

Constitution of Ecosystems Research Organization

Version (v0.5): May 2024

Article I Name

The name of this organization shall be Ecosystems Research Organization at Iowa State University and will be abbreviated as ESRO.

Article II Purpose

The purpose of Ecosystems Research Organization is the following:

- Form an interdisciplinary community, both professionally and socially, that promotes exploration and engagement in collaboration between disciplines related to ecosystems research. The following is a non-exhaustive list of programs and departments related to ecosystems research-related disciplines at Iowa State University: Meteorology (MET); Agricultural Meteorology (Ag. MET); Environmental Science (ENSCI); Agronomy (AGRON); Agricultural & Biosystems Engineering (ABE); Civil, Construction Environmental Engineering (CCEE); Chemical & Biological Engineering (CBE); Ecology, Evolution, & Organismal Biology (EEOB); and Natural Resource Ecology & Management (NREM).
- Obtain leadership skills through officer positions, setting agendas, and planning events.
- Develop professional skills through reading and analyzing scientific journal articles as a group; coding in major computer programming languages; and understanding soil-ecosystem-atmosphere related models as well their fundamental principles.
- Develop and strengthen communication skills via networking, presentations, and outreach or extension events.
- Ultimately, adhere to and promote the land-grant mission of teaching, research, and extension work.

Article III Statement of Compliance

Ecosystems Research Organization abides by and supports established Iowa State University policies, State and Federal Laws and follows local ordinances and regulations. Ecosystems Research Organization agrees to annually complete President's and Treasurer's Training.

Article IV Non-Discrimination and Free Expression Statement

Iowa State University and Ecosystems Research Organization do not discriminate on the basis of genetic information, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, race, ethnicity, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or status as a U.S Veteran. ESRO supports and upholds the First Amendment protection of freedom of speech and the principle of academic freedom in order to foster a learning environment where open inquiry and the vigorous debate of a diversity of ideas are encouraged. Any member will not be penalized for the content or viewpoints of their speech as long as they are expressed in a context that is germane to the subject matter at hand and conveyed in an appropriate manner.

Article V Membership

Section 1 Classes of Membership

There shall be two types of primary members.

V.1.i Active Member: Any graduate or undergraduate student meeting the requirements outlined in Article V *Section 2*. There will be two types of Active Member Status:

- (a) Graduate Student: Those who meet the qualifications of graduate student status with Iowa State University shall have the right to vote in all general elections and the right to hold office positions if elected.
- (b) Undergraduate Student: Those who meet the qualifications of Undergraduate Student status with Iowa State University shall have the right to vote in all general elections and the right to hold office positions if elected

V.1.ii Honorary Member: Any Iowa State University alumn who was once an active member of ESRO that wishes to retain an affiliation but has no voting privileges.

Section 2 Requirements

V.2.i Active members must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Be one of the following:
 - A. A Graduate Student. Defined as a full-time student seeking a graduate degree with a funded fellowship, research, teaching, or administrative appointment with the university.
 - B. A Concurrent Student. ESRO shall recognize those seeking an undergraduate and graduate degree simultaneously—typically referred to as concurrent enrollment—as a graduate student.
 - C. An Undergraduate Student. Defined as a full or part-time student seeking a non-graduate degree at Iowa State University.
- (b) All students shall be in good standing with Iowa State University. A student in good standing are those who meet the university AND college (the college to which the member is registered under) guidelines for being either a full-time Graduate Student or Concurrent Student, or an Undergraduate Student.
- (c) All active members must attend and actively participate in at least one-half of a period (typically around 8 weeks) worth of activities including but not limited to meetings, workshops, or similar actions, for both fall and spring periods. The officer board shall establish the specific guidelines each period for what constitutes appropriate activities. The officer board may waive this requirement for extenuating circumstances for any current or seeking active member with an officer board simple majority vote. If the person in question is to contact, in writing, the officer board, then the board must reach a decision within 7 days.

