Bylaws of the Department of Political Science

By-laws ratified by faculty vote on 11 February 2013, amended and ratified September 2018.

Included in this document are the major policies and procedures adopted by the Department of Political Science (DPS). In addition to these policies, the faculty and department are governed by policies described in the Florida State University Faculty Handbook, the General Bulletin, the Graduate Bulletin, the Collective Bargaining Agreement and other policies developed and interpreted by the university administration.

A. Faculty

1. Membership and Voting Rights
   a. Within the DPS, faculty positions are classified into two categories: (1) tenured and tenure-track professorial rank positions (i.e., Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor); and (2) non-tenure track faculty consisting of individuals in faculty classifications that are neither tenured nor tenure-earning.
   b. Appointment of affiliated faculty positions in the department must be made with the approval of departmental faculty through a secret ballot.
   c. Only tenured and tenure-track faculty (i.e., those listed in A.1.a.(1) above) may vote for or serve on the Executive Committee, the Graduate Studies Committee, the Promotion and Tenure Committee and faculty search committees.

2. Faculty Meetings
   a. Faculty meetings shall be held at least once each semester during the nine-month academic year. Meetings may be called by the Chair or on written request of five voting members. An agenda shall be submitted by the Chair when notice of the meeting is circulated.
   b. The faculty may permit representation and voting privileges by graduate students. These representatives are to be selected by the Political Science Graduate Student Association according to rules of the Association.
   c. A majority of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum., and motions will be decided on by a majority vote via secret ballot. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised.

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2 Currently, three graduate students (one voting; two non-voting) participate in faculty meetings.
B. Department Chair

1. The Chair shall be the chief executive officer of the Department and is responsible to the Dean of the College of Social Sciences and the faculty of the Department. The Chair may act independently on such matters as office management, teaching schedules, and course assignments; and shall consult with the proper committees on matters such as appointments, tenure, promotion, salary, curriculum, assignment of teaching and research assistantships, and allocation of resources.

2. The Chair shall serve at the pleasure of the Dean of the College of Social Sciences. The department deems the term of the Chair to be three years, but Chairs may serve additional consecutive terms. However, at the end of each three year appointment, the Dean will consult with the faculty and the Chair regarding the Chair's possible reappointment, or the selection of another to serve as Chair.

3. Appointment of the Chair shall be made by the Dean of the College in consultation with the faculty. No later than March 1 in the spring semester of the third year of the Chair's term, the Executive Committee will submit a memo to faculty asking for nominations to serve as chair. Nominations will be due within one week of the date of the memo, and a member of the Executive Committee will be designated by that committee to receive nominations. Once nominations are received, each person nominated will be given one week to indicate if s/he is willing to stand as a candidate for chair. Those not replying or willing to stand for consideration will have their names stricken from the list of nominees. Within one additional week, a final list of nominees will be distributed to the faculty and one or more faculty meetings set as necessary. At these faculty meetings the candidates will be asked to appear for the purpose of making a statement and responding to questions. Then, the faculty will discuss the nominees and vote by secret ballot. The ballot will ask faculty to indicate whether each of the nominees is an acceptable/unacceptable candidate for chair and to rank order all candidates (whether acceptable or unacceptable) with 1 being the highest rank. Failure to rank all candidates will invalidate a ballot. The results of the vote and the ballots will be immediately submitted to the Dean.

4. The Chair shall be an ex-officio member of all departmental committees.

C. Department Committees

1. Executive Committee (ExComm)
   a. Eligibility and Election. The ExComm shall consist of six faculty members and one graduate student. Faculty representatives shall be elected by secret ballot of the voting membership of the faculty. The vote of a majority of those casting ballots is required for election to the committee. For purposes of representation, the number of Professors,
Associate Professors, and Assistant Professors shall each be divided equally among the ranks so that each rank has two members.

