



## Physics Governance

### Revision approved by the Office of the Provost March 19, 2021

The policies and procedures described in this document are intended to be consistent with the policies of the University of Oregon, as posted by the Office of Academic Affairs, and of the College of Arts and Sciences, and with the various requirements of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between United Academics and the University of Oregon. It is understood that internal governance policy and any policies developed through internal governance, both within this unit and as specified in the CBA, are subject to the approval of the appropriate dean and the Provost or designee. This document was developed and approved with the equitable participation of all Department of Physics Tenure Track Faculty and Career Faculty.

The Department of Physics has a long history of orderly and collegial governance. It is based on elected Personnel and Post-tenure committees and a host of appointed committees tasked to take on specific departmental business. This document describes the current state of governance, including the explicit documentation of the role of career faculty, as required under the CBA.

Tenure-related faculty are responsible for developing review guidelines for tenure and promotion; workload for TRF; merit salary increases for TRF; and participating in the review of TRF and Career faculty. Career faculty are responsible for working with TRF to develop guidelines for performance and promotion reviews, workload, and merit salary increases guidelines for the career faculty ranks. Career faculty are also responsible for working with TRF to develop guidelines for performance and promotion reviews, workload, and merit salary increases guidelines for TRF ranks but their input is limited to professional activities that are part of their own job descriptions. Instructional Career faculty also participate in establishing, reviewing, and revising departmental curricula, in relation to their professional responsibilities.

Time spent by funding contingent faculty members on service to the University, including shared and internal governance, must comply with the terms and conditions of their sponsored project and all federal and state laws and regulations.

We organize this document by first providing a list of the various departmental committees, giving their charge and the method for the selection of committee membership, followed by departmental procedures, focusing on procedures involving personnel decisions and other matters. While the committees operate in a mostly autonomous manner, they are all advisory to the department head (DH), who is ultimately responsible for departmental governance and due process. Unless otherwise stated, committee membership is appointed on an annual basis, typically near the end of the academic year.

## Glossary

- CBA – Collective Bargaining Agreement between the UO and United Academics
- TRF – Tenure-related Faculty, i.e. tenure-track or tenured officers of instruction
- Career faculty – Career Non-tenure Track Faculty with college-funded appointments.
- TRP – Tenure Reduction Program. Faculty eligible for the TRP will be treated as TRF for the purpose of voting privileges, see below.
- RTRF – retired or emeritus TRF who are not eligible for the TRP.
- AF – Affiliated faculty
- DH – Department head

# Committees and Directorships

## I. Personnel Committee (PC)

A. The role of the PC includes the following:

1. Review of tenure, promotion and contract renewal cases for TRF and promotion of Career faculty. This includes providing recommendations for advancing (non-mandatory) promotion cases and writing reports as input to faculty votes.
2. Review of faculty annual reports. Each winter term, TRF and Career faculty are asked to submit annual reports of professional activities from the previous calendar year. The PC reviews and evaluates the reports according to an established procedure – see *Merit Review Process*.
3. On request of the DH, provide advice to the DH on departmental personnel and procedural issues.
4. The PC shall have at least one Career faculty member (see below). The Career faculty member(s) will participate in the evaluation of other Career faculty (items 1 and 2 above). They will also be involved in evaluation of TTF but their input will be limited to professional activities that are part of their own job descriptions.

B. Membership and election of the Personnel Committee and Post-Tenure Review Committee:

Elections for the PC and Post Tenure Review Committees (PTRC) – see below -- are conducted in the Spring term of each year for committees that will serve the following academic year. These elections are run sequentially, with the PC being elected first. The PC is composed of 5 or 6 faculty, at least 3 of whom are Full Professors, at least one of whom is a Career faculty, and the remainder shall be TRF of any rank; the PTRC consists of 3 tenured faculty. Entirely new committees are elected each year, and faculty cannot serve on either committee for more than two consecutive years. To facilitate anonymity and to allow participation by faculty who are out of town, these elections are conducted over the Internet. For purposes of eligibility for election to the departmental PC and PTRC, a tenured senior instructor will be viewed as equivalent to a tenured associate professor, and a tenured senior instructor II will be equivalent to tenured full professor. The DH oversees the election process according to the following guidelines:

