

# English Department Constitution University of Oregon

November 2017

*Approved by the Office of the Provost & Academic Affairs: December 5, 2017*

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 reflects the equitable participation of all Department of English Tenure Track Faculty and Career Non-Tenure Track Faculty in the development of department policies and practices. The English Department Constitution has historically been developed and amended by the elected members of the Department Council and brought to the faculty for discussion and vote. This version was amended by the elected members of the Department Council and brought to the TT and Career NTT faculty for discussion and vote on November 19, 2014. Amendment to the Constitution requires a vote of two-thirds of those eligible to vote (see Meeting Attendance Practices, page 12).

## **I. Department Officers**

### **A. The Head**

The Head of the Department is selected by the methods and at the times determined by the College of Arts and Sciences and is appointed by the Dean of that College according to the administrative procedure of the University. The department will follow procedures adopted at the February 2006 English Department Meeting (revised in November 2014) for the selection of a recommended candidate to serve as Head of the Department (see Head Recommendation Procedures, page 13), a recommendation to be subsequently forwarded to the Dean of CAS. All Full and Associate Professors in the Department of English are eligible for nomination; all Full, Associate, and Assistant Professors, and all Career Non-Tenure Track Faculty, are eligible to nominate a candidate.

The Head shall provide leadership for this Department by initiating the consideration of new policies, acting on policies determined by the Department, representing the Department in all its relations with the University at large, keeping the Department informed about all matters pertinent to its welfare, supervising the work of the Department, and chairing its regular meetings.

The suggested term length for the headship is three years, with the possibility of reappointment.

The Head shall be a non-voting member (except in case of ties) of the Department

Council and shall not serve as Chair of this committee.

Decisions made by Department Committees and at Department meetings shall be documented by the Department Head or a designated individual and be archived in the English Department files in the main office. The Department will maintain a file for all standing committees and a file of department meeting agendas and minutes. When new policies are developed or current policies are amended, the chair of each standing committee or the head of the department, as appropriate, will place a policy statement in the appropriate permanent file. All formal policies will also be available in an electronic Policy Library on the English Department Resources web page. Access to these decisions shall be readily available to all TT and Career NTT faculty members.

### **B. Appointed Administrators**

The Department Head, with advice from the Administrative Officers and the Department Council, will appoint the following administrative officers: Associate Department Head (from the TTF), Assistant Department Head (Career NTTF), Director of Composition (typically TTF, or Career NTTF), Associate Director of Composition (Career NTTF or TTF), Director of Graduate Studies (TTF), Director of Undergraduate Studies (typically TTF, or NTTF), Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies (Career NTTF or TTF), and a University Library Representative (TTF). Career NTTF serving as academic program directors shall have a PhD in an appropriate field. Administrative officers serve at the discretion of the Department Head. The usual term length for administrative officer appointments is three years or the length of their contract appointment, with the possibility of reappointment.

Program Directors—Director of Composition, Director of Graduate Studies, Director of Undergraduate Studies—will chair committees related to their positions (Director of Composition, Composition Committee; Director of Graduate Studies Graduate Committee; Director of Undergraduate Studies, Curriculum Committee).

### **C. Department Council**

The Department Council is an advisory body elected by the members of the Department. Its role is to ensure an open flow of advice and communication in the department by mediating between the Department Head, the Department Standing Committees, and the Department as a whole.

### Membership:

The Council will consist of five elected members, in addition to the Department Head. One delegate, serving a two-year term, will be elected to represent each of the following ranks: Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Career NTTF, and Graduate Student. Issues of confidentiality relating to personnel matters may require the President of the Council to restrict consultative meetings (#1, below). The Council President will be elected from the tenure-track faculty members of the Council. The Department Head, who shall not vote except in the case of ties, shall not serve as Council President. Members of the Council shall not be elected to consecutive terms.

### Functions:

The Council performs the following functions:

1. Consult with and advise the Department Head.
2. Preview notices of motion and make recommendations revising or endorsing them.
3. Discuss other matters of concern brought to the Council's attention and make recommendations where suitable.
4. Represent notice of motion and other matters of concern with the Council's recommendations to the Department.
5. President of the Council will participate in meetings of the Administrative Staff and Department Head, forming a liaison between the Administrative Staff and the Council.
6. Regularly assess instructional staffing needs and resources and report its hiring recommendations to the full Department.