b. Terms of Office. Members from the ranks of Professor and Associate Professor shall serve for terms of two years, beginning in the Fall term of the academic year. The terms of these members shall be staggered so that one member from a rank will be elected each year. Two members from the Assistant Professor rank will be elected each year to serve one year. A graduate student member will be elected by the Political Science Graduate Student Association according to rules of the Association and will serve one year. Members of the ExComm may be reelected to serve consecutive terms. The seat of an ExComm member absent from the University for one semester or more will be considered vacant and a new member will be elected to fill the unexpired portion of his term. However, if the ExComm member is absent only for the summer semester the seat will not be deemed vacant. If an ExComm member resigns or retires from the University, the committee position will be considered vacant and a replacement elected to serve the unexpired portion of the term.

c. Meetings. The Chair of the Department shall serve as chair of the ExComm and may cast a vote in the event of a tie. Meetings of the ExComm will be held as called by the Chair or requested by the membership of the committee. A majority of the membership will constitute a quorum. A tentative agenda for ExComm meetings will be announced to the Committee members and to the general 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 ExComm will be made promptly to the faculty and graduate students.

d. Graduate Student Representatives. The graduate student representative shall not participate in any discussion or vote relating to any faculty personnel matters, including annual faculty evaluations.

e. Duties. The ExComm shall assist the Chair in implementing Department policies and procedures including, but not limited to, such matters as recruitment of new faculty and annual faculty evaluations.

2. Undergraduate Studies Committee (UGSC)

a. Functions. The Committee shall undertake periodic reviews of the undergraduate curriculum in order to assure a balanced and effective program for undergraduate majors, minors and enrollees in the Department's courses and shall recommend to the departmental faculty for its approval changes in course offerings, in requirements for major and minors, in academic advisement procedures and in other procedures related to the undergraduate curriculum.
b. The Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUGS) shall serve as the Chair of the UGSC and shall be responsible for overseeing undergraduate academic advisement and course registration. The Department Chair in consultation with the ExComm shall appoint the DUGS.

c. Membership. The Committee shall consist of the DUGS, faculty members representing the fields within the department, four undergraduate students (two voting, two non-voting) and the Department’s Academic Coordinator.

(1) Composition and Selection of Faculty Representatives. The UGSC shall be composed of one representative from each of the Department’s undergraduate teaching fields. The field representatives are to be elected by the faculty within each designated field for a period of one year, and may be re-elected without limitation on terms. Faculty who teach undergraduate courses in more than one field may participate in the voting in each of their fields. Once these faculty representatives have been selected, their names shall be made known to the DUGS not later than the first week of the academic year.

(2) Composition and Selection of Student Representatives. The student members shall be apportioned as follows: one representative for each undergraduate class level. The student members will be selected by the DUGS no later than the third week of each academic year.

3. Graduate Studies Committee (GSC)

a. Decisions regarding all aspects of the graduate program shall be vested in the GSC and shall be carried out consistent with the policies determined by the Department. The GSC shall be composed of the designated area advisors, three graduate students, (one voting, and two non-voting) and the Director of Graduate Studies serving as Chair of the GSC. Graduate student members of the GSC shall not vote on any matter relating to their own welfare, such as new student admissions, applications for assistantships and work-load assignments.

b. The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) is appointed by the Department Chair in consultation with the ExComm. The DGS shall serve as chair of the GSC, recruit graduate students, administer records of graduate students for funding and admission, supervise the advisement of graduate students and implement the Graduate Studies Committee’s policies. The Director shall report periodically to the faculty on decisions and status of the graduate program. The Director of Graduate Studies is to

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3 Currently, these fields are American Politics, International Relations, Comparative Politics and Public Policy.
receive compensation for the time spent in these duties through
decreased teaching load and increased administrative and advising credit.

c. Area Advisors. The GSC shall be composed of one representative
from each of the Department’s graduate teaching fields. Area advisors
are to be elected by the faculty within each field for a period of one year.
Faculty who teach graduate seminars in more than one field may vote for
an area advisor in each of their fields.

