

BYLAWS OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF
LANGUAGES, LITERATURES AND CULTURES
UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

General Revision, September 2021

INTRODUCTION

These bylaws govern the committee structures and operation of the Department of Languages, Literatures & Cultures at the University of Delaware. All department policies, procedures, and operations are subject to and consistent with those of the University, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Faculty Handbook/CBA.

A separate approved Workload Policy governs expectations for faculty performance in teaching, scholarship/creative activity, and service: [Workload Policies](#)

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: [Merit Metrics](#)

A separate approved document governs promotion and tenure policies and procedures: [Promotion & Tenure](#)

A separate approved Faculty Appointment policy governs the policies and procedures for new faculty searches and appointments at all academic ranks. [Search Guidelines](#)

I. MEMBERSHIP AND VOTING

Voting members of the Department shall be Department faculty at all ranks who are employees of the University, including all faculty on full-time and part-time appointment (tenured, tenure-track, continuing track, and supplementary-contract faculty who have served for four or more consecutive semesters).

Members may, when necessary and with permission of the committee chair, participate in any Department or committee meeting by means of remote communications equipment by which all persons participating in the meeting can perceive each other. Remote participation in a meeting shall constitute presence in person at the meeting.

II. OFFICERS

A. Department Chair

1. Appointment and Reappointment

The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, following University procedures, shall appoint a search committee to nominate candidates for Chair. Subject to the procedures established by the President, the Provost, and the Dean of the College, the Department participates in the selection process by presenting its recommendation for Chair to the search committee and registering its support (or lack thereof) for the search committee's recommendation in a formal vote to be forwarded to the Dean of the College.

In accordance with University regulations, the Chair shall be appointed by the President for a five-year term upon the recommendation of the Dean and the Provost. The appointment is renewable, subject to the evaluation procedures established by the University. The advice of a majority of the faculty within the Department, through a formal ballot at a duly constituted Department Meeting, is required for the appointment or reappointment of the Chair.

2. Functions

As the chief executive officer of the Department, the Chair shall exercise not only all those functions specifically delegated to that office by University documents, but also those not expressly assigned to other Departmental bodies by this document. The duties of the Chair are described in detail in the University's Policy Guidelines for Department Chairs and Academic Program Directors.

B. Associate Chairperson

The Department Chair will appoint an Associate Chair, with the advice of the Executive Committee, and subject to confirmation by the Dean. The Associate Chair represents the Department Chair in their absence and carries out designated assignments that are agreed upon at the beginning of each semester.

III. DEPARTMENT MEETINGS

A. Procedures

1. At least two Department Meetings shall be held in each semester.
2. Meetings may be convened for special purposes by the Department Chair, or by the Executive Committee, or by a call of one-fourth of the voting members of the Department.
3. A quorum for the Department Meeting shall consist of a simple majority of the voting members of the Department who are not on leave.
4. The Meeting shall make decisions by a majority vote of those present and voting except for amendments to the bylaws. Any vote, at the call of one member, may be by secret ballot.
5. The Meeting shall be chaired by the Department Chair; in their absence, the Associate Chair shall preside.
6. The Meeting shall follow an agenda prepared and circulated in advance. Any member of the Department may submit items for this agenda. Such agenda items shall be considered old business and may be brought to a vote in the Meeting in which they are introduced.
7. The Meeting may consider any new business introduced from the floor, which shall be referred to the Department Chair for inclusion on the next agenda, unless by a vote of two-thirds of those present and voting it is agreed to vote immediately.

B. Functions

The Department Meeting shall make binding decisions on all matters except:

1. those which are reserved to other persons or groups by virtue of University or College policies;
2. those which the Department Meeting and the Department Chair agree will be decided by the Chair;
3. those which it delegates to other bodies, such as its Committees.

IV. COMMITTEES

The term of office shall begin at the start of the fall semester following the spring elections unless otherwise specified in the Department policy manual.

The Department Chair serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member of all standing committees.

The Department Election Officer shall conduct the elections.

With the exception of the Promotion committees, elections shall be held in April. Elections to fill unexpired terms shall be held when vacancies occur.

With the exception of the Promotion committees, in case of a vacancy where there is no faculty member at the appropriate rank able to fill the position, the Chair may nominate a faculty member of a less senior rank.

