

History of revisions to the LTER Bylaws

Prepared by Robert B. Waide

The LTER Bylaws were created in response to recommendations from the Twenty-year Review of the LTER Program, which took place in 2002. The goal of the bylaws is to institutionalize operational norms for the LTER Network. The LTER Executive Committee (chair, Jim Gosz) prepared a set of draft bylaws for review by sites and for discussion by the Coordinating Committee at their meeting in spring 2003. However, a full agenda prevented discussion at that time, so the Executive Board continued to revise the bylaws based on written comments from sites. The bylaws were submitted to the LTER National Advisory Board for comment in June, 2003. A subsequent revision was reviewed by the LTER program officer Henry Gholz of NSF. The draft bylaws were sent to the lead PI at each LTER site for additional comments in August 2003. After further revisions, the bylaws were adopted by the Coordinating Committee on September 19, 2003 (<http://intranet2.lternet.edu/documents/bylaws-lter-network-accepted-9-03>).

In 2005, the Executive Committee proposed a change to Article IV, Section 1 (Executive Committee) of the bylaws which was approved by the Coordinating Committee on September 21, 2005 (<http://intranet2.lternet.edu/documents/bylaws-long-term-ecological-research-network-revised-9-05>).

As part of the LTER Strategic Planning exercise, the Governance Working Group (chair, Ann Zimmerman) proposed a series of significant changes in the bylaws to the Coordinating Committee in May 2006. After a wide-ranging and productive discussion (<http://intranet2.lternet.edu/documents/spring-2006-lter-coordinating-committee-meeting>), the Coordinating Committee adopted the revised bylaws by a vote of 25-0 (with one absence) on May 18, 2006. The revised bylaws abolished the Coordinating and Executive Committees and replaced them with the Science Council and the Executive Board, with a new distribution of responsibilities. This version of the bylaws (Revision 2.0; <http://intranet2.lternet.edu/documents/bylaws-long-term-ecological-research-network-revised-5-06>) was included in The Decadal Plan for LTER. However, because of an error, the text in the Decadal Plan failed to include two approved changes in Article IV, Section 5 (defining a quorum and limiting the vote of the Chair to breaking ties) and Article IX, Section 2 (shifting the responsibility for administering the annual survey of sites from the Network Office to the Executive Board).

Revisions to the bylaws proposed by the Executive Board were approved by the Science Council on May 8, 2008 (Revision 3.0) and May 17, 2012 (Revision 4.0).