmental Studies Program values:

• innovative approaches that enhance the integration of the natural sciences, social sciences, arts, and humanities

• shared experiences, service learning, and field trips, which create a sense of individual identity and group cohesion

• personal connections to local environments and cultivating a sense of place

• knowledge of and commitment to environmental stewardship, through community partnership and shared expertise

1. The Sustainability and Environmental Studies Program Student Learning Outcomes:

* Integrate equity and complexity in approaching environmental problems.
* Differentiate multidisciplinary approaches to environmental issues.
* Reflect critically about their roles as citizens, consumers, and participants in an interconnected world

B. Meeting Guidelines

1. Program meetings will be run according to the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order (<http://www.robertsrules.com/>) and WI state opening meeting laws <https://www.doj.state.wi.us/sites/default/files/office-open-government/Resources/OML-GUIDE.pdf> summary at <https://www.uwlax.edu/info/meetings/>

2. Minutes will be recorded by a voting member or the program ADA and distributed in a timely fashion to program members. Copies of the minutes of program meetings and committee meetings shall be kept in a secure location by the program. Minutes from closed meetings will be taken by the Program Director and written within one week of the proceedings. They will be available by request.

3. Members may request to attend virtually, if needed.

C. Definitions of Membership & Voting Procedures

1. Leadership membership of the program includes the Program Director (regardless of tenure department) and any instructional staff whose position is budgeted through the Sustainability and Environmental Studies program (i.e. red-booked IAS and any tenure-track faculty). These individuals have primary decision-making responsibility for running the program, including curriculum decisions, program assessment, and program priorities. The program director’s duties are given below.

2. Program membership includes all those in the Leadership team described above and all instructors teaching core courses in the program any given semester.

3. Unless specifically indicated otherwise, a simple majority of those voting carries the vote. Voting occurs with a voice vote or a hand vote and any member can call for a roll call vote. Proxy voting is not allowed. Members who join virtually and have heard all the deliberation are eligible to vote.

D. Definitions of Quorum and Majority

A quorum for the purpose of conducting business at any program meeting shall be a simple majority of the persons eligible to vote. For personnel meetings a quorum is achieved with 2/3 of those eligible to vote. Members who join virtually and have heard all the deliberation are eligible to vote.

E. Changing by-laws

These by-laws may be amended by the following procedures: A two-thirds majority of the current program membership present and eligible to vote on by-laws is required to amend the by-laws; Any proposed amendment(s) shall be distributed one week in advance of the meeting in which they will be discussed and/or voted on.

F. Voting via email will be allowed if the action is not related to personnel decisions, and a department meeting is not feasible within the time needed for a decision or quorum needed for a vote isn’t possible for a regularly scheduled program meeting date. The Director would initiate the email, but the motion to be voted on can come from any voting member, and a second is needed. A quorum of voting members must apply for the vote to carry, and results will be reported in the minutes of the next official department meeting.

**III.** **Faculty/Staff Responsibilities**

1. Responsibilities of the faculty members and all instructional academic staff of the program shall include regular attendance at program meetings, engagement in the activities of the Sustainability and Environmental Studies Program, and participation in the promotion and development of the Program, including assessments and equity & inclusion reports.

Total workload for IAS is defined as a standard minimum teaching loador additional workload equivalency activities: <https://www.uwlax.edu/globalassets/committees/faculty-senate/20200514-policies-fs.pdf>

1. Learning Environment Survey (LENS)

The department will follow the UWL Learning Environment Survey (LENS) policy and procedure available on the Faculty Senate webpage [Faculty Senate LENS Policy](https://www.uwlax.edu/faculty-senate/articles-bylaws-and-policies/#tm-learning-environment-survey---lens-policy).

Results from student evaluation surveys are required for retention, tenure, post-tenure review, and promotion of tenure-track/tenured faculty and for renewal and promotion of Instructional Academic Staff. LENS summary reports (described in LENS Policy Section 1.C.3) must be included in promotion, retention, and tenure files.

*Transition from Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI) to LENS:* UWL's approach to gathering student evaluations changed in Fall 2023. As such, during the transition years, any personnel review that requires submission of student evaluations will include data from two student evaluation systems: SEI (as guided by earlier policies) for review periods through Summer 2023 and LENS (as guided by current policy) for review periods beginning Fall 2023.

**IV.**  **Merit Evaluation**

The results of merit reviews for all ranked faculty and instructional academic staff (IAS) who have completed at least one academic year at UWL are due to the Dean's Office on Dec. 15 annually. Merit reviews reflect activities during the prior academic year ending June 1.

A. Evaluation Process & Criteria

All IAS are evaluated in two categories weighted as follows:

Teaching (75% for Redbook IAS; 100% for Lecturers)

Service (25% for Redbook IAS; 0% for Lecturers)

The designation of Meritorious will be assigned to faculty members who have demonstrated activity in all areas of evaluation consistent with their status (tenure track or different IAS ranks).

The designation of No Merit will be reserved for candidates who are not satisfying the requirements of their position as outlined in their position description.

