A. Institutional context:

The Department of Nanoscience is one of two departments that make up the Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering (JSNN), an academic unit that is shared between the University of North Carolina Greensboro (UNCG) and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NC A&T). Nanoscience is a department of UNCG and its policies and procedures conform to UNCG policies and procedures, as interpreted and implemented by the Dean of JSNN.

This Instrument of Governance (IOG) describes the organizational structure of the department, its operations, and the policies and procedures that govern those operations. From time to time, the department may adopt new policies or procedures, all of which shall be incorporated into this IOG upon their approval, even if their wording is not specifically included in this document. For any matter not specifically covered in this IOG, the department will follow applicable UNCG policy.

B. Department mission:

The mission of the Department of Nanoscience is to provide students with advanced training in basic and applied research in nanoscience to prepare them for careers in industrial, governmental or academic settings. Within this context, the Nanoscience Department provides a graduate-level transdisciplinary educational and discovery research experience in materials science, synthetic biology, and nanoscale sciences, with an emphasis on innovation, entrepreneurship, and community-engaged outreach. The highly collaborative nature of the department with the Nanoengineering Department brings strengths in science and engineering together to achieve sustainable and integrated research programs in emerging high-impact areas.

C. Academic Programs:

The Department offers the MS (thesis, non-thesis, and Professional Master’s alternatives) and the PhD in Nanoscience. The PhD has two optional tracks, in Synthetic Biology and Materials Science, as well as a general PhD in Nanoscience. The Department does not have an undergraduate degree program.
D. Department organization:

Department Chair: The Chair is appointed by and reports to the Dean of JSNN. The appointment is normally for a 4-year term, renewable for a second term by mutual agreement. The Chair is responsible for all departmental operations but may delegate some responsibilities to other members of the faculty or to faculty committees.

Executive Assistant: The Executive Assistant reports to the Chair, who is responsible for developing a work plan and conducting an annual evaluation as required by Human Resource Services.

Other department administrative positions:

Director of Graduate Studies: The DGS is appointed by the Chair to serve a three-year term, which can be renewed. The DGS chairs the Graduate Studies Committee.

Library Representative: The Library Representative is responsible for sending departmental requests for acquisitions to the UNCG Libraries.

Committees:

Graduate Studies Committee: Consists of four faculty members appointed by the Department Chair and is chaired by the DGS. The members serve overlapping terms of two years. The GSC is responsible for allocating student travel funds, overseeing graduate admissions, selecting students to be nominated for JSNN and University awards, and keeping the Graduate Handbook current. Changes to the graduate curriculum or graduate policies originate with the GSC before being brought to the faculty for approval.

Budget Committee: Consists of four faculty members appointed by the Department Chair and elects its own chair. The members serve overlapping terms of two years. The committee periodically reviews the department’s “Budget Policy & Procedures,” and makes recommendations to the Department Chair for major purchases, whether from department funds or by request to the Dean.

Other Committees: From time-to-time, the Department Chair may appoint ad hoc committees to work on specific tasks.

E. Faculty governance:

Changes to policy: Changes to department policy, including changes to this IOG, are approved by majority vote of the faculty. Proposals may originate from the
Department Chair, from the GCS or another department committee, or from a faculty member or members.

Faculty Assembly:

1. The Joint School of Nanoscience & Nanoengineering (JSNN) is an electoral division of the UNCG Faculty Senate comprising the Department of Nanoscience. JSNN is assigned one faculty senator, who serves a term of three years. The senator will also serve as Chair of JSNN’s Faculty Assembly.

2. The Faculty Assembly consists of all full-time faculty in the Department of Nanoscience. Adjunct faculty are not members of the JSNN Faculty Assembly.

3. At least three months before the expiration of the senator’s term, the Department Chair will call for nominations, including self-nominations, of eligible faculty wishing to be considered for election to the position. The Department Chair is not eligible to serve as senator.

4. Voting will be by secret ballot. The Department Chair will distribute a ballot listing all of the nominees in alphabetical order to the voting faculty and will provide a ballot box in the Office of the Dean of JSNN. At least 10 days after the distribution of the ballots will be allowed for faculty to cast their ballots by placing them in the ballot box. The ballots will be counted by the Executive Assistant to the Dean of JSNN and reported to the Department Chair.

5. The Department Chair will not vote in the election, but in the event that two or more candidates receive equal numbers of votes, he or she will cast a tie-breaking vote.

F. Department policies (available on the department website):

Personnel: “Guidelines on reappointment, tenure and promotion”
“Procedures for reappointment, tenure and promotion”
“Policy on faculty annual evaluation and post-tenure review”

Budget: “Budget Policy and Procedures”

Graduate students: All policies regarding graduate students will be incorporated into the Graduate Handbook. The Handbook is revised annually and made available on the JSNN website at the start of the academic year. Revisions that are approved during the year normally become effective at the start of the next academic year, but some may become effective at an earlier date, in which case students will be notified by a communication from the Department Chair or the DGS.