4. Promotion and Tenure Committee (PTC)
a. Eligibility and Election. The PTC will be elected when the department
has a candidate for promotion and/or tenure or an untenured assistant
professor scheduled for third-year review. The PTC will be composed of
three tenured Professors and two tenured Associate Professors. All
tenure-track faculty are eligible to vote for these two slates.

b. Term of Office. The PTC serves for one year. It is to be elected in the
spring and serve, if necessary, through the first few weeks of the following
fall semester.

c. Functions. The PTC performs all of the tasks associated with
preliminary evaluations and making recommendations to the tenured
faculty regarding promotion and tenure. The PTC committee also
performs the third-year review of untenured Assistant Professors.

D. Retention, Promotion and Tenure
1. Departmental recommendations regarding retention, promotion and tenure
follow University-wide policies detailed in the Collective Bargaining Agreement
(CBA) and the Faculty Handbook (FH).

2. Departmental Criteria and Standards
a. New Assistant Professors are expected to have the Ph.D. degree prior
to appointment. An assistant professor who fails to complete the Ph.D.
degree may be expected to be terminated by the end of his/her first
academic year unless the requirements for the degree are completed by
January 1st following employment.

b. Standards for Tenure-track Promotions and Tenure: Recommendation
for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor or for tenure is based on
recognition of demonstrated effectiveness in teaching and service, definite
scholarly accomplishments, and recognized standing in the discipline.
Promotion to Associate Professor must take place within seven years
unless an extension of the tenure-earning period has been granted.

4 Currently, the Department elects area advisors in each of the following fields: American Politics,
International Relations, Comparative Politics, Public Policy and Methods.
Recommendation for promotion to the rank of Professor is based on recognition of superior teaching and service, scholarly accomplishments of high quality and recognized standing in the discipline.

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

3. Third-Year Review. Each spring the PTC reviews the research, teaching and service accomplishments of all Assistant Professors in their third year of tenure-earning employment at FSU. The PTC will recommend either retention or termination. While the decision to retain does not insure promotion, it does reflect a presumption that the candidate is making strong progress toward promotion in three years. If the PTC votes to terminate, the candidate is entitled to a subsequent year of employment, consistent with the regulations in the CBA and FH. The decision of the PTC is final within the Department, but if the candidate is dissatisfied with the outcome, an appeal can be pursued where provided by university procedure. Candidates who have successfully completed their third-year review shall be granted a two course teaching reduction prior to their coming up for promotion and tenure.
E. Annual Evaluation of Faculty

1. The annual evaluation of faculty is performed each spring by the ExComm and is based on evidence of research, teaching and service submitted by faculty from the previous two calendar years.

2. Research performance will be evaluated based on the following items: publications, conference participation, grant activity and work in progress. According to department policy, eligible publications, conference participation and grant activity are limited to the previous two calendar years.

   a. Only items actually published and appearing in print during the two-year period will be evaluated. Faculty are required to provide copies of the publications. Items accepted for publication, but which have not appeared in print are not to be included among publications. Faculty may list other research activity as work in progress. However, untenured assistant professors scheduled for third-year review or those being considered for promotion and tenure should submit copies of all relevant research even if it falls before or after the two-year evaluation window. For articles and books that have been accepted for publication, but have not yet appeared, letters from journal editors or book publishers indicating that the items have been accepted for publication shall be included.

   b. The ExComm will scrutinize the quality of publications. Distinctions between journals can be drawn based on reputation, citation rates, whether it is listed in the ISI-database, and whether it is peer-reviewed. In terms of book publishers, important distinctions can be drawn between scholarly and commercial presses versus vanity publications. If a journal or other outlet is not obviously visible to other political scientists, the faculty member has the responsibility for demonstrating that the journal is peer-reviewed and of good quality or that the book publisher is a quality outlet. Additional information including, but not limited to, circulation figures, citation rates, affiliation with an important professional association, recognized rankings by the discipline or a subfield and a copy of the journal itself may be provided to the committee.

3. Teaching performance will be evaluated based on the following evidence: courses taught during the previous two-year period; standardized student evaluations (e.g., SUSSAI and SPOT); and membership on student committees (e.g., undergraduate Honor Theses, Masters Theses and Doctoral committees). Syllabi are to be included for all regular classroom courses.

