

# Bylaws — Center for Intellectual Freedom

Luciano I. de Castro  
Interim Director, Center for Intellectual Freedom

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## Abstract

These bylaws were approved by the Advisory Council of the Center for Intellectual Freedom at its [meeting](#) on November 18, 2025, and by the Iowa Board of Regents, at its [meeting](#) on December 3, 2025.

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## Article I – Definitions

- Section 1. “*Advisory Council*” means the advisory council established by Iowa Code section 263C.7.
- Section 2. “*Board*” means the state of Iowa board of regents.
- Section 3. “*Center*” means the Center for Intellectual Freedom established by Iowa Code section 263C.2.
- Section 4. “*Director*” means the director of the Center, mentioned in Iowa Code section 263C.9. The term includes an interim director, unless explicitly specified otherwise.
- Section 5. “*R1 institution*” means a university or institution classified as “Research 1: Very High Research Activity” by the Carnegie Classification of Research Institutions.
- Section 6. “*Regents institution*” means an institution specified in Iowa Code section 262.7, subsections 1 through 3.
- Section 7. “*University*” means the State University of Iowa.

## Article II – Purpose and Mission

- Section 1. These bylaws govern the Center and its Advisory Council.
- Section 2. Pursuant to Iowa Code 263C.4, the Center:
- (a) shall educate students by means of free, open, and rigorous intellectual inquiry to seek the truth;
  - (b) affirms its duty to equip students with the skills, habits, and dispositions of mind they need to reach their own informed conclusions on matters of social and political importance;
  - (c) affirms the value of intellectual diversity in higher education and aspires to enhance the intellectual diversity of the University; and
  - (d) affirms a commitment to create a community dedicated to an ethic of civil and free inquiry which respects the intellectual freedom of each member, supports individual capacities for growth, and welcomes the differences of opinion that naturally exist in a public university community.

## Article III – Organization

- Section 1. The Center is an independent academic unit under the Board at the University. The Director reports directly to the Board.
- Section 2. The Advisory Council shall have an Executive Committee and a Scholar Committee and may create *ad hoc* committees.

Section 3. The duties of the Advisory Council include:

- (a) conducting a nationwide search for a permanent director of the Center if that position is or will become vacant;
- (b) providing advice to the Director and the Board about matters related to the Center; and
- (c) providing oversight and delivering feedback on the activities and operations of the Center.

Section 4. The duties of the Executive Committee include:

- (a) managing the search for a Center Director;
- (b) preparing the agenda and materials for meetings of the Advisory Council;
- (c) preparing and maintaining the minutes of meetings of the Advisory Council;
- (d) providing advice to the Chair about matters related to the Center and its activities; and
- (e) performing any other functions assigned by the Advisory Council.

Section 5. The duties of the Scholar Committee include:

- (a) advising the Director on the decision to hire all tenure-eligible faculty;
- (b) advising the Director on promotion and tenure of faculty;
- (c) advising on the inclusion of new academic representatives on the Advisory Council;
- (d) providing advice to the Director about matters related to the Center's activities; and
- (e) performing any other functions assigned by the Advisory Council.

## **Article IV – Membership**

Section 1. Iowa Code section 263C.7 establishes the rules for membership of the Advisory Council.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall consist of not fewer than five (5) Members and not more than one-half of the current membership of the Advisory Council, as determined by the Chair of the Advisory Council.

Section 3. Academic Members of the Executive Committee shall be elected by a majority vote of the members of the Advisory Council from a slate of candidates proposed by the Scholar Committee. The remaining members shall be elected by a majority of the members of the Advisory Council from a slate of candidates proposed by the Chair of the Advisory Council.

Section 4. The members of the Scholar Committee shall be the Advisory Council members who are current or former tenured professors from R1 institutions.

Section 5. Members of any committee shall serve a term of two (2) years, with one consecutive two-year renewal term upon a majority vote of the Advisory Council. Thereafter, a member may be re-elected or reappointed to the committee after at least a two-year hiatus.

## Article V – Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Advisory Council shall consist of a Chair of the Advisory Council and a Chair of the Scholar Committee.

Section 2. The initial Chair of the Advisory Council shall be selected by the Board from the initial membership of the Advisory Council. Thereafter, the Chair shall be elected by a majority vote of the members of the Advisory Council.

Section 3. The Chair of the Advisory Council shall serve a term of two (2) years. No member may serve more than two consecutive terms as Chair, nor may a member serve more than four terms as Chair in total.

Section 4. The Chair of the Scholar Committee and of any *ad hoc* committees shall be elected by their members for a renewable two-year term.

Section 5. The Chair of the Advisory Council shall serve as the Chair of the Executive Committee, except that for the limited purposes of conducting any search for a Center Director, the Chair of the Scholar Committee shall serve as the Chair of the Executive Committee.

## Article VI – Meetings

Section 1. The Advisory Council shall meet at least once per academic semester at a place, time, and location to be determined by the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Special meetings of the Advisory Council may be called by the Chair of the Executive Committee. A request to convene a special meeting shall be directed to the Executive Committee.

Section 3. The Advisory Council shall follow the requirements of Iowa Code Chapter 21 – the Iowa Open Meetings Act – and any successor law, when conducting its meetings.

Section 4. The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Advisory Council and each of its committees to the extent they are not inconsistent with applicable law, these bylaws, or any special rules of order that the Advisory Council or a committee may adopt.

