

Bylaws for the Department of Geography, College of Social Sciences and Public Policy

These are the bylaws for the Department of Geography in the College of Social Sciences and Public Policy at Florida State University. These bylaws were last approved on January 2021 by a majority of the applicable voting members of the department and on April 27, 2022 by the College and the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement.

Preamble

The mission of the Department of Geography is to provide excellence in undergraduate and graduate teaching; to contribute to international research in geography and related disciplines; and to be available as a public service to the local community. These bylaws are designed to foster an atmosphere of collegiality while pursuing academic and administrative duties. The authority of the Department shall reside in its voting faculty members.

I. Bylaws

A. Adherence with Other Governing Documents. At all times, department policy shall adhere to and be consistent with all university policies found in the FSU Constitution, the BOT-UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement (if applicable to the college), the Faculty Handbook, and the Annual Memorandum on the Promotion and Tenure Process issued by the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement.

B. Bylaws Revision.

(i) All amendments to the Bylaws shall be submitted for faculty consideration by the Executive Committee and must be circulated to all voting faculty no later than ten days prior to the date upon which the proposed amendments are to be discussed and voted upon. The Executive Committee shall forward any recommended change submitted by the Chair or by three or more members of the faculty.

(ii) To be effective all amendments must be approved by two-thirds of the voting faculty.

(iii) All provisions of these Bylaws, and any subsequent amendments, are null and void and of no effect if contravened by State Statutes, Florida Board of Governors, or College and University policies.

C. Substantive Change Statement. Faculty and staff members are expected to be familiar with and follow the Florida State University Substantive Change Policy as found on the university web site <https://sacs.fsu.edu/substantive-change-policy/>

II. Membership and Voting Rights

Note: Non-italicized language is set by the university and should not be altered. Italicized language reflects the required bylaws element with the specifics determined by the unit faculty.

A. Faculty Membership. The faculty of the Department of Geography shall consist of those persons holding full-time appointments at the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor.

B. Department Membership. In addition to the faculty defined in II.A above, the following are members of the Department of Geography: one office manager, one academic program specialist, one administrative assistant, and one graduate student representative to the faculty meetings.

C. Faculty Voting Rights. Voting membership in the Department of Geography shall include all nine-month, full-time, tenured and tenure-track faculty in the department. Faculty holding other types of appointments shall be non-voting members of the Department of Geography, but are allowed to attend meetings. Absentee voting is permissible (and communicated through the Chair).

D. Non-faculty Voting Rights. The graduate student representative shall have voting rights.

III. Department Organization and Governance

A. Faculty Meetings.

(i) A full departmental meeting will be held at least once in the fall semester and once in the spring semester. Meetings may be called by the Chair; by the majority of the Executive Committee; or by petition of the majority of the faculty.

(ii) Three-quarters of the voting faculty and the graduate representative shall constitute a quorum and a simple majority of those present, or voting absentee (communicated through the Chair), carries a motion.

(iii) Meetings will be scheduled with at least three days notice to faculty members. A tentative agenda will also be issued at that time and faculty and the graduate representative will have the opportunity to add to the agenda.

(iv) Minutes shall be taken by a nominated member of the faculty or a member of the staff, and posted or distributed to faculty and the graduate student representative within one week of the meeting.

B. Department Chair Selection.

(i) The Chair shall serve at the pleasure of the Dean of the College of Social Sciences and the President of the University.

(ii) The Chair will be the chief executive officer of the Department and is responsible to the Dean and the faculty of the Department.

(iii) The Chair shall execute all normal administrative activities in and on the behalf of the Department, subject to policies specified elsewhere in the Bylaws, and the rules of the University.

(iv) The Chair will be a non-voting, ex-officio member of all Departmental committees.

(v) The Executive Committee will conduct a formal departmental review of the Chair every year.

(vi) The Department may recommend to the Dean that the Chair be removed from office. Such action must be taken according to the following procedure:

1. A motion calling for removal must be submitted to the Executive Committee by at least three voting faculty members.
2. To be adopted, the motion for removal must be supported by a two-thirds majority of the voting membership of the Department in a secret ballot following a meeting to discuss the motion called by the Executive Committee. The Chair will not be present at the meeting and will have no voting privileges.
3. The Executive Committee will report the vote to the membership of the Department and to the Dean of College of Social Sciences.

(vii) If the Chair is absent for a brief period, responsibility for the governance of the Department will rest with a member of the Executive Committee. For periods of a semester or longer, the Chair, after consultation with the faculty, shall appoint an acting Chair.

(viii) The Chair shall regularly report to the Executive Committee and the Department those actions he/she performs in administering Departmental affairs.

(ix) The Chair shall present the Department with an annual financial report.

(x) The Chair will maintain a list of faculty service obligations and demonstrate equity in assignments over time.

