

# Environmental Sustainability Research Centre Rules of Procedure 2023-2024

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## **Introduction**

The following rules of procedure supplement those required by the July 1, 2023 to June 2026 Collective Agreement between Brock University and the Brock University Faculty Association (hereafter referred to as the CA).

## **Centre Committee Membership**

The Centre Committee (hereafter 'the Committee') is the core constituent body of the ESRC. The Committee is comprised of all of those faculty who hold appointment (as the home unit) or cross-appointment in the ESRC (hereafter 'Members of the Centre'). The Committee is responsible for matters under Article 16 of the CA. All faculty have full and equal opportunities to participate in Committee affairs except where limited in the CA.

Members of the Centre on leave are considered active members of the Committee unless other university regulations limit this participation.

For tenure, promotion and sabbatical applications, if not present, all full time tenured and tenure stream faculty members may submit a prepared statement to be read to the Committee by the Director and a sealed ballot (Article 21.22a and 34.03e ii).

## **General Rules of Procedure**

The Committee will be chaired by the Director (or designate).

The Director or designate will notify all members of each Committee meeting and provide a written agenda. Notification should be provided at least seven calendar days in advance.

Meetings of the Committee can be called at the discretion of the Director or through petition by at least half of the ESRC membership.

The Committee will meet no less than once per term.

Meeting will be minuted by the Coordinator. The meeting minutes will be posted on Sharepoint. All members of the Committee will have access to the minutes.

All meetings of the Committee will be guided by Robert's Rules of Order and the CA in its proceedings.

The Committee will review, approve, and publish its employment equity plan by October of each year.

The Committee will review, approve, and publish its rules of procedure by October of each year, with copies furnished to each member of the Centre, to the Dean, and to the Union as per Article 16.03 (b).

## **Quorum and Voting**

A quorum for voting on motions at meeting of the Committee will consist of one half of the faculty members plus one, excluding those on leave. Quorum will be based on those eligible to vote on a

given motion. Absentee ballots count toward quorum.

The voting majority is a simple majority on all business, including appointments.

The Director is entitled to vote on all motions.

Only tenured and probationary faculty members may vote on decisions concerning appointment, reappointment, tenure and promotion, leaves, and election of Chairs. All such votes shall be by secret ballot as specified in the CA [16.03 (c, d, e, f)]. As per Article 16.03(c) of the CA, limited term and non-full-time faculty members shall be given the opportunity to express their views on personnel matters and then be excused from the meeting. Tenured and probationary faculty members may then discuss the issue further before voting.

### **Remote Meeting & Attendance**

Virtual attendance can be accommodated without undue disruption of the meeting, potential violation of confidentiality in proceedings, technological difficulties, or other problems arising from the process.

The Director should be given notice of absences as soon as possible in advance of the relevant meeting.

### **Electronic Voting**

In extenuating circumstances e-mail voting may be used to conduct the business of the Committee.

E-mail votes may only be used if the motion to be considered is time sensitive and the Committee is unable to meet to consider the matter in a timely fashion and/or establish quorum. E-mail votes may not be used for motions that require secret ballots.

If the Director wishes to initiate a process of e-mail voting on a motion, they shall adhere to the following process:

- a) The Director shall write to members of the Committee with the text of the motion and any supporting materials.
- b) The first two members of the Committee who respond in the affirmative shall be deemed to be the mover and seconder of the motion.
- c) Committee members shall then have 48 hours to vote on the motion.
- e) Once every member of the Committee has voted by e-mail, or after 48 hours have passed, the Director shall disclose the vote totals to the entire Committee via e-mail and declare the motion carried or defeated.

The results of any voting conducted via e-mail shall be recorded in the minutes at the next meeting of the Committee along with the wording of the motion.

### **Roles of the Centre Director**

Duties of Centre Directors are outlined in Article 27 of the CA.

## Centre Procedures for Personnel Matters

### Appointments

The Centre will follow rules for appointment outlined in the CA (Article 19).

#### Probationary and Limited Term Appointments

All Members of the Centre are encouraged to participate fully in every aspect of a hiring decision (i.e. read applicants' files, attend the shortlist meeting(s), attend all job talks, and attend the final voting meeting) except those on leave. Members on leave may elect to participate in Centre hirings. Any Centre member unable to participate is encouraged to inform the Director of their non-participation.