1. The DH contacts the faculty person in charge of the electronic poll to initiate the process and provides lists of faculty eligible for each committee. Generally, all TRF and Career faculty will be placed on the lists except those who, in the following year, a) will be considered for promotion (excused from PC), b) are scheduled to undergo a post-tenure review (excused from PTRC), c) will be on leave, or d) have served the previous two years on the committee being elected. Faculty anticipating a large service load the following year may also be excused by the DH. Faculty cannot serve on both committees in the same year, so those elected to the PC will not be included on the PTRC election slate.
2. The election will be announced at least one day before the electronic poll opens. All TRF and Career faculty are eligible to vote, which they do by accessing the election web site with an anonymous PIN. Both elections generally require more than one round of voting to achieve full committees. In each round, each faculty member can vote for a number of faculty equal to the number of positions remaining open on the relevant committee. Any faculty receiving more than half the votes cast will be deemed to be elected. In each round, the polls will remain open for at least 24 hours, unless all eligible votes have been cast before that time, and the poll will remain open until at least 2/3 of eligible faculty have voted. The DH is notified automatically via e-mail as each faculty PIN votes. The entire process remains anonymous.
3. After each round, the elected faculty will be announced by the DH, usually by e-mail. If the full committee has not been elected in a given round, an additional round is initiated. The slate for the new round will be populated by those receiving the most votes without being elected in the previous round. After the first round, each slate consists of a number of candidates

that generally is equal to twice the number of committee positions that remain open. Tie votes or the need to facilitate convergence sometimes requires, at the discretion of the DH, slight deviations from the preferred ratio of 2:1 of candidates to open positions.

4. In order to ensure Career faculty representation on the PC, if a Physics Career faculty is not among the initial 5 PC positions resulting from the above process, a separate election will be held, mirroring the above, with the initial list being composed only of eligible Career faculty.

## **II. Post-tenure Review Committee**

A. The task of the post-tenure review committee (PTRC) is to provide evaluations of tenured faculty who are up for required three-year and six-year post-tenure reviews. The faculty members who are eligible for evaluation are notified by the DH, and are asked to provide a report of their professional activities over the previous three or six years. The written PTRC evaluations, along with a summary evaluation from the DH, are transmitted to the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS).

B. Membership and election of the PTRC: See above under PC.

## **III. Graduate Support Group**

A. The Graduate Support Group (GSG) is an informal support resource for physics graduate students with a primary focus on the prevention and resolution of issues related to student-faculty and student-staff interactions.

B. The GSG consists of up to three graduate student volunteers and up to three faculty members. Membership is determined annually following faculty and student committee elections. There is no limit to the number of consecutive years a member can serve (as an approximate guide, faculty and students might serve two and one years, respectively). Selection is initiated by a call to faculty and graduate students for nominations. This is followed by a consensus-based selection by the department head, the graduate student president and graduate student vice president. This selection will accommodate private concerns raised by students and faculty. All faculty and graduate students are eligible with the exception of the Department Head (DH) or other faculty who are Designated Reporters (typically, the DH is the only Designated Reporter in the Physics Department).

## **IV. Curriculum Committee**

A. The curriculum committee is tasked with two main responsibilities:

1. Helping the Associate Department Head (ADH) with soliciting teaching assignments from faculty and suggesting the slate of teaching assignments for both undergraduate and graduate physics and astronomy courses.
2. Considering and evaluating potential curricular changes.

B. The curriculum committee is appointed by the DH. The members are drawn from tenure-related faculty and career faculty. The committee chair will normally be tenured. The committee will include the ADH as an ex-officio member. In addition, the committee features (typically 3) members from the pool of current graduate students selected by the students.

## **V. Graduate Studies Committee**

C. The graduate studies committee considers the overall graduate program and graduate degree requirements, including the graduate curriculum, the graduate exams, and research requirements.

D. The graduate studies committee membership is drawn from tenure-related faculty and career faculty whose job description includes graduate instruction or graduate research supervision. The majority of members shall be TTF. The committee faculty membership is appointed by the DH. In addition, the

committee features (typically 3) members from the pool of current graduate students selected by the students.

## **VI. Graduate Admissions Committee**

A. The graduate admissions committee is responsible for evaluating the applicants for the physics graduate program and, in consultation with the DH, making offers for admission. The graduate admissions committee faculty membership is drawn from tenure-related faculty and may include the Director of Graduate Studies as an ex-officio member, in addition to (typically 3) members from the pool of current graduate students. The faculty members are appointed by the DH. The student members are chosen by the graduate students.

## **VII. Graduate Recruitment Committee**

A. The graduate recruitment committee is responsible for organizing the annual visit by prospective graduate students, as well as overseeing other activities involving recruitment, such as visits with undergraduates at other institutions.

B. The graduate recruitment committee faculty membership is drawn from tenure-related faculty and career faculty whose job description includes graduate instruction or graduate research supervision, in addition to members (typically 3) from the pool of current graduate students. The faculty members are appointed by the DH. The student members are chosen by the graduate students.