Section 5. The Center Director may attend and have the privileges of the floor during any regular meeting of the Advisory Council or one of its committees, unless the Chair determines otherwise.

## Article VII – Director Search

- Section 1. If the position of permanent director is or will become vacant, the Advisory Council and its Executive Committee shall commence a nationwide search for candidates for a permanent director of the Center, pursuant to Iowa Code section 263C.8.
- Section 2. The Board shall appoint an interim director if there is a period of time in which the Center has no permanent director.
- Section 3. No member of the Advisory Council shall be a candidate for the position of permanent director.
- Section 4. The procedures for the search shall be consistent with state and federal law and the policies of the Board.
- Section 5. The Executive Committee shall submit a list of one or more finalists for a vote of the Advisory Council.
- Section 6. All finalists must have the academic standing to be eligible for tenure at the University, at the rank of Professor.
- Section 7. A list of finalists approved by a majority vote of the Advisory Council shall be submitted to the Board.

## Article VIII – Center Director

- Section 1. The Director is the chief executive officer of the Center and reports directly to the Board.
- Section 2. A permanent director shall serve a renewable term of five (5) years.
- Section 3. An interim director shall serve a nonrenewable term of two years or until the starting date of the term of a permanent director, whichever is shorter.
- Section 4. In addition to all of the other powers of a chief executive officer of a collegiate academic unit at the University, the Director has the powers needed to fulfill the requirements of Iowa Code sections 263C.2 to 263C.10.
- Section 5. The duties of the Director are specified in Iowa Code sections 263C.9 and 263C.10.
- Section 6. The Director shall develop policies and procedures for the Center, subject to the approval of the Advisory Council and the Board.
- Section 7. The Center's policies and procedures shall be consistent with state and federal law and with the policies of the Board. In the absence of specific Center policies, applicable University policies shall govern to the extent they are consistent with Iowa Code 263C and these bylaws.

## Article IX – Center Faculty

Section 1. The Director has sole and exclusive authority to invite or hire:

- (a) Support staff;
- (b) Speakers;
- (c) Visitors;
- (d) Temporary professors, with short-term contracts;
- (e) Visiting professors;
- (f) Part-time faculty;
- (g) Teaching faculty, with renewable contracts lasting at least a semester;
- (h) Tenure-track assistant professors, eligible for tenure after a period specified in their offer; and
- (i) Tenured professors or associate professors, subject to the Center’s policies on tenure, and approval of tenure by the Board.

Section 2. The Director may create *ad hoc* committees to analyze candidates for tenure. The Director may appoint current or former tenured professors from R1 institutions to these committees. Such professors will be considered affiliated with the Center while they participate in these committees. Faculty members who are not affiliated with the Center shall have no authority to approve, deny, or modify the terms of appointment of faculty to the center.

Section 3. The Director shall determine the responsibilities and compensation of the Center’s personnel.

Section 4. Faculty members may hold joint appointments with other academic units at the University.

Section 5. Faculty may have tenure in the Center. If the Center is discontinued, the tenured faculty shall keep their tenure in the University.

## Article X – Courses, Certificates, and Programs

Section 1. The Center may offer courses; develop certificates, minor, and major programs as well as graduate programs; and offer degrees at the University.

Section 2. The Center shall coordinate with the center for cyclone civics at Iowa State University and the center for civic education at the University of Northern Iowa to offer courses at these Regents institutions either in person or online.

Section 3. The Regents institutions shall recognize the credit hours of the courses offered by the Center.

Section 4. The Center may coordinate with the Regents institutions to include some of the Center’s courses as satisfying core, major, minor, or certificate requirements.

## **Article XI – Finance**

Section 1. Any moneys appropriated to the Center, and any private and external donations to the Center, shall be used only for the direct operation of the Center.

Section 2. The Director may require additional funding to operate the Center, which shall be provided by the Regents institutions, subject to approval of the Board.

Section 3. The Director shall propose an annual budget and provide an annual report of expenditures, which should be approved by the Advisory Council and by the Board.

## **Article XII – Dispute Resolution**

Section 1. If a dispute arises between the Center and a Regents institution, the Chair of the Advisory Council shall attempt to resolve the dispute.

Section 2. If an agreement is not reached, the dispute shall be referred to a meeting of the Board for resolution.

## **Article XIII – Conflicts of Interest**

Section 1. An Advisory Council Member shall be considered to have a conflict of interest if

- (a) such Member has existing or potential financial or other interests which impair or might reasonably appear to impair such Member's independent, unbiased judgment in the discharge of his/her responsibilities to the Center; or
- (b) such Member is aware that a member of his/her family (which for purposes of this paragraph shall be a spouse, parents, siblings, children and any other relative if the latter reside in the same household as the Member), or any organization in which such Member (or member of his/her family) is an officer, director, employee, member, partner, director, or controlling stockholder, has such existing or potential financial or other interests.

Section 2. All Members shall disclose to the Advisory Council Executive Committee any possible conflict of interest at the earliest practicable time. No Member shall vote on any matter under consideration in which such Member has a conflict of interest. All Members are required to follow the requirements outlined in Iowa Code Chapter 68B and shall sign an annual conflict of interest disclosure form.

## **Article XIV – Amendment**

Section 1. An amendment of these bylaws may be proposed by the Director or by any member of the Advisory Council.

Section 2. The proposed amendment must be approved by a majority of the members of the Advisory Council.

Section 3. After the Advisory Council approval, the amendment must also be approved by the Board.