V.2.ii Honorary members must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Honorary membership shall be open to Iowa State University alumni who held an active membership. The officer board may waive this requirement and grant honorary membership to any individual by a simple majority vote.

Section 3 Removal

- V.3.i** Reasons for removal may include, but are not limited to, use of derogatory language, bullying, harassment, theft, repeated disruptions during meetings, or any other action deemed unacceptable by the current Student Disciplinary Regulations (Code of Conduct) at or during ESRO affiliated events or services.
- V.3.ii** Repeated violations (2 or more) such as those listed in **V.3.i**, without a good faith effort to remediate the actions (if acceptable), by an active member, non-voting member, or honorary member will result in their removal from ESRO.
- (a) Transgressions deemed severe by the president such as sexual assault, hate crimes, etc. can result in immediate expulsion from the group regardless of the number of previous violations.
- V.3.iii** The removal process may be initiated by any active member of the organization.
- (a) A formal call for removal must FIRST be brought to the officers of the organization. An active member may call for removal of another member by writing (email, letter, etc.) to the president AND vice president of the organization and requesting to discuss their concerns at the nearest officer meeting.
 - (b) The president and vice president must notify the officer board and act upon an officer vote within 30 days of the written notice from **V.3.iii(a)**.
 - (c) Officers must have a majority vote of approval to move the removal process to a general membership vote. Officers will vote by show of hands.
 - (d) The member in question must be provided a summary of the reasons for removal at least 10 days in advance of the general membership vote. At this time, the member in question will be given the decision to and shall have 5 days to rescind their membership by written notice to the president and vice president. If the membership is rescinded, no voting meeting will take place and no information regarding the removal shall be disseminated to the general members.
 - (e) The vote will be announced at least 5 days prior to the voting meeting with a summary of the reasons for removal.
- V.3.iv** Membership may be revoked by a majority vote of club membership present at the voting meeting. A quorum must be present at the meeting. Voting may take place during general meetings or may be a standalone event chosen by the officer board at a day and time to maximize eligible voter turnout by the officer board, but must be held at the same location as the general meetings or a location similar in nature.
- (a) The evidence for removal will be presented by the president or vice president to the general members. The member in question will be allowed to speak to the general membership for a maximum of 10 minutes before voting occurs. The president or advisor has the discretion to extend the maximum allowable speaking time if the situation necessitates it. The member in question will be asked to leave the meeting while deliberation and voting commences. The member in question will be informed of the results.
 - (b) Voting will be conducted by secret ballot at the meeting. Secret ballot voting will be an anonymous virtual form, standardized secret paper ballot, or any other method of a similar nature. The officer board will choose the voting method.
- V.3.v** The member in question may attempt to appeal the results of the vote by contacting the advisor of the organization and submitting a written statement. The advisor must respond with their decision within 10 days. No secondary appeals will be permitted.

- (a) A member who rescinds their membership automatically waives their right to the appeals process.

V.3.vi The member in question who rescinded their membership may request reinstatement 120 days after removal. The member in question who did not rescind their membership may request reinstatement 180 days after removal.

- (a) The member must submit a written request for reinstatement to at least 2 of the officers.
- (b) The officer board shall have up to 14 days from the written request to reach a unanimous vote through a show of hands to reinstate the member.

Article VI Officers

Section 1 Officer Positions and Duties

The officers of ESRO shall be President, Vice President, and Treasurer, in that hierarchical order. Additionally, ESRO shall require 2 administrative roles, Community Liaison and Clerk of Internal Affairs, equally dispersed between the Vice President and Treasurer.

