

By-Laws
Department of Biological Sciences
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Wayne State University
(as amended 10/16/15)

Preamble:

The purpose of the by-laws of the Department of Biological Sciences is to provide procedures for operating the Department within the statutes and other actions of the duly constituted governing bodies of the University, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the executive orders of the president, and the current collective bargaining agreement. These by-laws shall formalize the processes by which (1) the Department is to be administered in areas not covered by existing governing statutes and policies, and (2) the advice of the Biological Sciences faculty on academic and administrative issues is to be gained and transmitted to the Department Chair.

No part of these by-laws shall take precedence over any articles of the governing collective bargaining agreement, the duly promulgated statutes, actions and policies of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the University or the President's Executive Orders.

I. ARTICLE 1: Departmental Organization

A. Membership of the Department Faculty

Membership shall include Lecturers, Instructors, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Full Professors who are assigned to the Department half-time or more. Both tenured and non-tenured faculty are included. Emeritus faculty regardless of rank are also members of the Department.

B. Membership of the Department Academic Staff

Membership shall include Academic Services Officers and Academic Advisors. Both those with and without employment security status are included.

C. Voting Rights

Voting members of the Faculty shall include Lecturers, Instructors, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Full Professors who are assigned to the Department half-time or more. Both tenured and non-tenured faculty have voting rights.

Motions presented at faculty meetings shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast from those in attendance, by absentee ballots, and by proxies in writing. A secret ballot may replace a show of hands or voice vote by a motion with a second. Decisions in Departmental meetings shall be by a majority of those present, provided there is a quorum. A quorum is defined as no less than 2/3rds of eligible voters, or no less than ½ of eligible voters in a subsequent meeting on the same agenda item. Decisions by mail or electronic vote shall be a majority of those voting. To be valid, at least 2/3rds of eligible voters must cast ballots in a mail vote.

D. Meetings

The Department shall meet at least once each term during the regular academic year. The Chair may also call special meetings. A faculty meeting shall also be called upon the request of no fewer than 1/3 of the faculty members. Upon the request of a Division, the Chair or the Associate Chair of the Department shall call a meeting. Minutes and records of each meeting shall be kept and circulated to faculty members prior to the next meeting for their approval. An agenda shall be published in a timely manner for faculty to review prior to scheduled meetings.

E. Chair

The Department Chair is the administrative officer of the Department. (S)he shall inform the Dean concerning Departmental matters and the faculty of the Department concerning College and University matters of interest to them. (S)he (or his/her designee) shall chair Departmental meetings and has the right to vote but his/her ballot shall be cast after the tally of the faculty votes except in secret ballot where (s)he votes simultaneously.

The Chair's actions, policies, and decisions may be appealed to the Dean by a simple majority vote cast in a faculty meeting. Such appeals are to be transmitted by a faculty designee.

1. The Chair shall serve as ex officio Chair of the Promotion and Tenure Committee and of the Promotion and Tenure Advisory Committee, each without vote.

2. In case of impending or actual vacancy of the Department Chair, a Chair Selection Advisory Committee shall be formed in conformance with the constitution of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the WSU-AAUP/AFT agreement.

F. Associate Chair

The Associate Chair is an administrative officer of the Department. (S)he will provide perspective and advice to the Chair on departmental operations, will substitute for the Chair on a temporary basis as necessary, and has the right to vote on all issues raised at faculty meetings.

The Associate Chair coordinates promotion and tenure proceedings; chairs the Salary Review Committee without vote; coordinates nominations for College and University Committees; assists in arranging class scheduling and teaching assignments (faculty and GTA); assists in solving various faculty problems; and assists in resolving student-faculty conflicts.

The Associate Chair shall be a non-voting member of the Graduate Committee, Undergraduate Committee, and the Promotion and Tenure Advisory Committee.

G. Departmental Divisions

1. The Department shall consist of Divisions. Each faculty member shall choose an assignment to one of these Divisions on the basis of community of interest and specialty discipline.

2. Division Chairs shall be elected by the members of the Division for one year renewable terms.

3. The Division Chair shall be responsible for organizing the administrative responsibilities of the Division. (S)he shall keep records and report to the Chair of the Department. The Divisions shall make recommendations to the Departmental Chair and/or to the appropriate Departmental committees or officers on all matters of interest.

4. Divisional policies, procedures and recommendations shall be decided by majority vote of members of the Division.

II. ARTICLE II: Standing Committees and Officers

A. Standing Departmental Officers

DEFINITION: An officer is an individual from the Departmental faculty or supporting staff, appointed by the Chair for a specified period of time (usually the academic year) on an ad hoc basis.

1. THE UNDERGRADUATE OFFICER of the Department approves all Undergraduate degree elements and serves as a liaison to the Undergraduate Committee, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the University Advising Center. The Undergraduate Officer (or his/her designee) attends meetings of the Undergraduate Officers at the College and University levels, guides the departmental academic staff, and monitors the overall progress of undergraduate students.

