

# **CENTER FOR CULTURE, HISTORY, AND ENVIRONMENT**

## **Governance Bylaws**

**Originally Adopted 3/12/07, Revised 3/11/09)**

### ARTICLE I - GOVERNANCE

#### TITLE 1 - PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

#### SECTION 1 - PROGRAM STRUCTURE

##### Subsection (1) - The Center for Culture, History, and Environment (CHE)

1. The Center for Culture, History, and Environment consists of the Director, Executive Committee, Center Members, Graduate Student Affiliates, and Staff.

##### Subsection (2) - The Center Director

1. The Director must be a member of CHE and have tenure in a department at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The Director serves for a term of one year running from July 1-June 30, with the expectation that s/he will normally serve for three consecutive one-year terms. A director may serve for up to six consecutive one-year terms contingent upon a favorable evaluation after the first three-year term conducted by the CHE Executive Committee and the Director of the Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies. To serve for any additional consecutive terms requires election by a two-thirds majority vote of the Center membership. Candidates for Director will be chosen by the CHE Executive Committee in consultation with the Director of the Nelson Institute. The Director is elected by a majority vote of the Center Members and appointed by Director of the Nelson Institute. The Director is the highest ranking representative of the Center, and exercises all powers traditionally vested in such positions by the Nelson Institute and the Campus.
2. The Director may not act on any matter that would ordinarily require the consent of the Executive Committee without making every reasonable effort to contact all voting members to obtain the approval of a majority of those members.
3. Typically, once every year, in the spring semester, the incumbent Director shall report to the Executive Committee and the Nelson Institute Director about the Center's finances. This report shall include information about every Center account, but no accounts held by individuals.

##### Subsection (3) - The Executive Committee

1. 1. The Executive Committee consists of five faculty members, a majority of whom must be tenured. It must include one or two non-tenured faculty members. All Executive Committee members must be drawn from the Center membership. Two graduate students elected annually from the Graduate Student Affiliate membership will serve as non-voting members of the Executive Committee. Although Executive Committee members are elected annually, the ordinary expectation is that they will serve for three consecutive one-year terms, which run from July 1-June 30. To fill vacancies at the end of members' terms, the Director shall conduct an election according to procedures outlined under the sub-section on Election Procedures. Should vacancies occur during a member's term, the Director shall appoint a Center Member to serve for the remainder of that academic year.
2. The Director is a voting member of the Executive Committee. The Director chairs Executive Committee meetings, and shall convene the Committee at least once a month in September, October, November, February, March, and April, business warranting.
3. The Executive Committee is the executive body of the Center. It evaluates matters pertaining to the graduate certificate, including new course proposals and course changes. It reviews members' appeals for variances from Center rules and makes appropriate recommendations to the Center in executive session. The Executive Committee may nominate Center members for competitive awards both inside and outside the University, and it shall determine which members of the Center shall receive awards dispensed within the Center by whatever means a majority of the Committee consider appropriate. In consultation with the Director, it reviews Center finances. The Executive Committee also seeks counsel from Center Members, as needed, on decisions that affect major issues of Center policy and governance.
4. As necessary, the Director may, with the approval of the Executive Committee, create both ad hoc and standing committees to carry out Center business.
5. The Executive Committee shall establish a set of rules and expectations for members serving on the Executive Committee.
6. In the event that the Director becomes incapacitated or is for any reason unable to exercise his/her administrative responsibilities, the Executive Committee shall choose one of its members to act as Interim Director for the remainder of the current academic year.

#### Subsection (4) - Center Members.

1. Membership is open to all faculty and academic staff who either teach a course with content that significantly addresses themes of culture, history, and

environment; conduct research in the thematic areas of the Center, or can otherwise demonstrate an intellectual/pedagogical commitment to the aims of the Center.

2. Applicants seeking membership in the Center shall be nominated to the Executive Committee either by themselves or someone else; applications must include the individual's curriculum vitae and a statement describing the nature of their interest in CHE. Members may be elected either by a unanimous vote of the Executive Committee or by a simple majority vote of those attending a Members Meeting or participating in electronic balloting.
3. Center Members shall be active in Center affairs and, as needed, agree to be willing to serve on standing committees of the Center. Members are expected to attend the fall and spring meetings, and to participate in electronic balloting when it occurs.
4. Center Members shall be affiliates or members of the Nelson Institute.

