

Department of Communication By-Laws

College of Charleston

Adopted by vote of the department faculty, March 1, 2005. Approved by dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, June 22, 2005. Amended by vote of the department faculty, February 10, 2009. Amended September 20, 2011. Amended by vote of the department faculty, August 17, 2017.

These by-laws shall constitute the method of governance of the Department of Communication.

1. Membership

The department's tenured faculty, tenure-track faculty, instructors, and senior instructors shall constitute the voting faculty of the department. Members of the voting faculty shall abstain from voting on any personnel or fiduciary matter in which there is clear evidence of a conflict of interest. After one year of service by a visiting faculty member, the voting faculty by a two-thirds majority vote may extend voting faculty title and privileges to a visiting faculty member.

2. Chair

a. The department chair serves at the pleasure of the president. In addition to the duties specified in the *Faculty/Administration Manual*, these by-laws clarify some duties and add others.

b. Department, committee, and panel meetings shall be conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order* (latest edition), which shall serve as the department's parliamentary authority, except when the parliamentary authority conflicts with these by-laws or the *Faculty/Administration Manual*.

c. The chair will submit a budget report in the nature of a general summary to the department at the first Fall meeting, covering the previous academic year's spending.

d. The chair will gather conference travel requests from voting faculty and distribute travel funds at his or her discretion. The chair should consider such factors as the nature and level of the conference, cost, distance, and previous faculty funding when allocating travel funds. Faculty who did not receive travel funds the previous year should receive high priority. The chair will distribute a list of all department travel spending for the previous academic year at the first regular Fall meeting.

e. The chair will maintain an archive of annual committee reports.

f. The chair shall have discretion to hire adjunct part-time staff, but should consult with as many voting faculty as possible before hiring any full-time adjuncts or other faculty.

g. There shall be no limits to how many five-year terms the chair may serve. However, and if at all possible, if the chair does not intend to serve another term, he or she should inform the department by the end of his or her fourth year. The *Faculty/Administration Manual* provides for the ways and means department faculty can assess the chair.

h. The department chair shall appoint a tenured faculty member to chair any department meeting at which the chair will not be present. If the chair is unable to make this appointment, a tenured faculty member shall be elected to chair the meeting by the faculty present at the meeting.

3. Associate Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies

a. The associate chair and director of undergraduate studies (hereafter, "associate chair") is appointed and supervised by the chair, subject to appropriate administrative approval and following discussion and consultation at a scheduled faculty meeting. The associate chair's duties are stipulated by the dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and supervised by the chair. The associate chair shall be a tenured department member.

- b. The associate chair usually will qualify for a course release and/or stipend each semester.
- c. The associate chair shall serve no more than two consecutive four-year terms, unless approved by a vote of two-thirds of the voting faculty. The associate chair has no right to or expectation of future appointment as department chair.

4. Director of Graduate Studies

- a. The director of graduate studies (hereafter, “graduate director”) is appointed and supervised by the chair, subject to appropriate administrative approval and following discussion and consultation at a scheduled faculty meeting. The graduate director’s duties are stipulated by the dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and supervised by the chair, and these include scheduling and staffing courses. The graduate director shall be a tenured department member.
- b. The graduate director usually will qualify for a course release and/or stipend each year .
- c. The graduate director shall serve no more than two consecutive four-year terms, unless approved by a vote of two-thirds of the voting faculty.
- d. The graduate director will consult regularly with faculty about courses, curriculum goals, program needs and teaching appointments in the program. Teaching faculty usually will be selected from roster appointments and be eligible for a course reduction.
- e. At the conclusion of the academic year, the director of graduate studies will provide the chair with a written annual report on the graduate program. These findings will be presented to the roster faculty at the first fall faculty meeting.

5. Department Recording Secretary

- a. The chair shall appoint a faculty member to serve as department recording secretary for the academic year.
- b. The secretary will take minutes at all meetings and distribute them to all voting faculty before the next meeting. At that time the minutes should be approved or amended, and afterwards be available to anyone.