2. THE GRADUATE OFFICER of the Department approves all Graduate degree elements and serves as a liaison to the Graduate Committee, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Graduate School. The Graduate Officer (or her/his designee) attends meetings of the Graduate Officers at the College and University levels, functions as an advisor to the first year graduate students, coordinates the M.A program, monitors the progress of graduate students, and coordinates the graduate awards.

B. Standing Departmental Committees

DEFINITION: A Departmental standing committee shall consist of more than one individual. These committees are announced by the Chair of the Department during an appropriate faculty meeting in the Winter Term of each academic year (except for the Promotion and Tenure Advisory Committee, the Salary Review Committee, the Academic Staff Salary Review Committee and the Promotion and ESS Committee: see below). The tenure of committee membership is for the following academic year. Each standing committee shall include a representative of each Division selected by his/her Division. In addition, one or more members-at-large shall be elected by the voting members of the faculty. A Chair of each standing committee shall be appointed by the Chair of the Department.

1. THE GRADUATE COMMITTEE shall ensure that the Department's graduate programs are of high quality and operate within the requirements of the Graduate Division and the guidelines set by the Graduate Faculty of the Department. It shall oversee the Graduate Program and plan major curriculum changes in the graduate program and present these to the faculty for approval. It shall initiate graduate course changes, deletions and additions, and new graduate courses as advised by individual faculty or Divisions within the Department. It shall approve candidacy for advanced degrees and guide graduate students and their advisors as to proper protocol and policies for the progress toward advanced degrees, and act upon students' petitions for waiver or on any substitutions of these requirements. It shall recommend to the Chair graduate teaching assistantships (GTAs), fellowships, and graduate student awards. It shall review graduate student applications to the Department's Graduate Programs and make recommendations of acceptance to the University's Graduate School. It shall be responsible for recruitment efforts of graduate students. Graduate student participation in decisions of the Committee is not precluded.

2. THE UNDERGRADUATE COMMITTEE shall oversee the Undergraduate Program and plan major curriculum changes in the undergraduate program and present these to the faculty for approval. It shall initiate undergraduate course changes, deletions and additions, and new undergraduate courses as advised by individual faculty or Divisions within the Department. It shall ensure that Departmental and College baccalaureate requirements are fulfilled and make recommendations to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Educational Adjustment Committee on students' petitions for waiver or on any substitutions of these requirements. It shall also be concerned with teaching methodologies and policies affecting undergraduates. Ex officio members shall include the Director of the Advising Office and the Introductory Laboratory Coordinators.

3. THE CURRICULUM COORDINATING COMMITTEE shall continually assess and coordinate the implementation of curricular policy developed by the Undergraduate and Graduate Committees. It shall assess course changes and new courses as recommended by the Undergraduate and Graduate committees. This committee shall work closely with the Salary Review Committee and the Chair in determining faculty member assignments to courses consistent with the Department's workload policy, and it shall develop the schedule of classes for submission to the College. Membership on this Committee shall consist of the Department Chair, Associate Department Chair, and the Undergraduate and Graduate Chairs and Officers.

4. THE PROMOTION AND TENURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE shall be finalized in an appropriate faculty meeting during the Winter Term. Membership requires University tenure. All faculty members (tenured and non-tenured) have franchise in selecting the members of this Committee. Each Departmental Division shall elect one member. Two additional members shall be elected at large. The Associate Chair shall be an ex officio member without vote. The Chair of the Department shall chair the Committee without vote. The prime responsibility of the Committee shall be to make promotion and/or tenure recommendations to the Promotion and Tenure Committee. A designee shall make a written report of each meeting in a timely manner to the Promotion and Tenure Committee. The Chair may convene this committee for advice as needed.

5. THE SALARY REVIEW COMMITTEE shall be elected by the faculty. This Committee shall be composed of 6 members, 5 of whom are to be identical with those of the Promotion and Tenure Advisory Committee and the 6th member shall be elected at large and be non-tenured. The Associate Chair of the Department or his/her designee shall chair the Committee without vote. This Committee shall evaluate the scholarship, teaching and service performance of all faculty members according to the criteria and procedures set forth in the Departmental workload policy. Specifically it shall (a) perform yearly selective salary evaluations of all faculty, (b) perform yearly workload evaluations of all faculty and recommend to the Chair, where necessary and appropriate, how a faculty member's workload components may be adjusted so that workload performance meets an acceptable

departmental standard, and (c) perform reviews as needed and make recommendations to the chair regarding the graduate faculty status of faculty members in the Graduate School.