(xi) The Chair shall evaluate teaching performance of non-tenure track teaching staff and graduate students.

C. Department Leadership and Committees.

It is the policy of the Department to promote equity in the allocation of service as appropriate to rank and tenure status.

(i) Executive Committee

Three voting tenured faculty members shall be elected to the executive committee in a departmental meeting by a secret ballot of voting faculty. Any faculty member may nominate candidates. The three elected members, plus the Chair, shall constitute the Executive Committee. The Chair shall not have voting privileges on the Executive Committee. Members of the Executive Committee shall serve three years, and be renewable. Any member absent from the University for one semester or more of the academic year will be replaced by an interim. Meetings of the Executive Committee will be held as needed and a majority of the membership will constitute a quorum. A tentative agenda for meetings will be announced to members and to the faculty in the minutes of the preceding meeting or by special announcement in advance of the meeting. Reports of the proceedings and decisions of the Executive Committee will be made promptly to the faculty and graduate students. The record of Departmental business shall be kept in the minutes of the meetings, and include all Departmental decisions in application of regularly determined policy, as well as the decisions taken in establishing the policies themselves.

The Executive Committee serves as an advisory body to the chair. The chair should consult with the Executive Committee on decisions about: (i) the departmental budget; (ii) travel fund allocation; (iii) recruitment of faculty, graduate students and staff; (iv) capital equipment, through the chair appointed Equipment Committee; (v) implementation of the three-year review of the performance of the chair; (vi) approve master's and doctoral directive status; (vii) preparation of the annual financial report.

(ii) Graduate Committee

The Chair shall appoint a Graduate Program Director and two members of the faculty to form the Graduate Committee and be ratified by a majority of the faculty. The Director shall serve as chair of the committee for three years, and is renewable. The Graduate Program Director's teaching is to be reduced by one course per year. The Graduate Committee shall be responsible for implementing the policies of the Department with respect to the graduate programs and in recruitment, administering financial aid programs, assignments of research and teaching assistants, co-coordinating comprehensive examinations, and in advising and counseling graduate students. Decisions regarding recruitment, financial aid, and the assignment of assistants to the faculty should be made in consultation with the faculty. The committee will also function as an appeals body for students on the various degree requirements. Periodically, the Graduate Committee will initiate a review of graduate requirements to ascertain if changes are needed. All changes will require a majority vote of the faculty. The policy on graduate student funding by the department (either as teaching assistants or as research assistants) is four years for students entering the doctoral program with a master's degree; and five years for students entering the doctoral program without a master's degree. Funding for all years is based on good academic standing as defined in the Geography Graduate Student Handbook. Decisions to revoke funding will be

made by the Graduate Committee. Departmental funding for students entering the master's program is at the discretion of the Graduate Committee in consultation with the Chair. Departmental funding for graduate students shall be determined by the Graduate Committee in consultation with the Chair.

(iii) Undergraduate Teaching Committee

The Chair shall appoint an Undergraduate Program Director and two other faculty members to form the Undergraduate Teaching Committee for a period of three years, and is renewable. The Undergraduate Program Director's teaching is to be reduced by one course per year. The Undergraduate Teaching Committee will be responsible for implementing the policies of the Department with respect to the undergraduate programs; this includes recruitment and advising, overseeing the internship program, and monitoring teaching activities of graduate students. The Undergraduate Program Director will coordinate the undergraduate activities of the Department and periodically, initiate a review of undergraduate requirements to ascertain if changes are required.

(iv) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

The Chair shall appoint three faculty members to serve on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. The Chair has the option to serve as a fourth faculty member of the Committee. The Committee will also have a graduate student representative, selected by the Graduate Researchers in Geography group, and a staff member selected by the Chair. Committee members will serve three-year terms, and the graduate student and staff representatives will serve one-year terms.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee is responsible for organizing relevant trainings, workshops, seminars and discussions; conducting an annual graduate student climate survey; coordinating a mentoring program for pre-tenure faculty; supporting a BIPOC affinity group; and organizing other activities and initiatives aimed at enhancing the diversity, equity, and inclusivity of the department. The Committee will report on its activities at faculty meetings at least once per semester.

(v) Other committees

Other committees, such as Equipment may be appointed by the chair on an ad hoc basis. They shall report on their activities annually in a faculty meeting.

D. Faculty Senators. In years required by the College, the Department shall vote on a Faculty Senator to serve a term. Nominations will be made by the Chair in consultation with the Executive Committee. Voting will be done by the entire faculty. The nominee receiving the most votes will be elected. Ties will be broken by the Chair.

E. Faculty Recruitment. The Chair shall appoint three members of the faculty to serve on a Faculty Search Committee, with the responsibility of advertising, adjudicating, and compiling a short list of candidates for vacant faculty positions. The Chair of the Search Committee will circulate candidates' files and recommend a short list of candidates to a faculty meeting. The selection of candidates to be interviewed will be made in a faculty meeting. All voting faculty and the graduate student representative are eligible to vote for job candidates. In the event of a tie, there will be further discussion and a subsequent vote.