6. Meetings

- a. All department meetings should be attended by all voting faculty and are open to other interested members of the community.
- b. By a majority vote of the voting faculty, any meeting may go into executive session in the fashion proscribed by the parliamentary authority and consistent with applicable state laws and institutional policies.
- c. Meetings may be called either by the chair or by a petition from a majority of the voting faculty.
- d. Adjunct faculty are encouraged to attend and contribute to discussions at department meetings. However, only voting members can make motions and vote.
- e. Unless an individual is invited to attend some portion of the meeting, only tenured members of the department faculty and other tenured college personnel as described in the *Faculty/Administration Manual* shall attend and vote during meetings of the Faculty Evaluation Panel.

f. Proxy voting shall not be permitted in any department, committee, or panel meeting in the Department of Communication.

8. Committee Process

a. The chair shall solicit and consider individual faculty requests for committee assignments.

b. The chair will appoint all standing members and the committee chair (except the Executive Committee—see Sect. 7 below), and make every effort to distribute assignments evenly among all faculty. Usually, no one should serve on more than two standing committees, and all voting faculty should serve on a regular basis. With the exception of the Executive Committee, any change in committee membership or leadership requires the approval of the department chair.

c. The appointed standing committees are the Curriculum and Enrollment Management Committee, the Assessment and Basic Course Committee, the Awards and Special Events Committee, the Faculty Development Committee and the Graduate Committee.

d. Ad Hoc committees can be formed at the discretion of the chair, or by a petition of a majority of voting faculty. Any such committee shall finish its assignment, report to the department, and then dissolve within one year, except if a majority of the voting faculty vote to have it continue. The charge and duties of any ad hoc committee may be specified in a motion approved by a majority of voting faculty.

e. Committee meetings should be announced at least 24 hours in advance, preferably by e-mail.

f. All committees should hold their first meeting no later than two weeks after the membership is announced publicly. Committees should meet regularly when they have business to conduct or an assignment to complete.

g. Any member of the department community may bring a matter of concern to the attention of any committee. The committee members will consider the matter and have authority to act if necessary under the authority specified in these by-laws.

9. Executive Committee

a. The membership of this committee shall be composed of four voting faculty, excluding the department chair, with members elected by a majority of the voting faculty. New elections shall be held no later than April of each academic year to determine the membership of the committee for the next academic year. Committee members may serve no more than three consecutive years. The candidates elected to the committee must include at least one untenured faculty member, and at least two tenured faculty members.

b. The Executive Committee will meet as needed, with at least one meeting to be held per academic semester.

c. The duties of this committee shall include, but are not necessarily limited to, developing policies regarding, creating recommendations for the distribution of, and considering other factors related to research and faculty development funds, as well as governance concerns relevant to the department that may arise on occasion. This committee shall offer advice and counsel to the department chair on matters of import as determined by both the chair and the members of this committee.

d. The department chair shall serve as an ex officio member and shall not serve as committee chair. The associate chair shall serve as a non-voting, ex officio member and shall not serve as committee chair. The committee chair shall be a tenured faculty member and shall be elected by a majority vote of that year's committee members. The committee chair shall be responsible for submitting a rank ordered and committee-approved list and funding recommendations (excluding travel) to the department chair for all

research and faculty development applications and shall perform the other duties of a chair as described by the parliamentary authority.

e. Should a seat on the Executive Committee become vacant during the academic year, a special election to fill that seat shall be conducted within 60 days in a manner to be determined by the committee chair or, if the committee chair is unavailable or the office is vacant, the department chair. Should the committee chair become vacant during the academic year, a member of the committee shall be elected to the office at the earliest opportunity. All special elections shall be conducted in accordance with procedures recommended by the parliamentary authority.

10. Description of Appointed Standing Committees

The following are the descriptions of the department's appointed standing committees. All shall have at least three members, plus the department chair who will serve as an ex officio member. Electronic voting shall be permitted for all appointed standing committees and ad hoc committees.

a. Curriculum Committee

This committee shall review and approve all proposals to add, revise or eliminate courses and requirements in the department curriculum. This committee will periodically review syllabi to ensure that courses meet appropriate learning objectives and College policy. Substantive recommendations from this committee will be considered by the voting faculty.

b. Assessment Committee

In consultation with the department chair, this committee shall have the primary responsibility to review and initiate all changes and activities needed to meet institutional, state, and relevant accrediting agency standards for program and major assessment.

c. Nominations, Scholarships, and Awards Committee

This committee shall have the primary responsibility to screen and select student award and scholarship winners for undergraduate students and to organize various departmental events, with the support of departmental and institutional staff and in cooperation with the department chair and the associate chair.