As per Articles 19, 21 and 27.03 of the CA, limited term, non-full-time faculty and student representatives, staff and faculty affiliates are invited to attend all job talks and meet with short-listed candidates. These individuals shall be given the opportunity to express their views and that of their constituents on personnel matters and then be excused from the meeting.

Following approval of the Dean to appoint a new faculty member, the ESRC Director (or designate) will ensure the following:

- The Centre Committee shall fully discuss the qualifications, areas of competence and teaching responsibilities required for the position, shall approve an appropriate job description for the purpose of advertising, and forward it to the Dean for approval. In formulating this job description the Centre shall follow the employment equity procedures outlined in Article 20 of the CA and Appendix 1.
- The Committee will develop a clear set of criteria to be used to rank the applicants as well as a clear set of questions to be asked in the interview. Probationary and limited term position candidates will be asked to apply for positions in writing, submit a current CV, letters of reference and statements of research and teaching plans.
- The position will be appropriately advertised by working with offices at Brock.
- The applications are received.
- Any actual or potential conflict of interest are disclosed by Committee members. An opportunity for members to review all applications and give feedback is provided. A short-list of candidates is generated.
- Shortlisted candidates are invited to campus for an interview and receive instructions in advance as to what the visit will entail. At a minimum, it will involve a research presentation (will be recorded), an interview, and appropriate meetings.
- A recommendation of candidates in ranked preference to convey to the Dean of FOSS will be determined and a rationale will be given, including dissenting positions should there be any.

### Part-time Appointments

Centre procedures for appointment of part-time instructors will adhere to the current Collective Agreement between Brock University and the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 4207. The Committee will not normally be involved in hiring part-time instructors.

## **Cross-appointments and Voluntary Transfer of Faculty**

See the CA, Article 19.14 (a) through (n).

## ***Procedures for Tenure and Promotion***

Article 21 of the CA governs eligibility and requirements for tenure and promotion.

The Director shall be responsible for noting the time when each faculty member is required to apply for tenure and shall initiate the procedures which will result in the Centre's recommendation by informing the faculty member of his or her eligibility.

The candidate shall assemble a dossier of appropriate information, as required by the CA Article 21.11. The dossier shall be checked for accuracy and completeness by both the candidate and the Director (or designate) and made available to the Centre by October 1st.

The candidate will present the Centre with a list of five (5) appropriate external referees. The Committee will vote on the acceptance of the list, and then submit the list to the Dean by October 1st. If the Committee and candidate do not agree on the list of external referees, the procedures described in Article 21.38e.i will be followed.

At a meeting of the Committee, the Director shall invite an in-camera discussion of the merits of each candidate under consideration (without the candidate being present). Discussion shall be limited to the relevant criteria outlined in the CA as per Article 21.04. Following this discussion, a motion on the recommendation for tenure and/or promotion shall be determined by a vote of secret ballot. If there is the possibility of a negative decision, the regulations outlined in Articles 21.19 and 21.20 of the CA shall be followed. If a negative decision is ruled out, a motion in support of the application for tenure and/or promotion will be put on the floor.

## **Appeal Procedures for Promotion and Tenure**

Members of the Centre wishing to appeal the decision of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic concerning tenure and promotion are advised to refer to the relevant article of the CA - Article 21A.

## **Reappointment**

Articles 19.12 - 19.13 govern reappointments. An application that addresses how the candidate has been fulfilling their professional responsibilities in the areas of research, teaching, and service, along with a current CV should be submitted to the Centre Director.

The Director is responsible for anticipating the requirements for due notice as provided in 19.12.

## **Sabbatical Leave**

Articles 34.02 and 34.03 of the CA govern sabbatical leave eligibility, criteria, and processes.

A Centre meeting shall be called to consider all applications for sabbatical leave. The Committee shall base its decisions on the contents of the dossier as per Article 34.03(e) of the CA.

For each application considered, a vote of tenured and probationary faculty by secret ballot shall

be taken and recorded. This vote, together with a supporting rationale shall constitute the Centre's recommendation. This recommendation, along with supporting materials, shall be sent to the Dean who shall forward it to the University Committee on Academic Leaves.

### ***Centre Procedures for Appointment of Director***

Procedures for the appointment of Directors are governed by Article 27.03 of the CA.

### **Adjunct Faculty**

An adjunct appointment is to be made on the recommendation of the Committee, supported by the Dean of FOSS, and confirmed by the Provost. It is expected that a person recommended for such an appointment will have educational and professional standing comparable to that which we would expect of faculty and that the appointment will benefit faculty and students at the university. An adjunct appointment is an honorary one and carries no remuneration. Adjunct Faculty are not employees of the University, and as such they should not assume sole responsibility for any supervision of students.

