1. Council Charge

The Earth and Ecosystems Science (EES) Program is a multidisciplinary Ph.D. program, in which qualified faculty members from any department in the College of Science and Technology may participate. Consistent with the final authority vested in the University for all academic programs, the EES Interdisciplinary Council (“the Council”) is charged with overseeing the Ph.D. Program. Specific activities of the Council include the following.

a) Curriculum: The Council will initiate and recommend the initial curriculum for the program and recommend any subsequent changes. Curricular items approved by the program faculty will be sent forward to the College of Science and Technology Curriculum Committee in accordance with CMU policies. Affected departments will be notified of proposed curricular changes prior to their being submitted to the College curriculum committee.

b) Faculty: The Council will establish qualifications for faculty membership in the EES program, and will recommend dissertation advisors and faculty appointments to the Dean of the College of Science and Technology (“the Dean” and “the College” respectively). These qualifications shall be more rigorous than those established by the Graduate College for appointment to graduate faculty status.

c) Students: The Council will establish and maintain criteria and standards for students to enter and continue in the program and will develop and define the standards associated with satisfactory performance for students in the program.

d) Thesis supervisor and graduate committees: The council will approve each student's thesis advisor and committee.

e) Research Assistantships: The expectation is that the majority of the students will be partially funded on research grants awarded to their dissertation advisor. The Council will make recommendations to the Dean regarding the awarding of any EES Research Assistantships that may be funded by the College and also make recommendations to departmental chairs regarding those students qualified to work as Teaching Assistants in a specific program. In order for a student to receive an EES Research Assistantship the student’s thesis advisor must meet the criteria specified in section 4 (below).

f) Program Procedures and Guidelines: The Council will create and modify policies and procedures required for the successful administration and
assessment of the program. The Council will be responsible for program assessment and reviews plans for assessing student learning and activities of the faculty in the program. The council will also prepare an annual assessment report, following timelines given the Dean, summarizing all academic (teaching and scholarship) activities of faculty and students involved in the program. The report will be included in the College’s annual report to the Provost.

g) Committees: The Council may establish committees to carry out its objectives. Committees shall be formed at the request of the majority vote of the Council.

h) Parliamentary Authority: Meetings will be convened as needed to carry out program business. A quorum for these meetings is a majority (4) of the Council members.

2. Council Membership

a) Selection of the Council

The Council shall consist of three program members who are elected to staggered two-year terms that may be renewed for up to two consecutive terms. The Dean will appoint the initial Council members. The first election will occur in the spring semester of 2014 to replace one member. Council members will be elected from a slate of nominees to renewable two-year terms by a vote of program faculty. The Council shall establish the nomination process and other necessary procedures for filling vacant seats. Generally, new members will be elected during the spring semester for service in the following academic year.

b) Duties of the Council

The Council is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the program. The Council will solicit advice and assistance from the program faculty and report to the Dean of the College. The committee will elect one member of the council to be chair for a one-year term. This chair will have the final responsibility of signing documents.

Specific duties of the Council include the following.

i. Convene an annual meeting of the full EES program faculty to provide updates and hold required elections. This will ordinarily happen in the spring semester; special meetings may be called at any time by the Dean or a majority of the program council.

ii. Convene regular meetings of the Council to conduct business

iii. Work with departmental chairs and the Dean to schedule courses with the EES designator and recommend faculty to teach these courses. These
assignments will be considered part of the faculty member’s normal teaching load. All faculty workloads require the Dean’s approval.

iv. Assume responsibility for developing general recruiting materials and strategies to promote the program.

v. Advise program students on curricular matters and assist in resolving conflicts between students and their dissertation advisors.

vi. Represent the program in the broader university community and beyond.

vii. Assume responsibility for program assessment activities, including recommending appointments to the external review board and coordinating external review board activities; supervising internal program review as needed, with the assistance of the Council; and directing student outcomes assessment activities.

viii. Conduct necessary day-to-day administrative duties, and report on program matters to the Dean of the College. The chair of the council will attend meetings of the Dean’s Advisory Council as needed or desired by the Dean.

3. Faculty Program Membership

Faculty must meet the requirements outlined in section b) below to be members of the EES program. Program members must be members of the graduate faculty to guide dissertation projects or to serve on dissertation committees. Program membership is granted for three years and may be renewed indefinitely. Membership applications may be accepted and reviewed by the EES Council at the beginning of the Fall, Spring, or Summer semester, and are recommended to the Dean of the College for approval.

a) Rights of Membership. Only EES faculty may:

i. Act as advisor for an EES Ph.D. student; non-EES faculty members may serve on the thesis committee provided they are members of the graduate faculty (faculty from other institutions may also serve as committee members);

ii. Teach an EES course;

iii. Attend EES meetings, and serve on the EES council.

b) Responsibilities of EES faculty.

i. Maintain an active research program as demonstrated by:
   a. External funding record
   b. Regular publication of high-quality peer-reviewed papers.
      i. Evidence of high-quality papers can shown by documenting number of citations, journal ranking, impact factor, or h-index.
   ii. Be an active participant in the EES program including regular attendance at meetings and assisting with program assessment and review.
4. Awarding of Program Assistantships

Research Assistantships (RA) to support students in the program may be funded by the College and awarded to faculty by the Dean of the College based on the recommendation of the Council. The following guidelines apply:

i. RA support will only be provided to students working with EES faculty.

ii. Awards are made for one year and no student shall receive more than two years of EES RA support.

iii. Faculty may not have more than one student supported by an EES RA at the same time.

iv. The Council will solicit requests for RA support from EES faculty on an annual basis. Applications should include:
   a. The academic credentials of the student (e.g., GPA, GRE and, where appropriate TOEFL scores);
   b. Brief description of thesis project;
   c. Plan to secure external funding to support the student and project, including sponsor and application deadlines.

v. The award of the EES RA will be based upon the following criteria:
   a. Quality of the student and the research plan (see iv);
   b. Demonstrated success in obtaining external support for previous EES students receiving an RA;
   c. Publication record of previous EES students receiving an RA;
   d. External funding already secured to cover cost of student’s project (travel, supplies, etc.) and to support beyond the EES RA.
   e. Other factors including program and student diversity and faculty career development may be considered at the discretion of the Council and the Dean.

5. Internal Program Review

The Council shall be responsible for program review in accordance with University policy.

6. Student Learning Assessment Procedures

The Council will conduct assessment activities, including collection of assessment data, and preparation of annual assessment reports for the review of the Council and for wider distribution as required by university policies.

7. Procedures for Amending these By-laws

Amendment(s) to these by-laws can be proposed by a majority vote of the Council and made by a simple majority vote of program members in attendance at a full meeting of program faculty. The proposed amendments will be announced at least
two weeks in advance of the meeting at which the amendment(s) will be considered. All changes in the bylaws require the approval of the Dean of the College.

8. **Termination Provision**

Should the Council fail to meet at least twice during a semester, or fail to report its meetings with formal approved minutes (distributed to participating departments, Dean’s Office and the Office of the Provost) or if the Council responsibilities described above are not met, the Dean shall assume responsibility for the Earth and Ecosystem Science Program to ensure that students enrolled in the program are able to complete their degrees.