A. Executive Committee

1. Membership

The Executive Committee shall consist of six members: three tenure-track faculty, at least two of whom must be tenured (including at least one full professor), plus three elected members of the continuing-track faculty, including one Instructor. The Associate Chair may attend all meetings as an ex-officio, non-voting participant.

Tenure-track members of the Executive Committee shall be chosen by the tenure-track members of the Department. Continuing-track members shall be chosen by the continuing-track members of the Department. Elected members must receive a majority of the ballots cast. Run-off elections will be held if a majority has not been reached.

2. Election and Terms of Office

Members of the Executive Committee shall serve terms of two consecutive years. Members shall be ineligible to serve again until the expiration of two additional years. Terms will not be extended due to leaves of any sort.

3. Organization

The presiding officer of the Executive Committee shall be the Department Chair. In their absence, the Associate Chair shall preside.

The Executive Committee shall normally meet once a month during the fall and spring semesters. Minutes of each meeting shall be distributed to the Department within a week.

All other matters of internal organization and procedures of the Executive Committee, except those provided for in this document, shall be determined by the Committee.

4. Functions

The Executive Committee shall:

- a. receive advice from the Chair on Departmental issues;
- b. give advice to the Chair;
- c. consider and act upon personnel issues brought to the Committee by the Chair, such as establishment of peer review and search committees, creation and reallocation of tenure-track lines, conversion of continuing-track into tenure-track lines, and approval of secondary and joint appointments;
- d. review the operating budget with the Chair;
- e. initiate long-range studies and engage in long-range planning, the results of which shall be communicated to appropriate persons or organizations after being ratified by the Department;
- f. receive reports from the Chair of meetings with the Dean and other College or University officials;
- g. review proposals from Departmental committees;
- h. resolve conflicts between standing committees;
- i. perform such other functions as the Department Chair or the Department may legitimately delegate to it.

B. Graduate Studies Committee

1. Membership

The Graduate Studies Committee shall consist of:

The Graduate Studies Committee Chair, whose selection is covered separately in section B.3;

One voting member who shall be an associate professor or professor from each Language Faculty offering a major in one of the Department's graduate programs, to be elected by majority vote of all professors, associate professors, and assistant professors in the respective Language Faculties; and a voting member who shall be an associate professor or professor from the Pedagogy Faculty without regard to their language specialization, to be elected by majority vote of all professors, associate professors, and assistant professors in the Department. Other members may be added at the Committee's request and with the Department Chair's approval;

One graduate student elected by the Department's graduate students.

2. Terms of Office

Faculty members shall serve a three-year term, which is renewable once.

Graduate students shall serve a one-year term.

3. Chair of the Committee

The Chair of the Committee shall be the Director of Graduate Studies, a tenured faculty member who shall be nominated by the Chair of the Department, subject to approval of the Executive Committee and a two-thirds ratification vote of all professors, associate professors, and assistant professors of the Department. The term of the Director of Graduate Studies shall be three years, and shall be renewable.

4. Functions of the Committee

The Graduate Studies Committee shall administer all matters pertaining to graduate students and the graduate program, including:

- a. admission of students to the program, following consultation with the Language Faculties;
- b. consultation with the Undergraduate Studies Committee, if needed, regarding changes in curricula and programs (e.g., regarding 400/600-level courses);
- c. recommendations to the Department Chair for assignment of graduate fellowships and assistantships;
- d. overseeing the advisement of graduate students, to be shared as equally as possible by all tenure-track faculty in the students' primary fields;
- e. receiving from the Language Faculties recommendations regarding curricular changes and passing its recommendations on to the Executive Committee;
- f. providing a forum for considering and resolving issues of concern brought by graduate students;
- g. coordination of recruitment of graduate students.

5. Report

The Graduate Studies Committee shall distribute a brief summary of the year's activities to all full-time professors, associate professors, and assistant professors by 31 May.

C. Undergraduate Studies Committee

1. Membership

The Undergraduate Studies Committee shall consist of the following voting members:

Faculty

Faculty members shall be the elected Chairs of the Language Faculties and the Three Language and WLEAC coordinators, each of whom shall have one vote.

In addition, voting members of the Department from the continuing-track instructor ranks

shall elect for a two-year term, renewable twice, a faculty member from their ranks to represent them and supplemental faculty. The elected instructor must have served three full years in the Department by the time they will begin service on the Committee.

Students

Student members shall be two majors or minors nominated by faculty and selected by the Committee.

