THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
COMMISSION FOR ADULT LEARNERS
CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, STANDING RULES

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I
PURPOSE
The purpose of the Commission for Adult Learners is to provide advice and consultation to the University on issues affecting adult learners whether they attend full- or part-time; have degree, provisional, or nondegree status; and study day, evening, or at a distance.

The Commission for Adult Learners will:

1) provide a visible University-wide body whose primary purpose is to contribute to a supportive climate for adult learners,

2) monitor the recruitment, retention, and satisfaction of adult learners,

3) advocate for adult learners’ concerns by recommending changes in policy, practice, and procedures that impact adult learners,

4) foster coordination and information exchange regarding programs and services which attract and retain adult learners to Penn State, and

5) serve as repository and coordinating body for all adult learner-focused initiatives University-wide

Staff, budgetary, research, and organizational support for Commission operations shall reside in the Office of the Vice President for Outreach and Vice Provost for Online Education. The Commission is sponsored by five administrators: Vice President for Student Affairs; Vice President and Dean for Undergraduate Education; Vice President for the Commonwealth Campuses; Vice President for Outreach and Vice Provost for Online Education; and Vice Provost for Educational Equity. The sponsors annually select among themselves a representative to serve as a liaison to the Chairperson of the Commission.

ARTICLE II
MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Appointment of Members
Individuals appointed shall be persons interested in, and willing to contribute to, the improvement of opportunities for adult learners in the University community.

a. Members of the Commission for Adult Learners are recommended by current membership of the Commission and invited by the Vice President for Outreach and Vice Provost for Online Education.
b. Members shall be appointed to serve a three-year term with the exceptions of student members, standing members, and a Faculty Senate Liaison who shall be appointed to one-year terms.

c. Faculty, staff and administrative members shall include representation from:

1) offices/departments who work directly with adult learners, and

2) offices whose services are crucial to all students including adult learners, and

3) those who have been adult learners and/or advocates of adult learners, and

4) representatives from each sponsor’s unit.

d. Student members shall be undergraduate or graduate adult learners.

e. Membership shall include at least twenty-five percent from locations other than University Park.

f. Members of the Commission are eligible for reappointment after an absence from the Commission of at least one year. The Past Chairperson remains a member of the Commission for one additional year immediately following the term as Chairperson.

Section 2 - Resignations, temporarily inactive members

If a current member of the Commission finds it necessary to be absent from the University for a period of six months or more, the Vice President for Outreach and Vice Provost for Online Education may be asked to appoint an individual nominated by the Executive Committee to attend in the member’s absence. Upon return to the University, the first member will complete the original term of service, and the substitute will leave the Commission.

If a member finds it necessary to resign from the Commission, the Vice President of Outreach may be asked to appoint an individual, from a list provided by the Executive to complete the term of service. Replacements members should be chosen from the Executive Committee’s list, if feasible, in both of the above instances.

Section 3 - Inactive Members

Members missing more than one-half of the regular meetings and not participating in any committee work during any year (September -June) may be declared inactive by the Executive Committee and may be asked to resign. After notification to the inactive member, the Vice President for Outreach and Vice Provost for Online Education may be asked by the Chairperson to appoint a replacement member to complete that term of membership. A list of potential members will be provided by the Executive Committee.

Section 4—Standing Members

Each year the sponsors may appoint standing members to serve on the Commission to serve for one year, and may be reappointed.
Section 5 – Ex Officio Membership

The Director of Adult Learner Advocacy and Prior Learning Assessment Coordinator shall hold ex officio membership on the Commission for Adult Learners and its Executive Committee, with the privilege of the floor in all committee meeting and in Commission meetings, but without voting privileges.

ARTICLE III

AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Constitution shall be adopted by two-thirds of the membership by voice vote or e-mail ballot. Amendments shall be presented in writing at a regular meeting, with the voice vote or e-mail ballot following no less than three weeks after that meeting.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

OFFICERS/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1 - Executive Committee

The Commission for Adult Learners Executive Committee includes the

- Chairperson
- Past-Chairperson
- Chairperson-elect
- Chairpersons of the Standing Committees

Should none of the above members include a representative from a location other than University Park, an at-large member shall be elected from the Commission member from a location other than University Park.

The Executive Committee shall coordinate the activities of the Commission and its committees; it shall act for the Commission in the interim between meetings of the Commission; it shall exercise budgetary responsibility for the Commission.

