# FLORIDA COASTAL EVERGLADES LTER (FCE)

## Guidelines for Project Administration and Management

Modified 26 November 2018

This document presents a framework for the management and administration of the FCE LTER. These guidelines are designed to insure that important project decisions are equitable, democratic, and reflect both long-term consistency and project history. These guidelines also insure broad representation and involvement of both present and future researchers. This effort recognizes that, while the FCE LTER is administratively based in SERC, the project involves and will continue to involve FIU scientists from SERC, from other departments at FIU, from other universities, and from state and federal agencies. These guidelines were initially approved by the LTER Internal Executive Committee on March 13, 2000 by a vote of 7 in favor, 1 opposed (the Outside Member seat was not yet occupied). This document reflects all changes that have been approved by the FCE LTER Program IEC since this meeting.

There will be **Working Groups and Cross-Cutting Theme Groups** that include all PIs/Collaborators working on the FCE LTER. Both Groups will be topical, with the topics driven by key research questions and/or major processes being quantified by the LTER. Thus, the Working Groups and Cross-Cutting Themes closely parallel the structure of our proposal and the structure of our research.

- All PIs/Collaborators should affiliate themselves with at least one Working Group or Cross-Cutting Theme.
- Any PI/Collaborator may be affiliated with more than one Group.
- Each Working Group shall have two co-Leads and each Cross-Cutting Theme Group shall have one Lead, who are charged with maintaining communications and interactions within the group and between groups.
- Group Leaders shall be chosen by of the Internal Executive Committee with the advice of the Working Group membership.
- Group Leaders serve at the behest of their Working Group, such that leadership tenure shall be determined by each Working Group.
- Each Working Group shall have one co-Lead who will serve as a member of the FCE LTER Internal Executive Committee (see below), and shall represent the desires and interests of their particular Working Group in decisions made by that committee. The Lead of each Cross-Cutting Theme Group shall serve as a member of the FCE LTER Internal Executive Committee (see below), and shall represent the desires and interests of their particular Group in decisions made by that committee. In both cases, terms of the IEC positions shall be renewed every two years (or by request of the member or IEC, see below) with the possibility of rotating among co-leads or other group members. IEC representatives may serve multiple and consecutive terms.
- Any Group Leader who is unable to attend an Internal Executive Committee meeting shall appoint a replacement Working Group member to attend in their place, or if necessary shall send proxies to the IEC Chair for all necessary votes.

There will be an **FCE LTER Internal Executive Committee (IEC)** that will be composed of voting and non-voting members. This committee will include:

- The group leader from each of the Working Groups and Cross-Cutting Theme Groups (above), or the Working Group member appointed to represent that group at the IEC meeting. Each Group leader/representative shall have one vote.
- The proposal "cover page PIs" should be members of the IEC to the full extent possible.
- The FCE Education & Outreach Coordinator as a voting member
- The FCE LTER Lead PI as a non-voting member and as the *de facto* IEC Chair.
- At least one outside member who is not a PI/Collaborator on the FCE LTER project as a non-voting member (see below for selection process) and shall serve a 2 year renewable term.
- One representative from each of our key agency/NGO partners, specifically Everglades National Park, South Florida Water Management District, and Everglades Foundation, either as a Group Lead or as a non-voting member (see below for selection process).

- One representative from a sub-contracting institution to represent external academic partners as a non-voting member, who will serve a 1 year renewable term.
- A representative of the FCE LTER Affiliated Graduate Student Group as a non-voting member and shall serve a 1 year renewable term. Appointment of the graduate representative to the IEC shall be by decision of the Affiliated Graduate Student Group.
- The FCE Information Manager and Project Manager shall serve as non-voting *ex officio* members of the IEC.
- The immediate past PI may be elected by a majority vote of the IEC to serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of the IEC

The FCE LTER Internal Executive Committee **shall meet** in person or via email or conference call whenever sufficient agenda items warrant a meeting. Any voting member of the IEC may call a special committee meeting. Non-voting IEC members may call a special committee meeting through the IEC Chair. The IEC **shall be charged** with the following tasks and responsibilities:

