1. Definitions

These definitions need to be the same as in the School of the Environment By-Laws and Graduate Office documents.

a) In this document the "School of the Environment PhD" degree is what used to be called the "ESR:General". The official name of this degree is the "Environmental Sciences and Resources:General".

b) The Director of the School of the Environment serves as the coordinator of the ESR PhD program. In this document we will refer to this person as the Director.

c) The School of the Environment Executive Committee is made up of the director and the chairs of the three participating departments; Geography, Geology and Environmental Sciences and Management.

d) The ESR:dept will remain for students who were in the program before February 4, 2010. Admission to these programs are suspended at this time.

e) School of the Environment Faculty are all faculty in the School of the Environment.

f) School of the Environment PhD Advisors are all faculty who are currently PhD advisors or have indicated that they want to recruit and accept PhD students and serve as their single major advisor.

g) A PhD student’s Advisory Committee consists of one PhD Primary Advisor and any other two School of the Environment Faculty. This committee will be formed when the student is admitted and will be replaced by the PhD Dissertation Committee that includes another committee member (unspecified) and the Graduate Office Representative.

2. Participating Departments

The participating departments in the School of the Environment are Geology, Geography and Environmental Sciences and Management. The regular faculty in these departments are automatically affiliated with the ESR PhD program.

3. Student recruiting and admission

a) Recruiting will be coordinated through the School of the Environment office to help establish visibility. Participating departments or faculty are encouraged to recruit on their own but should coordinate efforts with the School to avoid confusion.
b) A School of the Environment Graduate Admissions Committee will be formed each year to handle recruiting and admissions.

c) The Graduate Admission Committee will include at least one member of each departments' graduate affairs committee.

d) All PhD applicants have to meet the University admissions requirements.

e) The Director in coordination with the university Office of Admissions will formally admit students.

f) The major pulse of admissions will be in February or March.

g) In order to be admitted, students must have a PhD advisor.

h) Support for the students should be identified during the recruiting cycle. This may be that the student will be finding support from outside sources.

4. Admittance criteria

All students being considered for admittance into the program need to meet the following criteria:

a) Each potential student must have an ESR PhD Advisor who is willing to advise and support him or her.

b) The advisor and advisor's department need to identify the source of support for tuition and expenses that are reasonable and matched to the needs of the student.

c) Applicants need to meet current guidelines for grades and academic course work as determined by the School of the Environment and the Office of Admissions.

d) Applicants need to be able to produce all required documents, such as identification, visa, etc..

5. Required course of study

There will be course requirements that are shared by all PhD students in the program. These requirements will be set by the School of the Environment curriculum committee and approved by the executive committee, the Graduate Council and Faculty Senate.

a) All PhD students will:

   a. Complete six quarters of ESR607 seminars that will include:
      a) two quarters of the speakers series seminars that are hosted by each departments
      b) two research seminars that are hosted by either departments or research groups within the school
      c) two quarters of journal club

   b. Complete the 620,621,622 sequence. Currently this list is compiled by the ESR PhD Coordinating Committee and be made up of 600 and 500/600
level courses that are taught in the participating departments in the School of the Environment or by ESR PhD Affiliated Faculty.

b) PhD students:
   a. might be required to take up to three courses as suggested by the Graduate Admissions Committee and in consultation with their PhD advisor to facilitate admission of inter-disciplinary students
   b. will complete a set of courses as assigned by their advisory committee and advisor

c) The Director may allow substitutions for these requirements.
d) Must have at least 81 graduate credits beyond the Bachelor's degree.

6. Teaching or other experience

   a) Teaching experience may be built into the student's plan of study and objectives. With the permission of the Director, it will be permissible for ESR PhD students to hold positions as
      a. GRA (graduate research assistant)
      b. GTA (graduate teaching assistant)
      c. Adjunct in a department outside of the School
      d. Fixed term instructor in a department outside of the School

   b) Field research projects, internships, externships, fellowships and other similar opportunities that are not directly related to the student's dissertation may be included in the plan.

7. Program progress and dissertation research

   The student's program will consist of the following elements:

   a) seminar participation (6 credits of ESR607)
   b) courses required by the admissions committee (up to 3 courses)
   c) core courses (620 series and statistics)
   d) advisory committee determined courses
   e) passing the qualifying exam
   f) formation of the dissertation committee
   g) approval of the research prospectus
   h) seminar presentation
   i) dissertation defense presentation and committee review

   Students will document their progress with a short memo and attached comments by the student's advisor or dissertation committee. This memo will contain a summary of research progress, courses taken, presentations or papers submitted (with links).
8. **Publication**

Students are required to submit their final dissertation to the Office of Graduate Studies. The PSU Library and ProQuest will make the final document publicly available. Students are encouraged to make their dissertation readily available by choosing Open Access.

9. **Faculty and governance**

a) The ESR PhD program will be administered through the School of the Environment and will be generally referred to as the School of the Environment PhD.

b) The Director will have the responsibility to review and approve (or deny) all student forms and appointments.

c) The Executive Committee will assign all PhD fellowships or assistantships that are offered through the School.

d) The Executive Committee has the authority to affiliate new faculty to the PhD faculty and to certify faculty as potential primary PhD advisors. They will invite all faculty who are certified (in this process) to consider being primary advisors for PhD students. The criteria will be:

   a. must hold a PhD
   b. must hold a tenure or tenure-trace faculty appointment at PSU except for special appointments that are approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies
   c. must be an active member of at least one research group or participating department
   d. must have an active research program that is able to support a PhD student

e) The Director will be responsible for the administration of the PhD program including the following tasks:

   a. coordinating offerings between the departments and research groups
   b. provide timely information to the Director's office for communications purposes
   c. writing and revising the guidelines
   d. tracking and supervising student progress
   e. establishing the yearly calendar of deadlines and offerings
   f. supervising the comprehensive exam process
   g. serving as the clearing house for multidisciplinary proposals (such as the GK12 or IGERT) and help establish the infrastructure that supports these efforts

f) A School of the Environment Curriculum Committee will be formed and appointed by the Director. This committee will revise or create courses, continually review the overall curriculum, and make suggestions for revision of the course requirements described in these guidelines.
g) The School of the Environment Graduate Admissions Committee has the following responsibilities:
   a. establishing clear criteria for admissions that will be used in recruiting
   b. coordinating all recruiting and admissions activities with the participating departments
   c. keeping the recruiting literature and website descriptions current
   d. publishing the schedule for recruiting and admissions decisions for each year
   e. selecting appropriate reviewers for applicant files
   f. verifying with potential primary advisors that they are willing to accept a new student
   g. compiling the reviewer information and making recommendations for admission
   h. maintaining contact with applicants during the process
   i. determining if the student needs any particular courses before they enter the ESR620 series
   j. continual quality improvement of the recruiting and admissions process

10. Modification of these guidelines
   The mechanisms for modifying and ratifying these PhD guidelines are provided in the School of the Environment Bylaws.