Even though “Service” is not a contractual requirement of all members, teaching in this program still requires regular attendance at Program meetings and fulfillment of program requirements related to teaching such as teaching assessment activities/reports and Equity & Inclusion activities/reports. Failure to do these activities would impact merit decisions.

Scholarly activity and/or service activity (beyond any duties specified in the contract) is not expected of individual IAS members, but is supported and encouraged for advancement of the individual and the institution. Summative evaluation of instructional academic staff is based primarily upon the quality of their teaching record.

All IAS members who are eligible for merit pay have a June 1st deadline for entering teaching, scholarship, and service activities into the electronic portfolios system (Digital Measures) on activities from the prior year June 1st – May 31st. This report must be submitted electronically or on paper to the program Director by June 1st for the prior academic year activities.

Each IAS member will receive written notification from the Director of his/her merit rating by June 30th of each year.

The basis for evaluating each category may include, but is not limited to:

Teaching

* Classroom visits by the Director
* Peer evaluations supplied in writing to the Director
* Student evaluations – both numerical scores and written student comments
* Teaching awards and/or nominations for teaching awards
* Evidence of innovative and/or effective teaching methods
* Syllabi that align with the Program’s student learning outcomes (SLOs)

Service

* Effective service to the Sustainability and Environmental Studies program as evidenced by positive outcomes of the service activities
* Effective service in the community on behalf of or representing the Sustainability and Environmental Studies program
* Effective service on college and/or university committees
* Effective service on community and/or regional/state committees or project

B. Distribution of Merit Funds

In the event that money is available for Merit distribution, the Sustainability and Environmental Studies program will determine the allocation of merit funds to each individual according to the following formula:

mx + HM(x + 100) = total merit funds available for distribution

m = number of individuals receiving a Merit rating

HM = number of individuals receiving a High Merit rating

x = merit dollars for each individual receiving a Merit rating

x + 100 = merit dollars for each individual receiving a High Merit rating

C. Appeal Procedures

If an individual disagrees with his/her merit rating, the individual must submit a written appeal to the Director, stating the reasons for his/her disagreement within one week of being informed of his/her merit rating. The Director will then provide a written response to the individual after consulting with the Dean of the College of Liberal Studies. If the response from the Director is not satisfactory, the affected individual may appeal directly to the Dean of the College of Liberal Studies.

**V.** **Faculty Personnel Review**

This section is not applicable at this time.

**VI** **Instructional Academic Staff Review**

A. Annual Review

In Accordance with Faculty Personnel rules UWS 3.05-3.11 and UWL 3.08, academic staff will be evaluated annually. <https://www.uwlax.edu/human-resources/resources/chairs-supervisors/supervisor-training/supervisor-performance-management/#expand-170854>

The evaluations will be performed by the Program Director.

B. Promotion Procedures

Policies and procedures guiding promotion for IAS are available at <https://kb.uwlax.edu/103704>

1. The Sustainability and Environmental Studies IAS Promotion Committee will include the Program Director and any IAS in the Program holding a higher rank than that of the person applying for promotion. Additional committee members will be selected by the Program Director to create a committee of five members, including at most one additional faculty member with expertise in Sustainability and Environmental Studies; all other members should be IAS holding a higher rank than that of the person applying for promotion.

1. The Sustainability and Environmental Studies IAS Promotion Committee will meet in October or by Nov. 1 to consider applications for Promotion. IAS members eligible for promotion will be notified no less than 20 days in advance of the Committee meeting and asked to prepare the portfolio for review using the Digital Measures as described on the HR website.

1. At least one week prior to the meeting, the IAS member will provide the portfolio to the Program Director, who will add the required departmental information and share the completed report with the Committee. All committee members will review the portfolio prior to the meeting. The IAS member will be given an opportunity to provide additional oral or written support for the promotion prior to the meeting going into closed session.

1. A simple majority vote will be used to determine the Committee’s decision, and the Department Promotion Committee Transmittal & Signature Page will be completed to record that vote <https://www.uwlax.edu/globalassets/offices-services/human-resources/transpage.pdf>). The IAS member will be notified within seven days of the results of the hearing. The Program Director will write a letter of support that will accompany the candidate’s portfolio, which is then sent to the Dean.

C. Appeal Procedures

In the case of a negative retention or career progression decision, the affected instructional academic staff member may make appeal directly to the Dean of the College of Liberal Studies.

**VII.** **Non-Instructional Academic Staff Review**

This section is not applicable at this time.

**VIII.** **Governance**

A. The Director shall be the only officer of the Program.

1. The Director shall be selected and appointed by the Dean of the College of Liberal Studies.

2. Administrative duties of the Director:

a. Shall preside over program meetings

b. Shall prepare agenda for meetings, and announce their time and place of occurrence.

c. Shall supervise the preparation of schedules and recruitment of personnel to staff ENV courses; shall work with departments in which courses counting toward the ENV minor are taught regarding the regular staffing and offering of such courses.

d. Shall represent the needs, views, and assessment of the state of the program to the administration.

e. Shall exercise leadership in all matters concerning the academic responsibilities and welfare of the Program.

f. Shall oversee the Program budget and approve expenditures; shall prepare requests for budget increases and submit to the College of Liberal Studies and the Joint Budget and Planning Committee as appropriate.

g. Shall perform all additional relevant functions designated in the Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article IV, H.

h. Shall provide leadership for strategic planning, assessment, curriculum development, and special event programming in collaboration with Program staff.

i. Shall promote the Program and recruit students to it.