## **VIII. Faculty Search Committees**

A. Chosen on an as-needed basis to oversee the search process for TRF and Career faculty.

B. Membership is drawn from TRF and Career faculty with student representatives.

## **IX. Director of undergraduate studies (DUS)**

A. Responsible for undergraduate major and other Physics-related undergraduate advising. Duties include every-day advising of undergraduates, overseeing peer advising, checking fulfillment of undergraduate degree requirements, tracking of courses in the degree program, updating of documentation, evaluating equivalencies of physics courses taken elsewhere, and nomination of students for undergraduate awards or scholarships.

B. Appointment will be to a TRF or Career faculty; appointed by the DH; position may include a stipend, to be determined by the DH.

## **X. Director of graduate studies (DGS)**

A. Responsible for advising of graduate students, especially for checking fulfillment of degree requirements for the Physics Master's and PhD degrees, and Physics Master's degrees from the Graduate Internship Program.

B. Appointment will be to a tenure-related faculty; appointed by the DH; position may include a stipend, to be determined by the DH.

## **XI. Director of summer session (DSS)**

A. Responsible for overseeing, in consultation with the DH, Physics courses for summer session, including selection of course offerings, selection of instructors and TAs, and tracking the budget in consultation with CAS.

B. Appointment will be to a TRF or Career faculty officer of instruction; appointed by the DH; position may include a stipend, to be determined by the DH.

Other typical Physics committees and service appointments:

- Colloquium coordinator: one tenure-related faculty per term in academic year
- Space committee: advises DH on space issues; 2-3 members from tenure-related faculty
- Development and alumni committee: coordinate public and alumni interaction; 2-3 members
- Diversity committee: co-ordinate programs relating to equity and inclusion; 4-5 faculty, 1 undergraduate and 1 graduate student representative
- Internships admissions committee: 1-2 faculty members
- Career Faculty committee: advises DH on Career faculty-related matters; features all Career faculty
- Undergraduate Studies Advising Committee: Provides support for USD's activities; USD and 1-2 faculty
- Faculty and student awards committee: 2-4 faculty
- Class scheduling coordinator – closely coupled with curriculum committee
- Library representative
- TA training coordinator
- Large classroom scheduling coordinator
- Affirmative action coordinator
- Advisor, graduate professional options
- Advisor, Society of Physics Students
- Advisor, Women in Physics Students
- Building (Labs) Manager
- Organizer, Undergraduate Physics Peer-learning Assistant Program
- Director of Pine Mountain
- Pre-engineering advisor

### **Affiliated Positions**

TRF and Career faculty from other UO departments can become affiliated faculty (AF) of the physics department. This affiliation allows AF to advise physics graduate students. Following their nomination by a TRF or Career faculty, the DH will seek input from relevant faculty and the nominee's DH before awarding AF status. Affiliated positions last for three years and are renewable.

### **Voting Privileges**

Significant policy changes and many personnel decisions are taken by votes of the faculty (this does not include AF). Approval of decisions requires a simple majority of faculty in attendance and those who provided proxy votes. In general, all TRF and Career faculty are eligible to participate in governance by providing input to these and other policies. The department will make no distinction between faculty members according to their membership in the faculty union.

Votes on personnel issues are made by written, signed ballots. Personnel-related votes are restricted to faculty of higher rank. Specifically,

- Promotion of tenure-related faculty can only be voted on by tenure-related faculty of higher rank. This includes faculty on TRP programs, but does not include RTRF. This also applies to 3<sup>rd</sup> year reviews of pre-tenure TTF.
- Tenure cases can only be voted by tenured faculty, including faculty on TRP programs, but not RTRF.
- Decisions to offer tenure-related faculty positions can only be voted on by other TRF (including those on TRP) but not RTRF.
- Decisions to offer instructional Career faculty positions can be voted on by TRF (including those on TRP but not RTRF) and instructional Career faculty. Decisions to offer research Career

faculty positions can be voted on by TRF (including those on TRP but not RTRF) and research Career faculty.

For other non-personnel related motions, all TRF and Career faculty are eligible to vote. Faculty on leave, including sabbatical, retain their voting rights and may participate in discussions and communicate their votes through any available form, such as email, Skype, etc.

Faculty meeting attendance:

All Physics faculty are generally invited to attend meetings, with the following exceptions:

- For the personnel decisions mentioned above, attendance will be restricted to those eligible to vote plus any others invited by the DH (including, for example, Career faculty members of the PC).
- For non-personnel related meetings, TRF and Career faculty are always invited. Otherwise, attendance should be consistent with the meeting agenda.

## **Procedures**

Procedures related to departmental governance will be developed by TRF and Career faculty in accord with the statement of responsibilities in the introduction.