- Assist the Lead PI with coordination of program-wide activities, including the organization of NSF site visits and writing of renewal proposals.
- Advise the Lead PI on important programmatic and budgetary decisions, including major personnel decisions, requests for university resources (such as space), etc., with decisions by a simple majority vote.
- Advise the Lead PI by a majority vote on budgetary changes of any kind that: 1) exceed $25,000 per year; 2) are multi-year reallocations; 3) involve allocations of funds to an unbudgeted PI or Collaborator; 4) involve inter-institutional movement of funds, or; 5) require the notification or permission of NSF. In cases where a budgeted PI wishes to reallocate small amounts of their own subbudget to enhance their working group's research, they must notify the Lead PI and the IEC prior to the change but an IEC vote is not necessary.
- Advise the Lead PI on inter-site decisions, including directions for cross-site comparisons and collaborations, with decisions by a simple majority vote.
- Recommend to the Lead PI whether or not to extend formal LTER project support (in the form of a Letter of Support from the Lead PI) for proposals that do not have an FCE LTER PI or Collaborator as a Principal Investigator by a simple majority vote.
- Recommend to the Lead PI the appointment of the non-affiliated members to the IEC membership.
- Recommend to the Lead PI the appointment of a non-voting representative of Everglades National Park, the South Florida Water Management District and Everglades Foundation to the IEC membership.
- Approve the FCE LTER Data Management Policies by a simple majority vote. Approve any substantive changes in these policies by a simple majority vote.
- Approve the specific requirements, limitations, and rights of newly added FCE LTER Collaborators and FCE Affiliated Graduate Students, as they are communicated in a "form" letter of welcome from the Lead PI (see below), by simple majority vote.
- Recommend to the Lead PI the addition of any scientist to be a FCE LTER Collaborator, after appropriate presentation by the applicant of how their involvement will enhance LTER research efforts, with decisions by a two-thirds majority vote. Notably, Postdoctoral Research Associates are eligible to serve as Collaborators.
- Recommend to the Lead PI the removal of any FCE LTER PI or Collaborator from the project, with decisions by a two-thirds majority vote.
- Recommend to the Lead PI any changes in the Lead PI position, with decisions by a two-thirds majority vote.
- Recommend to the Lead PI any changes in the FCE LTER Administrative/Management Guidelines, with decisions by a two-thirds majority vote.
- Coordinate the advertising and search for infrastructure-based LTER positions (the Information Manager and the Project Manager). Make recommendations to the Lead PI on hiring of infrastructure-based positions by a two-thirds majority vote.
- Make recommendations to the Lead PI on termination of infrastructure-based personnel by a two-thirds majority vote.

The **Chair of the Internal Executive Committee** (the Lead PI) shall be charged with the following tasks and responsibilities:

- The IEC Chair shall coordinate IEC activities, coordinate the IEC meetings, conference calls, or decision emails, call special IEC meetings when necessary, and preside over IEC meetings.

- The IEC Chair shall cast a tie-breaking vote when necessary. Otherwise, the IEC Chair is a non-voting member of the committee.
- The IEC Chair shall maintain communication about project progress and needs with relevant FIU administration officials and will communicate IEC requests, concerns, and mandates to the appropriate FIU administration officials.
- As the IEC Chair, the Lead PI shall oversee the Affiliated Graduate Students Group, including assisting the group with organizational and logistical issues, and maintaining a current list of actively involved students in the group.
- As the IEC Chair, the Lead PI shall send a "form" letter of welcome to all new Collaborators and Affiliated Graduate Students. This letter shall be accompanied by the most recent version of the Guidelines for Project Administration and Management and the Data Management Policies. The content of these welcome letters shall be initially approved by the IEC (majority vote). All substantive changes to this letter that reflect substantive changes in the rights and responsibilities of Collaborators and Affiliated Graduate Students, shall also be approved by the IEC (majority vote).