VI.1.i All officers shall:

- (a) Promote a positive environment and enhance the organization's social capital (e.g., networking).
- (b) Teach officer-elects and inform on critical information related to the organization during the interim period between the election and succession of office.
- (c) Be in attendance and active in at least two-thirds of officer board and general meetings.
- (d) Complete all trainings as required by Iowa State University policy.
- (e) Work towards the common goal and demands of any event hosted by ESRO.
- (f) Ensure that the responsibilities of the 2 administrative roles are fulfilled. The President shall delegate the 2 administrative roles between the Vice President and Treasurer at the beginning of the election cycle. The President shall also fulfill the responsibilities of the administrative role in question under extenuating circumstances if the Vice President or Treasurer cannot.

VI.1.ii The President shall:

- (a) Facilitate officer and general meetings.
- (b) Oversee the activities of the officers and general membership.
- (c) Serve as the Risk Management Officer to
 - A. Help minimize potential risks for club activities,
 - B. Recommend risk management policies or procedures,
 - C. To submit documentation to ISU's Risk Management Office, and
 - D. To ensure that proper waivers and background checks are on file with Risk Management for events.
- (d) Maintain contact with the advisor regarding organization activities and concerns at least once every 6 months.
- (e) Maintain the organization's digital information including, but not limited to, previous versions of the organization's constitution, officer board and general meeting minutes, and documents produced by or relevant to any officer.
- (f) Not be permitted to vote in general voting meetings.

VI.1.iii The Vice President shall:

- (a) Assist the president with their duties.
- (b) Preside over the organization meetings in the absence of the president.
- (c) Not be permitted to vote in general voting meetings except in the unlikely case of a tie.

VI.1.iv The Treasurer shall:

- (a) Manage the organization's finances and ensure that the organization is in good standing with any affiliated financial institutions.
- (b) Hold the organization's purchasing card (p-card) and assign additional p-card(s) to other designated members.
- (c) Maintain the organization's budget and work with officers to determine spending allowances.
- (d) Work with the Advisor to approve each expenditure before payment.
- (e) Preside over the organization's meetings in the absence of the president and vice president.

VI.1.v The Community Liaison shall:

- (a) Campaign for a seat in the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) with the department of the student of interest. If they are not elected, they must attend regular public meetings and are strongly encouraged to serve on a committee. For example, the Department of Agronomy usually starts the election process in the summer.
- (b) Attend at least 2 scheduled meetings, per fall and spring periods, of related organizations, and preferably not the same organization in the same period, such as Agronomy Graduate Student Club (AGSC), Graduate Meteorology Club (GMC), and Environmental Science Graduate Organization (ENSCISU), for the sake of maintaining a relationship with organizations within the scope of ESRO's purpose from Article II.
- (c) Create and/or maintain community-facing media to promote ESRO sponsored events and its digital presence using tools such as professional social media (e.g., LinkedIn) or email.

VI.1.vi The Clerk of Internal Affairs shall:

- (a) Organize an event dedicated to improving the social capital of the organization at least once each period defined in **VI.3.ii**, with the exception of winter. This could be, but is not limited to, organizing dinners, creating an intramural sports team, or assembling a volunteering event.
- (b) Use a standardized method for writing minutes of officer board and general meetings, tracking meeting attendance, history of membership violations described in **V.3.i**, and any clerical data deemed necessary by the president.
- (c) Keep track of and communicate with the general public about potential job positions or upcoming events pertaining to the interests of ESRO.

Section 2 Elections

VI.2.i A quorum shall be defined as the majority of active members present at a meeting.

VI.2.ii Annual elections will occur during the last 2 months of the spring period.

VI.2.iii Members eligible for officer positions are defined in Article V.

VI.2.iv Members interested in running for an officer position will complete a nomination form and submit the form to at least 1 officer at least 7 days prior to the general membership vote.

- VI.2.v** Voting will occur at a general voting meeting. The date of the meeting will be announced at least 21 days in advance by written notice to all active members.
- VI.2.vi** At the voting meeting, each candidate will have 2 minutes to speak in front of the general audience.
- VI.2.vii** Voting will be conducted by secret ballot at the meeting. Secret ballot voting will be an anonymous virtual form, standardized secret paper ballot, or any other method of a similar nature. The officer board will choose the voting method. Candidates will be elected by the quorum vote at the voting meeting.
 - (a) In the case of a tie, an immediate run-off election will be held between the tied candidates.
 - (b) In the case that no candidate receives a majority vote, an immediate run-off election will be held between the 2 highest voted candidates.