The process for becoming an Adjunct is as follows:

Prospective Adjuncts must be nominated by a Committee member.

Prospective applicants must submit a CV and a one to two-page statement of intent to the Director - outlining the relevance of their research and expertise to the ESRC and the programs offered.

The Director (or designate) shall bring forward all membership applications to the Committee at its next scheduled meeting, where membership decisions will be decided by a simple majority vote.

The Director (or designate) shall notify each applicant of the results of the membership vote.

Adjunct faculty may hold part-time teaching contracts in addition to their adjunct appointment. Contracts will be issued in accordance with the provisions of the collective agreement between Brock University and CUPE4207.

All Adjuncts may resign their membership through a letter of resignation to the Director and will take effect immediately.

### **ESRC Affiliates**

All faculty (Core and Participating) associated with ESRC programs are recognized as Faculty Affiliates of the ESRC.

Individuals who are temporarily affiliated with Brock or individuals and groups who are not members of the Brock academic staff may participate in ESRC activities through ESRC affiliation. ESRC Affiliates (hereafter the 'Affiliates') may be limited term appointments, post-doctoral research fellows, Research Associates, and Adjunct Professors, community members, businesses, NGOs or researchers from other universities who can make a demonstrable and positive contribution to ESRC's mission and objectives.

Affiliate appointment is for a three-year term which may be renewed.

The process for becoming an Affiliate is as follows:

- Prospective applicants must be nominated by a Committee member.
- Prospective applicants must submit a CV and a one to two-page statement of intent to the Director outlining the relevance of their research to ESRC and/or their planned contribution to ESRC.
- The Director (or designate) shall bring forward all membership applications to the Centre Committee at its next scheduled meeting, where membership decisions will be decided by a simple majority vote.
- The Director (or designate) shall notify each applicant of the results of the membership vote.

All Affiliates may resign their membership through a letter of resignation to the Director and will take effect immediately.

Affiliates whom the Committee have determined to have become inactive (i.e., they have not participated in the Committee or other ESRC activities for at least two years) may have their affiliation cancelled through the unanimous vote of the ESRC Committee. Prior to such actions, a letter from the Director will be sent to the member to request explanation.

All affiliation decisions of the ESRC Committee (new affiliation approvals, new affiliation rejections, and affiliation cancellations) can be overridden through a two-thirds majority vote.

### **Committee Procedures for Teaching Matters**

The Committee, with the advice of the GPC, approves: all decisions respecting the curriculum of programs; modes of course delivery; instructional allocations; requirements of majors, co-majors, concentrations and so on; and additions and deletions to the Centre course bank.

### **Graduate Program Committee (GPC)**

The ESRC is home to the Sustainability Science and Society (SSAS) and Sustainability Science (SSCI) graduate programs. ESRC graduate programs are governed by a Graduate Program Committee (hereafter 'the GPC') and its rules of procedure.

### **Assignment of Grades**

Members of the Centre and those instructing in the programs offered will acquaint themselves with the [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) calendars around the evaluation of student performance in a course. At the Undergraduate level, for example, an A+ is reserved for work of outstanding quality that provides clear evidence of a rare talent for the subject and of an original and/or incisive mind. It should be noted that these descriptors do not apply to graduate courses. All teaching members of the Centre must submit grade distribution reports to the office upon completion of courses which may be viewed by the Director and other instructors to facilitate comparable grading standards.

### **Appeal of Grades**



Graduate and undergraduate student appeals are governed by Sections III, 11 and 17 of the Faculty Handbook.

### **Course Evaluations**

For courses with enrollments of five (5) or more students (per Article 16.04 i), evaluations using common questions approved by the Centre will be conducted in all courses, normally within two weeks of the end of the course. Instructors will not be present during the evaluation.

Evaluations will be completed online by all students, facilitated by the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation at Brock University. Evaluations are only available to the instructor after grades are submitted. Data on individual faculty are not kept by the Centre unless express consent has been provided. The use of student evaluations for BUFA members is outlined in Article 12.07.

### **Freedom of Information Privacy Protection Act (FIPPA)**

Full-time faculty members, part-time faculty members and teaching assistants are required to retain all communications with students for at least one year.