2. Chair of the Undergraduate Studies Committee

The Chair of the Committee shall be the Director of Undergraduate Studies, a continuing-track or tenure-track faculty member at the rank of associate professor or full professor, who shall be nominated by the Chair of the Department, subject to approval of the Executive Committee and a two-thirds ratification vote of all voting members of the Department. The term of the Director of Undergraduate Studies shall be two years, and shall be renewable.

3. Functions

The Committee shall oversee all aspects of the undergraduate programs, including:

- a. Advisement
- b. Student Complaints

The Committee shall handle undergraduate complaints.

- c. Curricula and Programs

Recommendations and suggestions for changes in curricula and programs shall be considered by the Committee, which shall receive all such recommendations and suggestions from the Language Faculties and from individual faculty members.

Any such recommendations which are of interest to the Graduate Studies Committee shall be transmitted to that committee.

- d. Coordination of recruitment of undergraduate students

4. Report

The Undergraduate Studies Committee shall distribute a brief summary of the year's activities to all Department faculty by 31 May.

D. Promotion Committees

There are two standing Promotion Committees: the Committee on Promotion to the Rank of Professor, and the Committee on Promotion to the Rank of Associate Professor.

Membership, duties and responsibilities of these committees and of the subcommittees which report to them are defined and described in the Department's promotion document, which is hereby incorporated into this document.

E. Search Committees

Membership, duties and responsibilities of search committees are defined and described in the Department's search procedure document, which is hereby incorporated into this document.

F. Chairs of Standing Committees

An elected Chair of one standing committee (Graduate Studies, Undergraduate Studies, Promotion to the Rank of Professor, Promotion to the Rank of Associate Professor) may not serve simultaneously as elected Chair of any other standing committee.

V. LANGUAGE FACULTIES

A. Structure

Each Language Faculty shall consist of all full-time and part-time faculty teaching that language. Persons teaching more than one language may hold membership in more than one Language Faculty.

The Chair of each Language Faculty shall be a tenure-track member of that Faculty elected by its full-time members; a Faculty having no tenure-track member shall have an Acting Chair appointed by the Department Chair. The term shall be two years, and shall be renewable.

The Language Faculty Chair shall be the administrator of the Faculty and shall work with both the teaching staff and the Department Chairperson, as well as serving as the Faculty's representative on the Undergraduate Studies Committee.

B. Functions

The Language Faculties, following guidelines developed by the Graduate and Undergraduate Studies Committees or directives issued by them, shall administer the programs and curricula of their individual languages, including courses and curricula.

The Language Faculties shall propose to the Undergraduate or Graduate Studies Committee, as appropriate, new courses or revisions in existing courses, prerequisites, new major or minor programs or revisions of such programs, etc.

The Language Faculties shall develop and revise the specific course requirements for their language studies concentration(s) leading to a B.A. in Languages, Literatures, and Cultures.

Each Language Faculty Chair, in consultation with the Language Faculty, shall prepare a one-year program of courses to be offered, by semester, which shall be submitted to the Department Chair for approval.

The professors, associate professors, and assistant professors of each Language Faculty shall, in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee, establish reading lists for the M.A., and set and administer the Graduate Comprehensive Examinations.

VI. APPEALS

Actions of the Executive Committee may be appealed by any member of the Department to the Department at a regular meeting.

Actions of any other committee may be appealed by any member of the Department to the Executive Committee.

VII. RATIFICATION, REVIEW, AND AMENDMENTS

The bylaws of the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures shall be ratified by a majority of those present and voting in the Department Meeting.

The bylaws must be reviewed by the Department within twelve months after it goes into effect. At that time, decisions regarding its continuance and/or modification shall be made by a majority of those present and voting in the Department Meeting.

Subsequently, any amendment shall require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at, two successive regular Department Meetings.

Adopted January 16, 1986

(revised February 14, 1991)

(revised February 24, 1993)

(revised September 26, 2001)

(published online October 30, 2002)

(revised October 18, 2007) – extended voting to part-time faculty

(revised October 2015 – Three Language major coordinator to have seat on USC)

(revised October 12, 2016 - FLEAC to have seat on USC)

(revised May 22, 2019 – Added links to Merit Metric, P&T, Workload, and Search Guidelines documents; updated Department name)

General revision 2021 – reorganization and committee structure revision