6. THE PROMOTION AND TENURE COMMITTEE shall consist of all the tenured faculty of the Department present or voting by absentee ballot at the meeting designated in advance for the consideration of candidates for promotion and/or tenure. It shall act upon the recommendations of the Promotion and Tenure Advisory Committee. Normally, this Committee meets during the Fall term with adequate time given to make its recommendations prior to University deadlines on submission of candidates. Eligible voters of the tenured faculty are determined by the current AAUP/AFT contract. At least 50% of the eligible voters must be present at the meeting. In order for a candidate for promotion and/or tenure to be recommended by the Department, (s)he must receive the approval of at least 2/3rds of the eligible voters present at the meeting or voting by absentee ballot. The 2/3rds approving votes must comprise no less than 50% of the eligible voters. The voting records will be held by the Chair of the Department for one year after the date of the meeting. The results of the voting will be announced at the end of the meeting by the Chair of the Department. Upon receipt of the Committee's recommendations the Chair shall attach his/her written assessments and recommendations and shall forward both sets of recommendations and assessments to the Dean of the College. The Chair shall inform the Promotion and Tenure Advisory Committee of his/her recommendations.

7. THE ACADEMIC STAFF SALARY REVIEW COMMITTEE shall be composed of all academic staff members of the Department of Biological Sciences. The Chair of the Department or his/her designee shall chair the Committee without vote. This Committee shall evaluate the job performance, professional achievement, service and scholarly achievement (if applicable) of all academic staff members. Specifically it shall (a) perform yearly selective salary evaluations of all academic staff and (b) perform yearly workload evaluations of all academic staff and recommend to the Chair, where necessary and appropriate, how a staff member's workload components may be adjusted so that workload performance meets an acceptable departmental standard.

8. THE PROMOTION AND ESS COMMITTEE shall consist of the members of the Academic Staff Salary Review Committee holding employment security status (ESS) or tenure. The Chair of the Department or his/her designee shall chair the committee without vote. The committee shall be responsible for evaluating candidates and for making recommendations for promotion and/or employment security status. A two-thirds affirmative vote of the eligible membership of the committee shall be required for a recommendation for promotion or employment security status. No member of the committee shall participate in or vote on a promotion recommendation to a rank higher than his/her current rank. A committee representative shall be elected from the bargaining-unit members of the committee who shall serve as spokesperson for the committee. When the elected spokesperson does not agree with the recommendation of the Promotion and ESS Committee with respect to a specific candidate, the voting members of the committee may elect an alternative representative to serve as spokesperson for the committee with respect to that candidate.

9. THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE shall oversee research support for the Department of Biological Sciences. It shall monitor compliance with mandated research requirements including laboratory safety and ethics training. It shall oversee departmental research equipment and facilities and make recommendations for acquisition, replacement, renovation and upgrade of equipment and facilities. It shall promote recognition of research achievements and organize other events and initiatives intended to foster research programs or research funding in the Department.

10. THE POLICY COMMITTEE shall consist of the Associate Chair, Division Chairs (elected by the Divisions), and the chairs of the Graduate, Undergraduate and Research Committees. The Department Chair, or his/her designee are ex officio members of the Policy Committee and either one, as appropriate, shall chair committee meetings. The Policy Committee shall advise the Chair on the policies and practices of the Department as they relate to Departmental programs, budget, future directions of departmental growth including but not limited to faculty hires, Departmental interactions with other Departments

as well as the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the University and/or other agencies and institutions, and other matters as deemed appropriate.

11. THE BUDGET COMMITTEE shall consist of the Associate Chair, Division Chairs (elected by the Divisions), and the chairs of the Graduate, Undergraduate and Research Committees. The Budget Committee shall review the department budget and make recommendations to the Chair regarding priorities for allocating discretionary funds in all department accounts.

III. ARTICLE III: Peer Evaluation of Teaching

A. The Department of Biological Sciences will conduct regular peer evaluation of classroom teaching of each faculty member during his/her second, fourth, and tenth years of service and every 5 years after that. Should a faculty member not be teaching during a review year because of sabbatical, leave of absence, or any other reason, the peer evaluation of teaching will be deferred until the following year.

B. Each faculty member being reviewed will select an evaluator from among the tenured faculty in the department. No evaluator will be asked to evaluate more than one colleague in any given year. To achieve this, faculty being reviewed will select evaluators in order of years of service, those with fewest years of service selecting first. If two or more faculty members have the same number of years of service, the order of selection will be determined by drawing straws or an equivalent random selection mechanism.

C. Evaluations will include a review of course materials, a pre-observation consultation, teaching observation, a post-observation consultation and feedback, and documentation. The evaluation should offer constructive criticism intended solely to improve the faculty member's teaching performance and to enhance student learning.

D. After the evaluation has been completed, the evaluator will inform the department chair of the date on which it was completed. The evaluator will provide no further information to the Chair or any other individual. The evaluated faculty member may share the outcome of the review at his/her discretion.

IV. ARTICLE IV: Amending the by-laws

These by-laws may be amended by 2/3rds vote of the faculty at a faculty meeting. The meeting shall be announced in advance and the proposed amendment(s) listed in an agenda. Final action on the amendment(s) shall be deferred to the next meeting following that in which the amendment(s) were discussed.

V. ARTICLE V: Previous procedures and policies

Previously established procedures and policies of the Department shall continue in force if they do not conflict with these by-laws.