### **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

Policies regarding the accommodation of students experiencing functional limitations because of a disability or ongoing health or mental health condition have been developed in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code and Guidelines and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act to ensure all students are fully included in the university experience. Policy-related information can be found [online](#).

### **Committee Procedures for Other Matters**

The Committee is also responsible for the following:

#### **Curriculum**

The Committee is responsible for (a) the curriculum, the requirements of minors and so on, (b) UPC, calendar and scheduling submissions.

#### **Awards**

The Committee will work with the Coordinator to inform students of available scholarships, bursaries and other student awards. Working with the appropriate representative in the Student Awards and Financial Aid Office, the Committee will apply the criteria for each award to select recipients.

#### **Workload (NWS/AWP)**

The Committee will encourage equitable administrative workload distribution. In preparation for a Centre vote each December, it will revise the Normal Workload Standards (NWS) when appropriate. The Committee will ensure full-time faculty members complete the Annual Workload Plan (AWP) by March 1 of each year.

#### **Scheduling, Teaching Allocation, Part-Time Budget**

The Committee will aid the Director and the Centre Administrator to allocate teaching and to create the course schedule. Teaching preferences will be accommodated as much as possible taking into account program needs.

### **Recruitment and Student Outreach**

The Committee will help to develop and implement strategies for increasing enrollments, promoting our programs to prospective students and enhancing the effectiveness of our various means of communication with students and the broader Brock community.

### **Ad hoc Committees and Task Forces**

The Committee may strike ad-hoc subcommittees or task forces as deemed necessary. Affiliates may be invited to serve on ad-hoc subcommittees or task forces.

### **Amendment of ESRC Rules of Procedure**

Amendment of the ESRC Rules of Procedure can be proposed by any member of the Committee and must be passed by a two-thirds majority vote of the Committee.

### **ESRC Hiring Committee**

**Approved: September 19, 2023**

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## **Appendix 1. Employment Equity Plan**

Article 20 of the Collective Agreement (2023-2026) sets out the commitment of Brock University and the Brock University Faculty Association (BUFA) regarding the principle of employment equity and working towards increasing the proportions of women, Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) peoples, Black people, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities/racialized groups, and Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and additional sexually and gender diverse (2SLGBTQI+) persons in the Bargaining Unit through the appointment of members of designated groups to probationary and tenured/permanent and limited term positions while sustaining the University's commitment to excellence.. Article 20.02 stipulates the establishment of an Employment Equity Plan by each unit.

The Environmental Sustainability Research Centre (ESRC) is committed to hiring persons in academic positions based on merit, including demonstrated or potential ability in teaching, scholarly attainment and professional distinction (as per Article 19.02 of the Collective Agreement). It is also committed to Article 20 - Employment Equity.

The ESRC is a Research Centre in the Faculty of Social Science (FOSS) at Brock. In 2023, three and one-half (3.5) tenured/permanent faculty members are appointed to the ESRC. One faculty member fully appointed to the ESRC does not self-identify as a member of designated groups. Two faculty members fully appointed and one faculty member half-appointed to the ESRC do self-identify as members of designated groups.

Recognizing all efforts should be made to ensure that designated groups (including those specified above), are better represented in the ESRC and University as a whole, the following goals will inform the hiring process in the ESRC:

1. The ESRC seeks to achieve gender balance, as defined in Article 20.01(ii).
2. In the circumstance that the ESRC is deemed to have achieved a gender balance (i.e. more than 40% representation of women (i.e. women hold more than 40% of the probationary and tenured/permanent positions in the Centre)), the employment equity procedures in Article 20 will apply to candidates from the other designated groups.

3. In developing its curriculum and program requirements, the ESRC will consider their implications for attracting members of designated groups.

Specifically, the ESRC will take the following steps during the hiring process, as elaborated in Article 20.02 a. (i – ii):

1. Discuss amongst Committee members the implications of the areas of specialization to be advertised for members of designated groups, with the aim of attracting applications from members of designated groups;
2. Where possible, ensure that at least one member of the Committee is from a designated group (or an appointed one from outside of the ESRC with full voting rights).

With a view to eliminating barriers to employment of designated groups, the ESRC will also: a) advertise positions widely in a variety of media; b) encourage self-identification of all applicants by suggesting they complete the self-identification form available on the University website and include it with their application; and, c) carefully consider employment equity issues into hiring deliberations, explicitly recognizing that candidates for probationary and tenured appointments are to be selected for the shortlist on the basis of the criteria in Articles 19.02 (a), 19.02 (b) and 20 Employment Equity.