

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH BYLAWS

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1 INTRODUCTION

These bylaws govern the committee structures and operation of the Department of English at the University of Delaware.

A separate approved Workload Policy governs expectations for faculty performance in teaching, scholarship/creative activity, and service:

<http://www.udel.edu/provost/ApprovedENGLWorkload.pdf>

A separate approved Merit Metric describes criteria for the annual merit ratings that are given to faculty by the chairperson and provides the formula that governs calculation of annual merit allocations: <http://www.udel.edu/provost/ApprovedENGLMerit.pdf>

A separate approved document governs promotion and tenure policies and procedures:

<http://www.udel.edu/provost/ApprovedENGLP&T.pdf>

All department policies, procedures, and operations are subject to and consistent with those of the University and of the College of Arts and Sciences.

2 DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION

2.1 Officers of the Department

The **chairperson** is the chief administrative officer of the department, responsible for administering policies and procedures of the University and of the department and for representing the department within the institution and in the profession at large. The duties of the Chair are described in further detail in the University's Policy Guidelines for Department Chairs and Academic Program Directors.

Subject to the procedures established by the President, the Provost, and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the department participates in the appointment process by presenting its

recommendation for chairperson to the search committee. Such recommendation requires a two-thirds majority of those voting at a duly constituted department meeting, provided that two-thirds majority is equivalent to more than half of the voting membership of the department.

In accordance with University regulations, the chairperson is appointed by the President, normally for a five-year term, upon the recommendation of the Dean and the Provost. The appointment is renewable for a like period.

The **associate chairperson** is appointed by the chairperson and performs those functions assigned by the chairperson, including the supervision of the undergraduate curriculum and the handling of undergraduate student complaints and grievances. In the absence of the chairperson, the associate chairperson assumes responsibility for the administration of the department.

The **graduate director** is appointed by the chairperson. As chief administrative officer of the graduate program, the graduate director is responsible for admissions, implementation of policy, administration of the program, and handling of student complaints and grievances. The graduate director monitors the academic and teaching performance of TAs.

The **director of writing** is appointed by the chairperson and is responsible for directing the first-year writing program, upper-division service-writing courses, and the Writing Center. The director of writing monitors the teaching performance of TAs and consults with the graduate director as necessary.

The **assistant director of writing** is appointed by the chairperson in consultation with the director of writing and is responsible for helping to direct the first-year writing program and upper-division service-writing courses. The assistant director of writing helps monitor the teaching performance of TAs.

The department may recommend to the Dean that the chairperson be removed from office before her/his term is completed or to the chairperson that any other officer of the department be removed from office before his/her term is completed. Any such recommendation requires a two-thirds majority of the voting members of the department.

2.2 Standing Committees

The **Executive Committee** consists of the chairperson, the associate chairperson, the director of writing, the graduate director (all serving ex-officio, without voting privileges), an elected representative from each of the four ranks, and three members elected at-large (total of 11 members).

Before the end of the spring semester each year, the Executive Committee conducts an election for the following academic year. The term of an elected member is two years, and members cannot be elected for consecutive terms. At-large members and those representing the four ranks are elected in alternate years. To be eligible for election, a faculty member must hold the rank of instructor, assistant, associate, or professor and be a voting member of the department. A secret email ballot containing the names of all eligible candidates is circulated by the chairperson's

assistant. Those who receive the most votes within each category become members of the Executive Committee.

The chairperson's assistant serves as secretary to the committee. The committee elects its own chairperson annually. A chairperson may serve two consecutive years. The secretary distributes to the department the minutes of each meeting containing an account of subjects discussed, actions taken, and an agenda for the next regularly scheduled meeting. Any member of the department may propose an item for the agenda.

The committee meets at least monthly upon call of the department chairperson, the committee chairperson, or any member of the committee. A quorum consists of four of the six voting members. Any member of the department may request permission to attend a meeting and speak to the committee concerning any agenda item scheduled for discussion.

Responsibilities of the Executive Committee are to:

- Advise the chairperson concerning the general administration of the department.
- Approve membership on standing committees when applicable.
- Approve proposals from standing committees.
- Oversee the curriculum. Proposals for new courses or a new sequence of courses are considered by the committee and a statement of proposed action published in the minutes. Members of the department communicate their views to the secretary or to a member of the committee before the next regularly scheduled meeting. The committee then takes final action.
- Oversee procedures for hiring. See Section 3.0, Appointments.
- Review and evaluate departmental activities.
- Develop and maintain department guidance documents: Vision Statement, Goals and Actions, and Hiring Plan.

Decisions of the Executive Committee are subject to review at a department meeting and can be overturned by vote of the department.

The **Undergraduate Studies Committee** periodically reviews the department's undergraduate curriculum and English major programs and advises the chairperson and associate chairperson on policy affecting the undergraduate curriculum. The committee consists of the associate chairperson of the department (who chairs the committee) and six voting members of the department appointed by the department chairperson and approved by the Executive Committee. Each member serves a two-year term with half the members of the committee appointed each year.

