

**BYLAWS OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES  
UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE\***

(Approved by the Faculty of the Department of Biological  
Sciences September 27, 2004; revised May 13, 2013; April 25,  
2016)

\* These bylaws are guidelines for the internal operation of the Department of Biological Sciences. All departmental decisions must be consistent with University policy.

## **I**

### **The Faculty**

The faculty of the Department of Biological Sciences shall be comprised of all full-time tenure-track and continuing track faculty, full-time temporary faculty, affiliated faculty, secondary faculty, and members of other departments who hold joint appointments in Biological Sciences. Faculty from other University of Delaware departments with joint appointments in Biological Sciences and affiliated faculty from outside the university will contribute to the intellectual, scholarly, and service activities of the department. Their appointments will be for three years and are renewable subject to review by the Steering Committee of the Department. Full-time tenure-track, continuing track, and temporary faculty who derive at least 50% of their salary from the Department of Biological Sciences are entitled to vote on departmental issues. Affiliated faculty, secondary faculty, and those with joint appointments are non-voting members of the Department.

## **II**

### **Faculty Meetings**

The faculty shall meet at least twice a semester. Special meetings may be called either by the Department Chair or at the request of 20% of the voting faculty.

At least fifty (50) per cent of the voting faculty in residence shall constitute a quorum. Absentee and proxy votes will be left to the discretion of the Department Chair. All business of the faculty shall be conducted by the principles of Robert's Rules of Order unless a motion is made to suspend such rules, seconded, and approved by a two-thirds vote.

The Department Chair shall prepare the basic agenda. The Chair will add appropriate items, which may be submitted by any member of the faculty. Such items must be submitted in writing no later than 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting. The agenda will be communicated to the faculty at least one day before the scheduled meeting. New items may be presented and discussed at a faculty meeting but may not receive final action (voting) during that meeting.

Final action may be taken on any item on the agenda by a majority vote of those voting members who vote yes or no. If the majority vote on any issue is less in number than a majority of voting faculty in residence, any member of the faculty can move to reconsider. If the motion is seconded, the item will be placed first on the agenda for the next meeting. The vote at the latter meeting will be final. Motions on which final actions have been taken may not be reconsidered by the faculty unless (1) at least six months have elapsed from the time of the final action or (2) a motion to reconsider the item is approved by a two-thirds vote of the voting faculty (presuming a quorum).

Secret balloting must be taken if requested by a voting member of the faculty.

Any commitment for departmental courses to be included as a requirement in the curriculum of programs outside the Department first must be discussed as an agenda item at a duly scheduled faculty meeting. The Chair shall propose the course commitments to either the Undergraduate Programs Committee or Graduate Affairs Committee. The appropriate committee shall consider the proposals and submit them to be included on the agenda of a duly

scheduled faculty meeting along with the committee's recommendation. A vote shall be taken at the faculty meeting either to approve or reject the proposed commitment. This shall be considered a formal recommendation of the Department faculty, and the Department Chair shall consider this recommendation before deciding whether or not to make the proposed commitment on behalf of the Department.

### **III Officers of the Department of Biological Sciences**

#### **Department Chair**

The Department Chair is appointed according to current regulations of the University of Delaware. The advice of a majority of the voting faculty, by a formal secret ballot vote, shall be required before the appointment or reappointment of the Department Chair and shall be transmitted to the Dean. The duties of the Chair are described in the University of Delaware Policy Guide for Department Chairs and Academic Program Directors.

The Department Chair or the Chair's representative may be an *ex officio* member of all committees except the Promotion and Tenure Committee. The Chair shall be notified of all committee meetings and shall receive all committee reports, which may be via introduction at a departmental faculty meeting, as appropriate.

The Department Chair or the Chair's representative shall preside over faculty meetings.

#### **Associate Chair**

The Associate Chair is appointed by the Department Chair with the concurrence of a majority of the voting members of the faculty in residence and serves at the pleasure of the Chair. The duties of the Associate Chair other than those mentioned below are negotiated with the Department Chair and will be communicated to the department. The Associate Chair assumes the Chair's duties in the absence of the Chair. The Associate Chair's term of service is three years subject to renewal by the Chair with the concurrence of a majority of the voting members of the faculty in residence, conducted by secret ballot.

#### **Graduate Program Director**

The Graduate Program Director is appointed by the Department Chair with the concurrence of a majority of voting faculty members by secret ballot at a duly scheduled faculty meeting, and serves at the pleasure of the Chair. The duties of the Graduate Program Director other than those mentioned below are negotiated with the Department Chair and shall be communicated to the department. The Graduate Program Director's term of service is three years subject to renewal by the Chair with the concurrence of a majority of the faculty as stipulated above.

## **Undergraduate Program Director**

The Undergraduate Program Director is appointed by the Department Chair with the concurrence of a majority of voting faculty members by secret ballot at a duly scheduled faculty meeting, and serves at the pleasure of the Chair. The duties of the Undergraduate Program Director other than those mentioned below are negotiated with the Department Chair and shall be communicated to the department. The Undergraduate Program Director's term of service is for three years subject to renewal by the Chair with the concurrence of a majority of the faculty as stipulated above.

## **IV Standing Committees of the Department of Biological Sciences**

Departmental policy and program implementation shall be developed by the faculty and executed throughout the action of various standing committees. All committees will be appointed by the Department Chair who will notify the Department of their membership (no later than September 1) and Chairs after they are elected within the committees. Committees shall be appointed from the faculty annually each spring and take office on September 1 of the following academic year unless otherwise specified. All committees shall keep appropriate records of their discussions and decisions and shall report periodically to the faculty either orally or in writing via departmental faculty meetings, as appropriate. Each committee shall present at least one oral or written report annually to the faculty.