Section 3 Term and Term Limits

- VI.3.i** The term for all officers, shall be 1 year starting with the beginning of the summer period defined by Iowa State University and ending at this time the following year. This term shall be split into 4 distinctive periods defined by Iowa State University: summer, fall, winter, and spring semesters.
- VI.3.ii** The officer board must evaluate each officer position every period as graduate students do not predominately graduate during any specific period. The evaluation must take place prior to the start of a new period (i.e., the end of the summer, fall, and winter periods) in a manner that evaluates each officers' ability to uphold their responsibilities. This includes but is not limited to the expected graduation time of the officers. If it is determined that an officer cannot uphold their responsibilities for the following period (e.g., due to graduation), then a new officer must be elected prior to the start of the new period following *Section 5* guidelines.
- VI.3.iii** Those seeking the office of president shall be restricted to 2 terms.
- VI.3.iv** Those seeking the office of vice president or treasurer shall not be restricted to any term limits.

Section 4 Impeachment/Removal

- VI.4.i** A quorum shall be defined as the majority of active members present at a meeting.
- VI.4.ii** Officers can be removed from their position by a quorum vote.
- VI.4.iii** Grounds for removal include, but are not limited to, failure to uphold the responsibilities of the position, use of derogatory language, bullying, harassment, theft, repeated disruptions during meetings, or any other action deemed unacceptable by the current Student Disciplinary Regulations (Code of Conduct).
- VI.4.iv** Any club member may initiate the impeachment process by bringing a written request for removal and reasons for removal to the highest-ranking officer not in question for removal.
 - (a) The officers will hold a special meeting with the advisor to deliberate.
 - (b) The officers (excluding the officer in question) and advisor must have a majority vote of approval of all officers to move the impeachment process to a general membership vote. The officer in question may not be present for the officer vote. Officers will vote by a show of hands.
- VI.4.v** Officers can be removed from their position by a quorum vote.
 - (a) Voting will be conducted by secret ballot at a general meeting.

- (b) The vote will be announced at least 1 week prior to the meeting.
- (c) The voting method will be an anonymous virtual form or secret paper ballot (method decided by officers).

VI.4.vi The officer in question must be provided a summary of the reasons for removal at least 1 week in advance of the vote.

VI.4.vii The officer in question will be allowed to speak to membership for a maximum of 5 minutes before voting occurs. The officer in question will be asked to leave the meeting when deliberation and voting commences. The officer in question will be informed of the results and be allowed access to the ballots if requested.

VI.4.viii The officer in question may attempt to appeal the results of the vote by contacting the advisor of the organization and submitting a written statement. The advisor must respond with their decision within 10 days. No secondary appeals will be permitted.

Section 5 Officer Replacement

VI.5.i In the case of an abrupt officer vacancy, a special election must occur within 7 days of the position being vacated.

VI.5.ii If the vacancy is given in advanced notice such as from **VI.3.ii** then a special election must take place but the officer-elect will not take office until the start of the following term. It is still the responsibility for the current officer to support and train the newly elected officer prior to the start of the following period.

- (a) If the vacancy at hand is for the office of president, then it is at the current president's discretion to designate their replacement from either the current vice president or treasurer. If the president does not designate their replacement or the current vice president or treasurer do not wish to obtain the position, then a special election must take place.

VI.5.iii Special elections must follow the same format as annual elections, outlined in Article VI *Section 2*.

VI.5.iv If no candidates come forward for the position, the board of officers may appoint an active member to the position with the member's approval.