The **Graduate Studies Committee** establishes policy for the graduate program subject to the approval of the Executive Committee and advises and assists the graduate director in administering the program and enforcing degree requirements. The committee consists of the graduate director (who votes only in case of ties), four voting faculty members appointed by the chairperson and approved by the Executive Committee, and two elected, non-voting graduate student representatives. Each member serves a two-year term, with half the members of the committee appointed each year.

The **Committee on Promotion and Tenure**. See Section 4.

The **Awards, Fellowships, and Development Committee** nominates faculty and students for various awards and helps coordinate the process of applying for awards. It makes information available and helps faculty and students find funds to support scholarship. The Committee advises the Chair on how to disburse funds from existing endowments and from discretionary funds. The Committee maintains a plan for department development activities (endowments, scholarships, awards, special projects, alumni giving) and helps to develop department resources. Membership (appointed by the chairperson and approved by the Executive Committee) consists of the chairperson, four faculty members who together represent a cross-section of the department's interests and the assistant to the chair.

The **Speakers Committee** plans, coordinates, and, when appropriate, seeks funding for the department's program of lectures and readings by local and visiting writers, scholars, and critics. It invites suggestions from faculty and students and makes its own suggestions to establish a balanced program in cooperation with other department and University bodies. Membership (appointed by the chairperson and approved by the Executive Committee) consists of four faculty members (one serving as chairperson for a two-year term) who together represent a cross-section of the department's interests, and an elected graduate student representative.

The **Graduate Job Placement Committee** is responsible for guiding students ready to enter the job market through every stage of the application and interview process. The committee serves as an information resource about position openings and advises students on the appropriate methods for assembling their application materials, including letters, curriculum vitae, and teaching portfolios. It also organizes mock interviews, for which the members recruit other faculty on an ad hoc basis. Membership consists of two tenure-track faculty (appointed by the chairperson and approved by the Executive Committee), one a full professor and one an assistant or associate professor; one member serves as chairperson. The minimum term of appointment is for one year; the maximum term is at the discretion of the department chairperson. For the sake of continuity, the member serving as chairperson should have previously served on this committee for at least one year.

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and approved by the Executive Committee): ~~ne a full professor and one an assistant or associate professor~~; one ~~two~~ ~~tenure-track~~ member serves as chairperson. The minimum term of appointment is for one year; the maximum term is at the discretion of the department chairperson. For the sake of continuity, the member serving as chairperson should have previously served on this committee for at least one year.

2.3 Department Meetings

In accordance with the bylaws of the College of Arts and Sciences, the department holds at least two meetings every semester to consider matters of department policy.

Scheduling. The secretary of the Executive Committee or any other person designated by the department chairperson serves as secretary for department meetings. Meetings may be called for special purposes by the department chairperson, by the Executive Committee, by the chair or director of any standing committee, or by a call of one-fourth of the voting members of the department upon petition to the chairperson. Such special meetings may consider only the business for which they are called.

Agendas. Each meeting follows an agenda prepared by the chairperson and/or the Executive Committee and circulated in advance by the chairperson. Any voting member of the department may, prior to a scheduled meeting, request that items be placed on the agenda. Such agenda items are considered as old business and may be brought to a vote at the meeting during which they are introduced. New business may be introduced from the floor, but no action may be taken on new business except by a 2/3 vote of those faculty present, assuming a quorum.

Voting privileges. Full-time faculty holding, primary appointments in the department may attend, participate in, and vote at all department meetings. Full-time faculty members who hold a primary appointment in the Department and a joint appointment in another department or program, and who do not possess voting privileges in any other department, may attend, participate in, and vote at all department meetings. Individuals holding such joint appointments must be approved for voting rights by a two-thirds vote at a department meeting. Exchange professors and visiting professors in the department may attend and participate in all meetings, except that they are excused from confidential discussions of personnel matters and do not have voting privileges.

Proxy voting: For meetings in which proxies are allowed, a faculty member may delegate his or her vote to an amenable other faculty member. A faculty member may carry more than one proxy. Both the person who designates the proxy and the delegate must be voting members of the department. The faculty member designating the proxy must notify the Chair's Assistant before the meeting, in writing or by email, that he or she will be represented at the meeting by the designated proxy. Without the prior written designation of proxy, a proxy cannot be voted at the meeting.

Voting procedures. A secret ballot may be called for by any voting member present. The chairperson may call for an electronic vote on any department matter except the appointment or removal of the chairperson and amendment to these bylaws.

Decisions. Except where otherwise specified, binding decisions require a simple majority of those voting, whether in person, by e-mail, or by paper ballot. More than half the voting members of the department must participate for a vote to be valid. Through such votes, the department makes binding decisions concerning all matters of department policy except those matters reserved to other persons or academic units by virtue of College or University regulations and those matters specifically delegated to other persons or groups by these bylaws.