F. Unit Reorganization. The Department of Geography currently has no policy on unit reorganization and would follow those outlined at the College of Social Sciences and Public Policy.

IV. Curriculum

See sections C(ii) and C(iii) above for how faculty may be involved with curriculum development.

V. Annual Evaluation of Faculty on Performance and Merit

A. Peer Involvement in Annual Performance and Merit Evaluation. Each faculty member's performance will be evaluated relative to his or her assigned duties. Each faculty member's performance will be rated annually using the following university rating scale:

- Substantially Exceeds FSU's High Expectations
- Exceeds FSU's High Expectations
- Meets FSU's High Expectations
- Official Concern
- Does Not Meet FSU's High Expectations

Every spring semester all faculty members will participate in the annual evaluation exercise, for the distribution of merit salary, for post-tenure evaluations, and for the determination of differential teaching loads. The criteria and procedures comply with and are supplemented by the provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and the Faculty Handbook (FH). The criteria afford each faculty member an equitable opportunity to achieve a merit raise, since evaluations are based on each member's assignment of responsibilities (AOR).

Each faculty member's performance will be evaluated relative to his or her assigned duties as spelled out in the AOR. The Executive Committee is responsible for evaluating all members of the faculty, including members of the Executive Committee, and the Chair. When a member of the Executive Committee is being evaluated, they will exit the Committee and be replaced by the Chair. In all evaluations the following will be used as a guide on each faculty's performance in each of the three categories, research, instruction and service:

Significantly Exceeds FSU's High Expectations – describes a faculty member who far exceeds expectations during the evaluation period, and makes extraordinary contributions to research, instruction or service goals when promoting the field of Geography (e.g., national award).

Exceeds FSU's High Expectations – describes a faculty member who exceeds expectations during the evaluation period, and makes substantial contributions to research, teaching and service goals when promoting the field of Geography (e.g., university award).

Meets FSU's High Expectations – describes a faculty member who meets expectations during the evaluation period, and makes contributions to research, instruction or service goals when promoting the field of Geography.

Official Concern – describes a faculty member who demonstrates a commitment to support Departmental goals during the evaluation period, but does not make contributions to research, instruction or service goals when promoting the field of Geography in line with the high standards of the University.

Does Not Meet FSU's High Expectations – describes a faculty member who fails to demonstrate a commitment to support Departmental goals during the evaluation period and does not make contributions to research, instruction or service goals when promoting the field of Geography in line with the high standards of the University. No restrictions limit the number of faculty who can be placed in a given category.

The Chair will assign merit salary increases to all faculty receiving an overall score of 'meets FSU high expectations' or higher. All faculty meeting this criteria will be given the same dollar amount and equal to the total department merit divided by the number of faculty meeting this threshold.

Faculty will be provided with a letter from the Chair detailing their performance, and feedback on how to strengthen and improve for the next year, and trajectory for promotion and tenure.

Chair may recommend an increased teaching assignment for any tenured faculty member who receives "official concern" or "does not meet FSU's high expectations" on research for two consecutive years. If the Chair decides that a teaching load increase is necessary, the faculty member will be informed in writing in their annual evaluation and asked to increase their teaching load to 3/3 in the next academic year. Continued research performance at "official concern" or "does not meet FSU's high expectations" will result in the assignment of another course per semester (for a total maximum teaching load of 4/4) for subsequent years. Receipt of a research rating of at least "meets FSU's high expectations" for two consecutive years will allow a return to the standard teaching load.

Faculty members are evaluated according to their Assignment of Responsibilities (AOR) and are eligible for merit salary increases based on their annual evaluations. Faculty with higher teaching loads will be equally eligible for merit salary increases as are faculty with research assignments. Tenured faculty may choose to increase their teaching load, in which case their research and service obligations will be decreased proportionately.

Since scholarly activity is closely related to effectiveness in training graduate students, faculty on a 100% teaching assignment or a combination of teaching and service will no longer participate in the graduate program, which includes teaching graduate courses, grading doctoral examinations, serving on master's and doctoral committees and directing dissertations.

B. Criteria for Evaluation of Tenure-track Faculty. Annual Evaluations are based solely on activities completed the preceding calendar year. Criteria for evaluation are based on research, teaching and service. The Executive Committee will specify the exact criteria each year but will generally contain the following:

1) Teaching.

Teaching performance. Evidence on teaching performance shall include student evaluations, syllabi, enrollment data, and evidence of graduate advising activity. Faculty may submit a one page summary of activity if desired.

2) Scholarship/Research.

Research productivity (journal articles, books and book chapters in print), presentations and participation at learned meetings, active grants. Any grant and manuscript submissions should be listed in a clearly separate category. Faculty may submit a one page summary of activity if desired.