#### Subsection (5) – Graduate Student Affiliates.

1. Affiliate status is open to graduate students who have research, teaching, or outreach interests that significantly address the themes of culture, history, and environment.
2. Applications for Affiliate membership shall be nominated to the Executive Committee by themselves or someone else; applications must include a description of the research interests of the student and key departments and programs the student regards as core to their intellectual community on campus; applications should also include a digital photograph of the student. This information will be posted on the CHE website unless the student requests that it be omitted for some reason. The Executive Committee approves Affiliate status by a majority vote. Once elected, Affiliates will receive a written request from the Director annually, each fall, if they wish to renew their membership.

## TITLE 2 - VOTING AND ELECTIONS

### SECTION 1 - VOTING RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

1. All duly affiliated Members of the Center have voting rights in the Center. Teaching assistants and individuals holding fixed-term appointments do not have such rights. Graduate Student Affiliates do not have voting rights.

### SECTION 2 - ELECTION PROCEDURES

1. The Director - Every year, no later than March 1, the highest ranking civil servant in the Center or the Nelson Institute staff shall conduct the advisory

balloting for the Center Director at the request of the Director of the Nelson Institute. The voting shall be by secret ballot, and may be conducted electronically. Members will be notified of the election and ballots distributed at least one week before the deadline for voting. The Executive Committee, in consultation with the Director of the Nelson Institute, will prepare and approve a slate of name(s) to be placed on the ballot. Ballots will contain the names of approved candidate(s) and a blank slate for a write-in candidate.

2. Executive Committee - In the spring of each year, the Director and the current Executive Committee shall canvas the Center membership to determine who among its members wishes to nominate a candidate for the Executive Committee, and shall prepare a slate of names to place on the ballot. Members are welcome to nominate themselves if they so desire. Efforts will be made to stagger terms of Executive Committee members in preparing the slate of candidates. The slate shall be announced one week before the ballots are distributed. Anyone not listed on the slate may be placed on the ballot by filing a petition within five days with the highest ranking civil servant in the Center or Nelson Institute staff, who shall prepare the ballot. The Executive Committee will determine the balloting procedures. The voting shall be by secret ballot, and may be conducted electronically. Members will be notified of the election and ballots made available at least one week before the deadline for voting.
3. Graduate Student Affiliates – In the spring of each year, the Director and the current Executive Committee shall canvas the Graduate Students Affiliates to determine who among its members wishes to nominate a candidate for the Executive Committee, and shall prepare a slate of names to place on the ballot. Graduate Affiliates are welcome to nominate themselves if they so desire. The slate shall be announced one week before the ballots are distributed. Any Affiliate not listed on the slate may be placed on the ballot by filing a petition within five days with the highest ranking civil servant in the Center or Nelson Institute staff, who shall prepare the ballot. The Executive Committee will determine the balloting procedures. The voting shall be by secret ballot. Graduate Student Affiliates will be notified of the election and ballots made available to the Affiliate membership at least one week before the deadline for voting.

## TITLE 3 - MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATION

### SECTION 1 - MEMBER MEETINGS

1. The Director shall typically convene a meeting of the Members and Graduate Student Affiliates of CHE at least once during each of the fall and spring semesters to report on and seek counsel on major initiatives and programs of the Center. If, in the opinion of the Executive Committee, there is insufficient business to warrant holding a meeting, the Director shall so notify the membership. The meeting time and location shall be announced at least one week

in advance, and the agenda posted no less than 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Any Center Member or Graduate Student Affiliate may request to place an item on the agenda. If necessary, Members can also be polled using electronic balloting.

## SECTION 2 - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

2. The time and location of Executive Committee meetings shall typically be announced at least one week in advance, and the agenda posted no less than 24 hours in advance of the meeting. A quorum of 50% of the Executive Committee's voting members is necessary for the Committee to meet and take any action. Any Member of the Center who so wishes may attend on a non-voting basis, except under circumstances when the Executive Committee goes into closed session according to circumstances permitted by Wisconsin's Open Meetings Law.
  
3. Any Member of the Center, whether a member of the Executive Committee or not, may request to place an item on the agenda.

## TITLE 4 – BYLAWS

1. Any revision of these bylaws requires a majority vote by a quorum of Center Members. Ballotting may be done electronically if appropriate.