d. Faculty Life Committee

In coordination with the department chair, this committee shall have the primary responsibility of planning and coordinating activities related to the professional development of faculty in the department (e.g. teaching observations; pedagogical/research roundtables; mentoring; etc). Additionally, this committee will assist the chair in the development and training of adjunct faculty including mentoring and regular review of syllabi and course materials.

e. Graduate Committee

This committee shall be responsible for monitoring the performance of all departmental graduate programs. This includes the initial development and approval of all courses and curriculum requirements in a graduate program, subject to review and approval of the departmental curriculum committee, before recommending any change to the voting faculty for final approval. The graduate director will chair this committee as a voting, ex officio member.

11. Personnel Searches

These by-laws govern searches for all roster faculty lines.

a. Job descriptions and advertisements will be discussed and approved collectively, by majority vote, either at a regular department meeting or, in the case of summer deadlines, by e-mail before the chair submits them. At the meeting when the voting faculty approve the advertisement, an ad hoc search committee shall

be formed. All search committees shall have at least four members and shall include at least one untenured, and at least one tenured member. No faculty in their first year may serve. The department chair will also serve as a voting member of all search committees.

b. The department will form a new committee for each search.

c. Each search committee will establish a system for reviewing, interviewing and ranking applicants in a manner consistent with the approved position description. The committee should contact by phone and/or e-mail at least the top three candidates, and more if desired. After concluding their review of all candidates, the committee will make candidate recommendations to the department's voting faculty or recommend the search be discontinued. The voting faculty will then, after due deliberation and a majority vote of the voting faculty, select and rank candidates, who will then be invited to campus for interviews, or the voting faculty shall accept the recommendation to discontinue the search. Campus interviews will include a teaching demonstration and a presentation on research interests and will provide an opportunity to meet interested faculty individually.

d. At a scheduled meeting, the department will select its top candidate, or instruct the search committee to find and recommend new candidates, or instruct the committee to discontinue the search. Once a top candidate is selected by a majority vote of the voting faculty, the department will determine if either or both of the remaining candidates are acceptable as a second or third choice. If so, the department will rank them. If the voting faculty decide to recommend that a faculty position be offered to a candidate, the chair will begin immediate negotiations following receipt of appropriate administrative approval. If the offer is turned down, the chair will begin negotiations with the next ranked and approved candidate, and so forth.

e. The voting faculty may waive a requirement of Article 9, Sections (c) and/or (d) with a three-fourths majority vote of the voting faculty only if doing so does not violate the advice of the College's General Counsel or the relevant administrative policies of the College.

12. Amendment Procedure

Any member of the voting faculty may propose an amendment to the by-laws. Such proposals shall be made available in writing to all voting faculty members at least one week before the next scheduled department meeting. At this next scheduled faculty meeting, an ad hoc committee shall be formed to consider and possibly recommend the amendment as a motion to the department. Ad hoc committee reports on the advisability of by-laws amendment are due no later than 120 days following the formation of the ad hoc committee. No motion to amend the by-laws is in order until the ad hoc committee report on that motion has been received at a meeting of the department faculty. Any amendment approved by a two-thirds majority of the voting faculty shall take immediate effect and shall be incorporated in these by-laws.

13. By-laws Approval and Jurisdiction

These by-laws shall take effect on July 1, 2005, if approved prior to that date by (a) a majority vote of the roster faculty and (b) the dean of the School. Prior to July 1, 2005, the department chair shall take reasonable steps to implement these by-laws on July 1, 2005, if departmental and administrative approval of these by-laws may reasonably be anticipated. Should these by-laws be inconsistent with any current or future version of the *Faculty/Administration Manual*, institutional policy, or applicable school policies, the *Faculty/Administration Manual* or applicable institutional or school policy shall prevail. Should any section of these by-laws be superseded by another institutional or school policy, the department shall be governed by the remaining sections of the by-laws. To permit sufficient time for review and amendment, these by-laws shall remain in effect for six months following any change in name or administrative status of the current Department of Communication and/or its successor unit or units, unless the responsible dean shall indicate in writing to the affected faculty that the by-laws are not relevant to the governance of the renamed and/or reorganized unit(s).