3) Service.

Service and administration to the Department, College, University, Geography discipline, and interdisciplinary academic associations. At a minimum, evidence will consist of a list of offices, departmental responsibilities, and membership to committees, and academic associations. Faculty may submit a one page summary of activity if desired. Service activities include administrative duties that serve to facilitate faculty performance in teaching, research and service, and are normally restricted to department chairs or persons whose major responsibilities are administrative. The following evidence must be considered in evaluating administrative performance: i. Faculty Relations. Fairness in dealing with faculty; facilitation of faculty communications; facilitating faculty performance; coordination of faculty activities; recruitment of faculty; accessibility to the faculty. ii. Administrative Activities: Scheduling course loads;

timeliness and accuracy in performing administrative tasks; effectiveness in allocating resources, and effectiveness in coordinating programs and related activities. iii. External Outreach: development of alumni relations. iv. Other Activities: Ability to lead department toward achievement of its collective goals; effectiveness in representing the interests of the faculty to the dean and other constituencies.

C. Criteria for Evaluation of Specialized Faculty.

None. The department does not have any specialized faculty, and never has had one previously.

VI. Promotion and Tenure

A. Progress Toward Promotion Letter. Each year, every faculty member who is not yet at the highest rank for their position will receive a letter that outlines progress toward promotion and/or tenure.

B. Third Year Review for Tenure-track Faculty. Tenure-track faculty in their third year of service will receive an evaluation of their progress in meeting the department's expectations for promotion and tenure.

Progress toward Promotion or Tenure: Assistant Professors hired July 1, 2019 or later shall receive a tenure review in their third year. Assistant Professors hired before July 1, 2019 and who have not yet had a 2nd-year review may choose between a 2nd and 4th year set of reviews or a 3rd year review. Assistant Professors hired before July 1, 2019 and who have already had a 2nd year review shall have a 4th year review. These reviews are mentoring opportunities during which the Promotion and Tenure Committee shall provide specific feedback and advice reflecting expectations for tenure and how the faculty member is progressing toward meeting those expectations. The faculty member shall meet with the chair to discuss the report. Tenure Review Report(s) shall be included in the tenure binder. Assistant Professors hired with credit toward tenure shall have credited years included in the determination of the timing of the third-year review unless an alternative schedule is mutually agreed upon by the faculty member and their supervisor.

C. Peer Involvement in Evaluation of Promotion and Tenure of Faculty.

(i) Recommendations that a faculty member assembles materials in order to apply for promotion and tenure are made by the Executive Committee.

(ii) Departmental recommendations for promotion and tenure follow University-wide policies detailed in the BOT-UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and the Faculty Handbook (FH).

D. Criteria for Promotion and Tenure of Tenure-track Faculty.

Recommendation for promotion to the rank of Professor, Associate Professor or for tenure should be based on recognition of demonstrated effectiveness in teaching, service, scholarly or creative accomplishments, and recognized standing in the discipline and profession as perceived by peers both within the Department and outside. Department guidelines are available here. As decisions are made at the College and University levels, the following criteria should be considered as approximate guidelines:

(i) Candidates are expected to have been awarded a doctorate in geography or a related subject.

(ii) Evidence of quality teaching, based on student evaluations from courses taught and satisfactory peer-observation by senior faculty. Candidates should also document their teaching loads, number of new preparations since arriving at FSU, any significant course enhancement efforts, their supervision of graduate students, and any and all significant teaching related efforts.

(iii) Evidence of an active and continuing research agenda is critical for the awarding of tenure. For the rank of Associate Professor, publications in refereed journals (preferably those listed by the Institute for Scientific Information if appropriate for the research agenda of the faculty member) and authored or co-authored books are deemed as the primary evidence of research excellence; though other types of research accomplishments may be pertinent depending upon the candidate's area of expertise. As a guideline, candidates should aim to publish an average of two refereed journal articles per year. A published book is generally equivalent to three refereed journal articles. Additionally, for the rank of professor, candidates should demonstrate "leadership" in the field of geography or related disciplines.

Promotion to Associate Professor must take place within seven years unless an extension of the tenure-earning period has been granted.

A faculty member may request an extension of the tenure-earning period for one year from the Chair, with the approval of the Dean, due to qualifying circumstances, before being considered for tenure. Personal circumstances include, but are not limited to: childbirth or adoption, personal injury or illness, care of ill or injured dependents, elder care, or death of a closely related family member resulting in the need for extended dependent care.

E. Criteria for Promotion of Specialized Faculty.

Faculty members in non-tenure track positions qualify for promotion to the next higher rank based on satisfaction of the minimum College and University requirements for that rank and on demonstrated performance above the minimum satisfactory level in her or his areas of assigned duties during at least the three years preceding the promotion.