The faculty or Department Chair may delegate certain decision-making powers to the committees, but the committees will be primarily advisory and make recommendations. Such recommendations shall come to the faculty as seconded motions at a duly scheduled faculty meeting.

If the Chair alters or chooses not to follow any faculty decision based on a committee recommendation, the faculty and committee must be notified in writing within ten days, and the reason(s) for doing so must be stated.

Standing committees are of two types: those primarily responsible for departmental affairs and those that have a major responsibility to the larger college or university community.

### **A Department Committees**

#### **1 Graduate Affairs Committee**

The committee will consist of four full-time faculty members who represent the diversity of the research and scholarly activities of the department. The Graduate Program Director shall serve as an *ex officio* member with full voting privileges. With five voting members, the committee Chair (who will vote last on all issues) will cast any tie breaking vote. The committee members will be appointed by the Chair of the Department to three-year renewable terms.

The Graduate Program Director shall call the first meeting each September at which time a committee Chair will be elected from among the four regular members (the Graduate Program Director may not serve as Chair). The elected Chair will call all future meetings and represent the committee as a member of the Steering Committee.

The duties of the committee will be to assist the Graduate Program Director in recruiting activities, make recommendations for admission of new graduate students, participate in development of graduate program initiatives within and outside the University, participate in graduate curriculum and program reviews, assist the Graduate Program Director in monitoring graduate student progress, and review graduate courses. The committee also will nominate students for fellowships, awards, and scholarships. Other charges related to graduate program issues may be brought to this committee by the Department Chair.

## **2 Undergraduate Programs Committee**

The Committee will consist of at least five full-time faculty members. The Undergraduate Program Director will serve as an additional *ex officio* voting member of the committee. This committee makes recommendations to the department faculty concerning the goals, design, and effectiveness of undergraduate degree programs. The committee will suggest and implement revisions to department policy for undergraduates, and oversee the process of approving changes to course offerings, curricula, and degree programs. The committee also will administer fellowships, awards, and scholarships for undergraduates. The committee members will be appointed by the Chair of the Department to three-year renewable terms. The committee Chair will be elected from amongst the committee membership and will serve a one-year renewable term.

## **3 Promotion and Tenure Committee**

This committee shall consist of all voting members of the Department at or above the rank for which the candidate is being considered and shall be chaired by a faculty member of appropriate rank appointed by the Department Chair in consultation with the candidate. The committee will evaluate candidates for promotion and tenure and present their recommendations to the Department Chair and College Promotion and Tenure Committee.

## **4 Safety Committee**

This committee will be comprised of at least two faculty members, one of whom will serve as Chair, three staff members, a representative of the storeroom, and two graduate students. The committee members will be appointed by the Chair of the Department to two-year terms, and approximately half of the members' terms will expire each year. The committee will carry out safety inspections of all teaching laboratories each semester and all research laboratories each year. The

committee members will recommend changes in Department policy and practice, which will promote and enhance laboratory safety. Committee members also will provide for training under the State of Delaware Right-To-Know law and the OSHA-mandated Chemical Hygiene Plan.

## **5 Research Committee**

The Research Committee will consist of at least five faculty members who, as far as possible, represent the breadth of research programs in the Department. The committee members will be appointed by the Chair of the Department to three-year renewable terms. The Chair of the committee will be elected annually by the committee members during the first meeting of the academic year. The committee will make recommendations concerning allocation of departmental resources for the purpose of enhancing the research facilities and capabilities of the Department. The committee members will consider and implement ways to increase the overall research effort and productivity of the Department. The committee members also will encourage and promote applications for research, equipment, and facilities grants.

## **6 Teaching and Technology Committee**

This committee will consist of up to five faculty members who represent both graduate and undergraduate curricula, and one graduate student. The committee members will be appointed by the Chair of the Department to three-year renewable terms. The Chair of the committee will be elected annually by committee members. The committee will promote the use of technology in labs and lectures by initiating educational seminars and workshops, identifying sources of funding for technological innovation, reviewing requests for teaching equipment, and advising the Department Chair on disbursement of funds for teaching technology.

## **7. Faculty Development Committee**

The Faculty Development Committee will consist of a committee Chair and at least three other faculty members all of whom will be appointed by the Department Chair to three year terms. The composition of the committee should reflect the breadth of ranks and types of faculty appointments in the Department. This committee coordinates the faculty review processes, faculty award nominations, and faculty mentoring. Its duties may include overseeing and coordinating (i) the periodic reviews of tenure-track faculty, (ii) post-tenure reviews of tenured faculty, (iii) the periodic reviews of continuing-track faculty as well as the review of the rolling contract renewals for such faculty, and (iv) the renewal of appointments for affiliated and joint faculty. The committee will assist with assembling information on faculty accomplishments to be used in nominating faculty for awards and will develop procedures for and oversee the mentoring of junior faculty. The committee may also advise the chair on hiring priorities and resource allocation policies.



## **VI**

### **Amendment of the Bylaws**

A Department committee or any voting faculty member may propose amendments to these bylaws. The proposed amendments must be distributed in writing to the faculty at least one week before the Department faculty meeting during which the amendments will be discussed, and such proposed amendments shall be a formal agenda item. Adoption of amendments will require approval of at least two thirds of the voting faculty present who vote yes or no.