Section 6 Minimum Cumulative GPA for Officers

The officers of this organization must meet the following requirements:

VI.6.i Be in good standing with the university and enrolled: at least half time (6 or more credit hours), if an undergraduate student (unless fewer credits are required to graduate in the spring and fall semesters) during the term of office; and at least half time (4 or more credits), if a graduate level student (unless fewer credits are required in the final stages of their degree as defined by the Continuous Registration Requirement) during their term of office.

VI.6.ii Have a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) as stated below and meet that minimum GPA in the semester immediately prior to the election/appointment, the period of election/appointment, and periods during the term of office. For undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, the minimum GPA is 2.00. In order for this provision to be met, at least 6 hours (half-time credits) must have been taken for the semester under consideration.

VI.6.iii Be ineligible to hold an office should the student fail to maintain the requirements as prescribed in **VI.6.i** and **VI.6.ii**.

Article VII Advisor

Section 1 Duties

The duties of the advisor are to provide general oversight to the group and to ensure that the organization is complying with the standards set forth by Iowa State University and Memorial Union Student Engagement.

Section 2 Method of Selection

VII.2.i Advisor candidates shall be verbally nominated by officers at a pre-determined officer meeting.

VII.2.ii A candidate may be elected through a majority vote of officers.

(a) Officers will vote through a show of hands.

(b) All officers must be present for a vote to occur.

VII.2.iii Once a candidate is selected, the president will contact the advisor candidate to offer the position.

VII.2.iv If the advisor candidate declines, the officers of the organization will repeat **VII.2.i** to **VII.2.iii**.

Section 3 Terms of Service

The advisor of the organization shall serve at their leisure.

Section 4 Impeachment/Removal

VII.4.i The advisor can be removed from their position by a unanimous vote of club officers at an officer meeting.

(a) Grounds for removal include, but are not limited to, failure to uphold the responsibilities of the position, use of derogatory language, bullying, harassment, theft, repeated disruptions during meetings, or any other action deemed unacceptable by current Disciplinary Regulations.

VII.4.ii The advisor must be notified and given a reason for removal at least 1 week prior to voting.

VII.4.iii The advisor will be given the opportunity to speak in front of the club officers before a final decision is made. The advisor may speak for 5 minutes, then they must leave the room while voting and deliberation occurs.

VII.4.iv The advisor will be notified of the decision via email.

Section 5 Replacement

In the event an advisor must be replaced, the method of selection shall be the same as described in Article VII Section 2.

Article VIII Finances

VIII.0.i All monies belonging to this organization shall be deposited and disbursed through a bank account established for this organization at the Campus Organizations Accounting Office and/or approved institution/office (must receive authorization via Campus Organizations Accounting Office). All funds must be deposited within 48 hours after collection. The advisor to this organization must approve and sign each expenditure before payment.

VIII.0.ii Upon disbandment of ESRO, all funds and properties in excess of liabilities and expenses of dissolution will be distributed as determined by a majority of officers.

VIII.0.iii Dues shall not be required.

Article IX Amendments and Ratification

FIXME: WE MUST INCLUDE A PART THAT KEEPS A NOMENCLATURE FOR VERSION CONTROL

IX.0.i The amendment process may be initiated by any member.

- (a) Requests for amendment must be submitted in writing to the board officers.
- (b) The officers must have a majority vote of approval to move the amendment to a general membership vote.
- (c) Officers will vote through a show of hands.

IX.0.ii The proposed amendment must be presented to general membership at least 5 days before the vote.

IX.0.iii This constitution may be amended by a quorum vote.

- (a) Voting will take place at a club meeting.
- (b) Voting will be conducted by show of hands.

IX.0.iv Amendments to the organization's constitution must be submitted to Student Engagement within 10 days for approval.

IX.0.v In the event a constitution is rejected because it does not meet Iowa State University policy and/or constitution requirements, the following may occur.

- (a) Any changes to bring the constitution into compliance may be made with unanimous approval from the president, treasurer, and advisor.
- (b) Notification of these changes must be communicated at the next full organizational meeting.

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