Section 2 - Officers

The Chairperson shall be the presiding officer of the Commission for Adult Learners. The duties of the Chairperson shall be to preside over all meetings of the Commission; to respond to and
initiate communications with the Vice President for Outreach and Vice Provost for Online Education and/or the sponsoring administrators; and to assume all functions usually associated with the office of Chairperson.

The Chairperson-elect shall automatically succeed to the position of Chairperson, during the second year in office. During the first year, the Chairperson-elect shall assume the duties of Chairperson when that officer is absent, and shall perform the duties appropriate to that office. In the event the Chairperson resigns or is unable to serve, the Chairperson-elect shall move into that position immediately. The vacant position shall be filled at the next annual election, or sooner at the request of the Executive Committee.

All elected officers and members of the Executive Committee shall hold offices for one year beginning July 1 or until their successors are determined. In the event both officers resign or are otherwise unable to serve, the Executive Committee shall appoint a Chairperson from its membership to serve until the next regular election.

Section 3 - Administrative Assistant to the Commission

The Commission shall have an administrative assistant to keep the official roll, to prepare and publish notices, agendas, and minutes of the Commission for Adult Learners meetings, and perform other related duties including chairing the conference planning committee. If a vacancy occurs in the position, the acting Chairperson will appoint a replacement chair to the conference planning committee.

Documents and records of the Commission for Adult Learners shall be housed and made accessible according to the general policy relating to records and archives of the University and on the Commission’s official web site. The administrative assistant would be a non-voting member of the Commission and as chair of the conference planning committee would be a standing member of the Executive Committee.
ARTICLE II
ELECTIONS

All elections shall be by secret ballot. Elections to the Executive Committee shall be as follows:

1) Nominations for the office of Chairperson-elect shall be conducted by a Nominating Committee comprised of all outgoing members of the Commission for Adult Learners. The past Chairperson of the Commission will serve as Chairperson of the committee.

2) The process for electing the Chairperson-elect shall be: The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of names for the office at the regular Commission meeting in March. Nominations from the floor will be accepted at that time. Upon finalizing the ballot, it will be emailed to all members. Ten days will be allowed for completing ballots. Results will be announced at the April meeting.

ARTICLE III
COMMITTEES

The Chair of the Commission shall determine its committee structure and composition in consultation with the Director of Adult Learner Advocacy with the following stipulations:

a. Any University personnel or any student of the University may be appointed to a committee.

b. Chairpersons of a committee must be active members of the Commission.

c. Committee Chairpersons will be appointed by the Commission Chairperson to serve for one year, with the option to renew the appointment.

ARTICLE IV
MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the Commission for Adult Learners shall be held from September through May on dates to be determined by the Executive Committee. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson of the Commission.
ARTICLE V

AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Bylaws shall be adopted by two-thirds of the membership by voice vote or e-mail ballot. Amendments shall be presented in writing at a regular meeting, with the voice vote or e-mail ballot following no less than three weeks after that meeting.
STANDING RULES

ARTICLE I

RULES OF PROCEDURE

The rules of procedure in the meetings of the Commission for Adult Learners shall be those of Robert’s Rules of Order, most recent edition.

All meetings of the Commission are open to members of the University community, unless matters of a confidential nature are being discussed. Any member of the University community who is not a member of the Commission for Adult Learners may request the privilege of speaking on any item of business before the Commission. Such a request must be made in writing to the Chairperson at least four days before the meeting.

The Chairperson shall have the authority to place a time limit on the remarks of any participant in a Commission meeting.

The Commission shall publish minutes of its proceedings in a timely manner.
ARTICLE II

COMMITTEES

With the approval of the Executive Committee, all committees may add to their membership any member of the University staff or faculty or any student of the University on the basis of their interest, expertise, or membership in a particular sector of the University community. All committees are encouraged to seek advice or consultation on particular questions as circumstances might indicate.

All committees shall record minutes or provide a summary report of their activities, to be filed with the administrative assistant for the Commission.

ARTICLE III

SPONSORSHIP

The Commission for Adult Learners may provide sponsorship (financial backing and/or attaching the Commission name) to an event and/or program. Decisions will be made by the Executive Committee on a case-by-case basis determined by need, appropriateness to Commission goals, and available funds.

First Version: December 1997
Revised: May 2000
Revised: May 2001
Revised: May 2005
Revised: November 2006
Revised: January 2007
Revised: September 2009
Revised: December 2011
Revised: September 2012
Revised: September 2013