

By-Laws
Rev. 10/2005
Department of English
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
The University of Florida

I. Membership

- A. The voting members of the Department of English are all members of the Department who are budgeted to the Department and hold the rank of assistant professor or above, as well as the Phased Retirement Program. Members of other Departments who teach in or do research in the Department may be elected by the Department to voting-member status.
- B. Tenured members of the Department are those members of the Department who have been granted tenure by procedures established by the Department, the College, the University and the Board of Trustees. Within the Department, it is required that names and qualifications of those candidates eligible for tenure be presented for action to the then currently tenured members of the Department by the Chair after consultation with the Evaluation, Tenure, and Promotion Committee.
- C. Academic ranks of Department members are determined by procedures established by the Department, the College, the University and the Board of Trustees. Within the Department, it is required that names and qualifications of members requesting, or nominated for, promotion be presented for action to the appropriate Department bodies—those members of the Department of the rank sought or above—by the Chair, after consultation with the Evaluation, Tenure, and Promotion Committee.

II. Authority

- A. Within the Department, the ultimate authority resides in its voting members except in those instances where the College or University has vested authority in the Chair.
- B. Operation of the Department is conducted by the Chair, the Appointed Administrative Officers, the Department Council, and the Department Committees.

III. Meetings

- A. There shall be at least one regular Department meeting per semester, with agenda, reports, and other relevant materials distributed in advance. The agenda is determined by the Chair, in consultation with the Council, on the basis of reports from committee chairs, need to consider old and new Department business, items proposed by faculty members, and

material presented from outside the Department. New business and items not designated as action items on the agenda will not be voted on at the meeting at which they are brought up.

- B. Additional meetings are called by the Chair (1) on his or her own initiative, (2) at the request of the Council, or (3) on the written request of one-fourth of the voting members of the Department.
- C. The Chair presides at Department meetings; in the Chair's absence, the Associate Chair, or other person designated by the Chair, shall preside.
- D. Two-fifths or more of the number of voting members of the Department not on leave constitute a quorum.
- E. Proxies may be cast at departmental meetings. A proxy must be in writing; it must be signed; it must be limited to one person's use, at one specified meeting, and on one issue.
- F. Meetings are conducted in accordance with the latest revision of Robert's Rules of Order, except where the By-Laws specify otherwise. At the first Department meeting of the academic year, a voting, tenured Professor of the Department is elected Teller to serve for one year. He or she assists the Chair in determining the presence of a quorum and counting votes at all Department meetings; and assists the Chair in counting votes for all tenure and promotion nominations and committee elections.

IV. The Chair

- A. The Chair is the chief administrative officer of the Department. As such, he or she: (1) is ex officio a member of the Department Council; (2) appoints the Administrative Officers of the Department and selects the members of standing non-elected Department Committees; (3) calls, prepares the agenda for, and presides over Department meetings as specified in III above; and (4) on a routine basis supervises all the day-to-day activities of the Department office.
- B. The Chair is the chief financial officer of the Department. He or she supervises all receipts of money and expenditures and, with the advice of the Council prepares an annual budget proposal and an annual financial report, summaries of which are presented to the Department and to the Dean's office.
- C. In conjunction with the Administrative Officers of the appropriate committees, and the Department where appropriate, the Chair coordinates all aspects of the academic program, such as degree requirements, curricular offerings, catalog announcements, class schedulings, and faculty assignments.
- D. In conjunction with the Appointments Committee, the Chair coordinates the recruiting of new faculty members.