B. Standing Program Committees

There are no standing committees of the program at this time.

C. Programmatic Assessment Plan (see Appendix A)

**IX.** **Search and Screen Procedures**

The department will follow hiring procedures prescribed by the University's Office of Human Resources (HR) in conjunction with AAOD and UW System and WI state regulations. The UWL Search and Screen Policy and Procedures are to be followed for all faculty and staff recruitments at UWL: <https://www.uwlax.edu/human-resources/services/talent-acquisition-and-employment/recruitment/>

**X.** **Student Rights and Obligations**

A. Complaint, Grievance, and Appeal Procedures

The Complaint Process will be handled in accordance to the student handbook guidelines found at <https://www.uwlax.edu/student-life/student-resources/student-handbook/#tm-faculty-or-course-grievances> and stated below.

1. Informal Complaints:

If a student has a concern or a complaint about a faculty member or course, the general process for making **informal complaints** is outlined in steps 1-3 below. Students are welcome to bring a friend or a UWL staff member with them during the following steps. Students who report concerns/complaints/grievances, whether informally or formally, will be protected from **retaliation** and have the right to expect an **investigation** and the option to have regular updates on the investigation:

A. The student should speak directly to the **instructor**.

B. If the student is uncomfortable speaking with the instructor, or they are unsatisfied with the solution, they should go to the **chair of the faculty member’s home department**.

C. If the student is uncomfortable speaking with the department chair, or the chair is the faculty member in question, or they are unsatisfied with the solution, the student should speak with their **college dean**.

Depending on the specifics of the student’s concern, it may be helpful for them to reach out to additional offices:

* Complaints/concerns/grievances about grades, teaching performance, course requirements, course content, incivility, or professional ethics should follow the process outlined above. Students may also wish to seek support from the Student Life Office.
* Complaints/concerns/grievances related to **hate/bias** and **discrimination** may follow the process outlined above, and in addition or instead students may contact the [Campus Climate](https://www.uwlax.edu/center/Transformative-Justice/) office and/or submit a [hate/bias incident report](https://www.uwlax.edu/center/Transformative-Justice/hatebias-response/hatebias-incident-report/).
* Complaints/concerns/grievances related to **sexual misconduct** may begin with the process outlined above, but will need to also involve the [Equity & Affirmative Action](http://uwlax.edu/equity) and [Violence Prevention](https://www.uwlax.edu/violence-prevention/) offices, and/or the [Title IX Team](https://www.uwlax.edu/title-ix/). Students should know that faculty members are [mandatory reporters](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofWisconsinLaCrosse&layout_id=23) of sexual misconduct, but that [confidential resources](https://www.uwlax.edu/title-ix/tixteams/) are available to them.

2. Formal Complaints:

If the student is unsatisfied with the solution of their informal complaint, they have the right to file a **formal institutional complaint** with the Student Lifeoffice.

3. Additional Information related to Grade Appeals

This appeal should follow the Informal Complaint steps outlined above and must take place before the end of the semester immediately following the semester in which the grade was recorded. As stated in the process above, the student should first discuss this difference with the instructor. If a student-instructor meeting is not possible, or if such a meeting does not result in resolution of the difference, the student should contact the Program Director. After meeting with the student, the Director will discuss the student concern with the instructor, if possible. Following these meetings, the Director will make a recommendation to the instructor regarding the grade change. Any decision to change a grade remains that of the instructor, unless the instructor is no longer available, in which case any decision to change a grade is made by the Program Director.

B. Expectations, Responsibilities and Academic Misconduct

1. Expectations and responsibilities

Students who enroll in courses offered by the Sustainability and Environmental Studies Program are expected to attend and participate in these classes. They are expected to devote sufficient non-class time to the study of course material and to complete all class assignments in a timely manner and to undertake additional study as necessary to demonstrate satisfactory mastery of the material.

2. Academic and Nonacademic Misconduct Policy:

See University of Wisconsin System policy at:

<https://www.uwlax.edu/student-life/our-services/student-conduct/academic-misconduct/>

<https://www.uwlax.edu/student-life/our-services/student-conduct/nonacademic-misconduct/>

**XI. Process for Requesting Summer or Winter teaching**

1. Any instructional staff whose position is budgeted through the Sustainability and Environmental Studies program (i.e. red-booked IAS and any tenure-track faculty) can express an interest in summer and winter teaching to the Director.

2. Those opportunities will rotate between eligible instructors unless one or more is not interested.

3. The Director will then request a summer and/or winter course with the Dean’s office. Not all requests are granted.