4. Performance on service will be evaluated based on a report of the faculty member’s service to the department, college, university, discipline and community.
5. Each member of the ExComm evaluates each faculty member’s teaching, research and service, and provides a score from 1 (unsatisfactory) to 5 (outstanding) for each dimension. Those scores are averaged across the five members of the committee and then weighted by the faculty member’s Assignment of Responsibility to produce an overall score. The department bases merit salary decisions on the average of the current and previous year’s annual evaluations.

6. At the end of the evaluation process, each member of the ExComm will make a summary judgment of each faculty based on the evidence of performance relative to his/her assigned duties and place him/her in one of the following categories. No restrictions exist as to how many faculty members can be placed in any category. The ExComm’s ratings will be submitted as recommendations to the department chair.

Substantially Exceeds FSU’s High Expectations. This describes a faculty member whose accomplishments during the evaluation period far exceed performance expectations according to his/her assignment of responsibilities. These accomplishments may include the following: highly significant research; exceedingly effective teaching; recognition in one’s field of research as evidenced by attaining significant professional achievements, awards, or recognitions; and excellence in service to the department, college, university, discipline or community.

Exceeds FSU’s High Expectations. This describes a faculty member whose accomplishments during the evaluation period exceed performance expectations according to her/his assignment of responsibilities. These accomplishments may include the following: significant research activity; highly effective teaching; and highly engaged and effective service to the department, college, university, discipline or community.

Meets FSU’s High Expectations. This describes a faculty member whose accomplishments during the evaluation period meet performance expectations according to his or her assignment of responsibilities. These accomplishments may include the following: research or creative activity; effective teaching; active participation in professional associations; and service to the department, college, university, discipline or community.

Official Concern. This describes a faculty member who has difficulty in completing assigned responsibilities during the evaluation period in a manner that is consistent with the high standards of the university.

Does not Meet FSU’s High Expectations. This describes a faculty member who fails to meet expectations during the evaluation period according to his/her assignment of responsibilities.
E. Differential Faculty Teaching Assignments for Tenured Faculty

1. While the normal teaching load is two courses per semester, higher teaching loads are assigned to tenured faculty whose research productivity is rated to be below “minimally satisfactory.” Tenured faculty members who receive, during the annual evaluation, an average research score of less than two (“minimally satisfactory”) for two years in a row shall have their teaching assignment increased to three courses per semester (75% of responsibility) for the next academic year. Faculty who receive a score of less than two for three years in a row will have their teaching load increased to 4 courses per semester (100% of responsibility) for the next academic year.

2. All faculty are evaluated according to their Assignment of Responsibilities and will become eligible for merit salary increases according to their overall score on the annual evaluation. Those with higher teaching loads will be equally eligible for merit salary increases as faculty with research assignments.

3. Faculty who obtain an average research score of two or higher in any subsequent year will return to a 2/2 teaching load the following academic year.

4. Since publishing scholarly research is closely related to effectiveness in training doctoral students, faculty who are placed on a 100% teaching assignment (or a combination of teaching and service) will no longer participate in the doctoral program, which includes teaching doctoral seminars, grading doctoral examinations, serving on doctoral committees and directing dissertations. Faculty serving on a committee when this differential assignment goes into effect will be allowed to complete their terms. An exception will be a faculty member's continued eligibility to teach courses designated only for students in an applied masters program (e.g., the MAAPP program).

F. Other Provisions

Faculty and staff members are expected to be familiar with and follow the Florida State University Substantive Change Policy as found on the University website http://provost.fsu.edu/sacs.

G. Amendments to the Bylaws

1. Any five voting members of the Department may propose an amendment to the By-laws. A proposed amendment must be made available to the voting membership at least two weeks prior to a departmental meeting. To be adopted, a proposed amendment must receive an affirmative vote by a majority of the voting members present and voting. All voting on proposed amendments must be conducted by secret ballot.