- E. The Chair, or the Chair's designate, represents the Department to university officers and bodies and acts as general spokesperson for the Department.
 - F. The fixed term of the Chair is set by the Dean. The Department suggests a term of three to five years; the Chair may be reappointed.
 - G. Informal annual reviews of the Chair's performance shall be carried out during the Spring semester by the Council and the Appointed Administrative Officers sitting as a Committee without the Chair and electing its own chairperson. It is appropriate that this Review Committee interview the Chair and receive a copy of the faculty evaluations of the Chair administered annually by the College Office. The Review Committee's report will be conveyed only to the Chair.
 - H. If the position of Department Chair is to become vacant, the Dean, after whatever consultation with members or bodies of the department he or she deems advisable, authorizes the search for a new Chair. If necessary the Dean appoints an Acting Chair. Upon receiving authorization from the Dean to initiate a search for a new Chair, the Department proceeds with the election of a Search and Screen Committee (see VIII C).
- V. The Department Council
- A. The Department Council consists of the Chair of the Department and Associate Chair, ex officio, and five to seven members elected to two-year terms as follows: one Professor, one Associate Professor, and one Assistant Professor, elected in odd-numbered years; and two to four other voting members at ranks specified by the Council to reflect the balance by rank in the Department, elected in even-numbered years. While the Department has three or more non-tenure-accruing members (see Section I.A.), one elected member of the group shall sit on the Council as a non-voting member.
 - B. The Department Council meets once a semester, but it may hold other meetings at the request of the Chair, or of any other three members of the Council. The Chair normally presides at these meetings; he or she distributes agenda some days prior to each meeting. In the absence of the Chair, the senior member of the Council presides.
 - C. The Chair consults with the Council on hiring and budgeting priorities before submitting the annual report.
 - D. The Department Council may advise the Chair on all other matters of policy and procedure that are of concern to the Department, such as (1) the work of, and relations between, the various committees in the Department; (2) faculty loads and schedules; (3) relations with other departments; (4) holding of institutes, and workshops, conferences, etc.; and (5) concerns of individual faculty members.
 - E. When an individual faculty member wishes to appeal a judgment of the chair, the Chair and the faculty member will present their views to the Council along with supporting

documents. The Council will then make a written recommendation to the Chair, with a copy to the appellant.

VI. The Appointed Administrative Officers

- A. The Chair shall name three persons to assist in the Administration of the Department's academic program: a Graduate Coordinator, an Undergraduate Coordinator, and a Director of General Education. The Chair shall designate one of these three as the Associate Chair, who will substitute for the Chair at Departmental, University, and public functions when he or she is unable to be present. In the absence of the Chair and the Associate Chair, either shall designate another of the Administrative officers to serve in the capacity of acting Associate Chair.
- B. The Graduate Coordinator serves as chairperson of the Graduate Studies Committee and is responsible for the conduct of the graduate program.
- C. The Undergraduate Coordinator serves as chairperson of the Undergraduate Studies Committee and is responsible for upper-division undergraduate programs and course scheduling.
- D. The Director of General Education serves as chairperson of the General Education Committee and is responsible for general education programs in writing, the training of teaching assistants in pedagogy, and, in consultation with the Undergraduate Coordinator, the lower-division literature courses.
- E. Together, the Graduate Coordinator, the Undergraduate Coordinator and the Director of General Education serve as a Curriculum and Scheduling Committee. The committee will solicit recommendations for each years offerings from area group coordinators.
- F. The Chair shall also appoint a Director of Creative Writing.

VII. Department Committees

- A. *Ad Hoc Committees.* The Chair, after consultation with the Council, shall establish such particular committees of specified duration as are needed to deal with specific matters of importance to the Department for limited periods. The Department shall be notified as soon as possible of the formation, purpose, and make-up of all such committees.
- B. *Elected Committees.* The Department has two standing committees whose members are elected: the Merit Pay Committee and the Evaluation, Tenure, and Promotion Committee.
- C. The Merit Pay Committee consists of four to six members elected to staggered two-year terms, at ranks chosen to reflect the make-up of the Department by ranks. When the number of Assistant Professors is fewer than 10 per cent of the total tenured or tenure-earning faculty, the Associate and Assistant Professor seats shall be combined.

- D. The Evaluation, Tenure, and Promotion Committee consists of four tenured Full Professors and two tenured Associate Professors, elected to staggered two-year terms. The Committee is responsible for expert assessment and consultation with the Chair in matters of tenure and with regard to the annual letters of evaluation of untenured faculty, in the following particulars:
1. Assisting the performance (in the areas of teaching, scholarship and service) of those who are to be considered for tenure or promotion. The assessment shall be conveyed in writing by the Chairperson of the Committee to the appropriate tenure and or promotion committee at large. The Committee will offer the candidate the opportunity to talk with the appropriate subcommittee if she or he so wishes.
 2. Assessing the performance (in the areas of teaching, scholarship and service) of those who are untenured. The assessment shall be conveyed to the Department Chair in a meeting; it is deemed proper that the Chair take this assessment into account in the individual faculty member's letter of evaluation. The Committee will offer the faculty member the opportunity to talk with the appropriate subcommittee if she or he so wishes.
 3. The Committee will try to achieve consensus; it will not take votes.
- E. *The Major Appointed Committees.* The Department has four appointed standing committees: the Graduate Studies Committee, the Undergraduate Studies Committee, and the General Education Committee oversee the Department's teaching function, and the Appointments Committee evaluates prospective candidates for appointment.
- F. The Graduate Studies Committee, acting as a whole or in subcommittees (including Admission and Awards), is responsible for the conduct of the Graduate Program, including the following particulars:
1. Providing the Curriculum and Scheduling Committee with its recommendations for graduate offerings and instructors for the academic year.
 2. Providing the Chair with its recommendation for admission to the program and for graduate student awards.
 3. Providing placement assistance.
 4. Evaluating student progress in the program and student appeals.
 5. Working with the General Education Committee in establishing the policies governing the evaluation of teaching assistants.
 6. Recommending to the Chair graduate faculty status.