3 APPOINTMENTS

The department maintains a hiring plan that sets priorities for any new hires. This hiring plan is developed by the Executive Committee and recommended to the faculty for adoption. Updates to the hiring plan are approved by faculty vote at a department meeting. The chairperson presents the department's hiring priorities and accompanying rationales during budget meetings with the Dean and Associate Dean.

3.1 Tenure Track Appointments

The chairperson informs the Executive Committee when the department receives permission from the Dean to search for a tenure track or tenured faculty member. The committee drafts a position description for approval by department vote. With the approval of the Executive Committee, the chairperson appoints an ad hoc committee to conduct a search for each position. The ad hoc committee actively and systematically solicits the views of the department as a whole and makes every effort to be guided by the department's wishes. The ad hoc committee presents a nominee or a slate of nominees to the Executive Committee, which in turn makes a recommendation to the department chairperson. In a department meeting, the chairperson presents each recommendation for approval by a majority of voting faculty in attendance. A quorum is required for a vote to offer a tenure-track appointment. A quorum equals at least half of the voting faculty who are not on leave at the time of the meeting. No proxies or absentee ballots are allowed on hiring votes during regular terms. During winter and summer terms, proxies are allowed on hiring votes and can help constitute a quorum. No absentee ballots are allowed on hiring votes.

3.1 Non-Tenure Track Appointments

3.1.1 Continuing non-tenure track faculty positions

The department chairperson informs the Executive Committee when the department receives permission from the Dean to search for a continuing non-tenure track faculty member. The committee drafts a position description for approval by department vote. With the approval of the Executive Committee, the chairperson appoints an ad hoc committee to conduct a search for each position. The ad hoc committee actively and systematically solicits the views of the department as a whole and makes every effort to be guided by the department's wishes. The ad hoc committee presents a nominee or a slate of nominees to the Executive Committee, which in turn makes a recommendation to the chairperson. The chairperson presents each

recommendation for approval in a department meeting by a majority of those voting faculty in attendance.

Non-tenure track contracts may be renewed upon recommendation of both the department chairperson and the Committee on Promotion and Tenure at intervals stipulated by the Faculty Handbook, Section 4.

3.1.2 Terminal faculty positions

Appointment of visiting professors, exchange professors, and other temporary full-time faculty is upon recommendation of the department chairperson to and approval by the Executive Committee. At least one week prior to Executive Committee action upon any such recommendation, the department is advised, either by the department chairperson or by the Executive Committee through its minutes, of the names of candidates proposed for appointment.

3.1.3 Joint appointments

Joint appointments of faculty to English are made upon recommendation of the chairperson and the Executive Committee and upon approval by the department. The procedure for department approval is identical to that for approval of a tenure-track appointment.

4 COMMITTEE ON PROMOTION AND TENURE

The Committee on Promotion and Tenure consists of all full professors and associate professors holding tenured appointments in the department, except that when continuing non-tenure track faculty are considered for promotion or review, the P&T Committee also includes continuing non-tenure track full and associate professors.

The committee makes recommendations concerning:

- Promotion to the rank of associate professor with tenure in the department
- Promotion of continuing non-tenure track faculty to the rank of assistant professor or associate professor
- Renewal and termination of contracts of continuing non-tenure track instructors, assistant, and associate professors
- The promotion and review procedures of the department

The committee also conducts peer reviews of assistant and associate professors.

The tenured full professors of the department constitute a subcommittee of the Committee on Promotion and Tenure, except that when continuing non-tenure track faculty are considered for promotion to full professor, or when continuing non-tenure track full professors are reviewed, the committee also includes continuing non-tenure track full professors. The subcommittee makes recommendations concerning the following:

- Promotion to the rank of full professor
- Renewal and termination of contracts of continuing non-tenure track full professors
- Granting of tenure to associate professors appointed initially without tenure
- The promotion and review procedures of the subcommittee

The subcommittee also conducts peer reviews of full professors.

The chair of the Committee on Promotion and Tenure and of its subcommittee is a full professor and is elected by a majority vote of the committee. The chair appoints a committee secretary, who may be either a member of the committee or the department chair's assistant. The secretary keeps confidential records of each meeting containing an account of the actions taken.

The committee or subcommittee meets upon the call of the committee chair or at the request of any committee member. The committee chair is responsible for preparing the agenda. A quorum consists of a majority of the faculty not on leave who are eligible to participate in the business of the meeting. Meetings of the committee and subcommittee are confidential.

A separate document, The English Department Promotion and Tenure Guidelines, offers details on all procedures: <http://www.udel.edu/provost/ApprovedENGLP&T.pdf>

The department complies with all policies and procedures for promotion and tenure and for review as set forth in the University Faculty Handbook and in the College of Arts and Sciences Administrative Handbook.

5 AMENDMENT

These bylaws may be amended at a duly constituted department meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members of the department who are not on leave at the time of the vote.