7. Recommending to the Graduate Faculty changes in the graduate curriculum.
- G. The Undergraduate Studies Committee, acting as a whole or in subcommittees, is responsible for the conduct of the undergraduate program in the following particulars:
1. Providing the Curriculum and Scheduling Committee recommendations for Variable Topics, Department Seminars, and upper-division Honors courses.
 2. Establishing, recommending, and implementing changes to the English major programs.
 3. Evaluating any new course proposals and course changes and deletions, in order to make recommendations to the Chair and the Department on an annual basis.
 4. Keeping the Department informed about the current status of the program.
 5. Administering the Departmental Honors Program and keeping honors students informed about graduate school opportunities.
- H. The General Education Committee, acting as a whole or in subcommittees, is responsible for the conduct of the general education program in the following particulars:
1. Recommending to the Department changes in the general education curriculum (1000-level courses and the 2000-level literature sequences).
 2. Recommending to the Chair courses in the curriculum which might be added to the College's general education requirements in the English and humanities areas.
 3. Recommending to the Chair kinds and numbers of writing courses to be offered.
 4. Reviewing and recommending to the Chair catalog descriptions of general education courses.
 5. Maintaining close liaison with other writing programs in the university.
 6. Reviewing placement procedures (prerequisites) for general education courses and consulting with the College advisement program.
 7. Reviewing, supporting, and disseminating information about innovative teaching approaches in general education courses.
 8. Maintaining liaison with public school programs in the teaching of English.

VIII. Council and Committee Elections

- A. Elections for the council and the elected committees are held in the Spring, with newly elected members to take office the following Fall. Voting will be a two-stage process, with voting by rank. The first-stage ballots for each election will contain the names of all eligible members at the appropriate rank, except those serving a continuing term on any of the bodies. Members having served two consecutive terms on one of the elected bodies may request not to be listed on the ballot for that body at the next election. Members at each rank will vote for twice the number needed at the rank for the body in question. Any member selected by a majority of those voting at the rank will be declared elected. To fill remaining vacancies, twice the number needed at each rank will be selected for the second ballot, working down from those receiving the most votes. (If a tie should occur for last place, both names should be included on the ballot.) Those voting will again be asked to vote for the number needed at that rank. If duplicate names appear on any two or three of the lists, the second elections will be held, as necessary, in the order of the Council first, the Merit Pay Committee second, and the ETP Committee third, with names of individuals elected to one body replaced on lists for subsequent elections by the next names in line. A tie for last place in the second election for any of the bodies will be broken by selecting the member who received more votes on the first ballot or, that failing, by the flip of a coin.
- B. If a vacancy occurs on the Council or the ETP Committee (due to resignation, retirement, or promotion), an additional person at the appropriate rank will be elected to a one-year term during the regular election (the two-year terms being filled first from the second-ballot list).
- C. A separate but similarly organized two-stage voting procedure will be used to select members of a Search and Screen Committee for a new Department Chair or for any other elected *ad hoc committees*, with the committee size and distribution by rank to be determined by the Council as convenient and to reflect the make-up of the Department. The College Constitution states that only tenured members of the Department can vote for the Committee, although untenured members may serve on it. It also states that the committee, after electing its chair, "may select up to two additional faculty members to insure a committee diversified in terms of rank and specialties within the department, race, and gender." To assist the Committee in making such appointments, at the time of the first ballot straw votes will be taken of women, and of minority group members, as well as of assistant professors.

IX. Amendments

- A. The members of the Council, together with the Appointed Administrative Officers, sitting as a committee without the Chair, will review these By-Laws at five-year intervals, submitting any proposed revisions and amendments to the Department for debate and action.

- B. Any three voting members of the Department may propose in writing to the Chair an amendment to the By-Laws. Such amendment shall be circulated to the Department at least two weeks before the meeting at which it is to be voted on. Alternatively, an amendment may be introduced at a Department meeting by any voting member and discussed at that meeting, with vote to be taken not sooner than one week following the meeting nor later than three weeks, by mail poll or at a subsequent Department meeting. In any case, the vote is by written secret ballot; a two-thirds majority of those voting is required to pass the amendment.