### **D. Administrative Staff**

The Administrative Staff includes the following administrative officers of the Department: Department Head, Associate Department Head, Director of Composition, Associate Director of Composition, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies, Director of Graduate Studies, Manager of Administrative Services, and President of the Department Council. The Administrative Staff will meet regularly to coordinate the overall administration of the Department and consult with the Department Head about ongoing administrative activities. The Department Head will convene the Administrative Staff.

## **II. Department Meetings**

The Department will hold two types of meetings, Regular and Executive:

Regular Department meetings held once a month, with an agenda prepared by the Head and distributed a week in advance of the meeting. Notices of motions must be served at least two weeks in advance of a regular meeting although exceptions may be made to this rule, in emergencies, by the Department Council. Extra meetings may be called as business dictates.

Regular Department meetings will be open to all faculty, staff, and departmental graduate students. Notices of motion will be distributed by the Department office staff via e-mail.

Details on meeting attendance and voting practices are outlined in the attached Meeting Attendance Practice chart. Each eligible member has one vote.

Absentee votes may be given to the Department Head prior to the meeting by those whose official University business or unanticipated emergencies conflict with Department meetings. Those submitting absentee ballots are expected to consult with relevant colleagues to inform themselves about the issue up for vote before casting a ballot. Absentee votes cannot be used for substitute motions.

Executive meetings of the full-time faculty may be called, in which participation is limited to all TTF and Career NTTF or to TTF only, depending upon the business.

All Department meetings shall follow the rules set forth in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* save that the motion to table shall require a two-thirds majority.

60% of those eligible to vote shall be present for all motions involving curricular and program changes considered at a department meeting. A simple majority is required to carry a motion.

### **III. Department Committees**

#### **A. Make-up of Committees:**

All TTF and Career NTTF faculty will submit committee service preferences to the Department Council. Faculty members of departmental committees will be appointed by the Department Council (except for members of the Merit Review and Post-Tenure Review Committees, who are elected).

At least one student member will be appointed by the Department Council. To serve on a committee, a graduate student must be currently enrolled in a major course of study in the English Department and be in good academic standing.

**B. Committee Structure and Administration:**

1. Faculty members of each committee will normally serve for two years after appointment by the Department Council.
2. Committee members may not be reappointed to the same position in consecutive terms of office, except as specified below.
3. Each committee will elect its own chair at its first meeting of the year, except as specified below.
4. Committee chairs shall be elected for a term of one year. (Re-election by committee not prohibited.)
5. While duration of student appointments is up to student organizations, in no event shall the term exceed two years.
6. The Department Council, prior to making appointments, is required to solicit committee preferences from all eligible faculty and to consider their preferences in making appointments.
7. Vacancies and Eligibility: The Council will make appointments to fill vacancies in unexpired faculty terms. Any faculty member who is absent from campus on authorized leave for two quarters or more shall be relieved from his/her committee assignments. The Department Council shall appoint a successor to fill the unexpired term.
8. Except in unusual circumstances as may be determined by the Department Council, no person may hold voting membership on more than two committees at any one time (unless required to do so by administrative function.)
9. The stipulated rank and number of faculty and qualifications and number of graduate students should be observed whenever possible: if necessary the Department Council may alter the stipulated manner of assigning faculty or student membership.

**C. Duties of Committees:**

Following a notice of motion, the Department Head will refer the motion to the appropriate committee. That committee may redraft the proposed motion (after consultation with the original proposer) and bring the revised version before the Department without the formality of amendment or simply advise the Department of its recommendation on the motion when it comes up at a meeting.

Each committee on its own initiative may undertake study and action on any matters falling within its policy area (see particular charges in the descriptions of each committee, below) and propose legislation through the Department Council giving the usual notice of motion. On appropriate occasions, or by invitation, committees may advise the Department Head or Department Council directly on specific matters; similarly, committees may request that the Department Head or Department Council give them special charges to handle.

Undergraduate and Graduate students can work through standing committees to submit notices of motion to department meetings.

The standing committee structure is designed to conduct the oversight and regular review of our curricula and policies on admission and assessment.

Since committees will often be acting, at least temporarily, for the Department as a whole, committee chairs must give adequate notice of substantive matters under consideration, solicit opinions from TTF and Career NTTF, and, finally, any committee decision affecting the Department as a whole must be filed in writing and distributed to the Department. This decision, after consideration by the Department Council, will be presented for ratification at the next department meeting.

#### **D. Non-Conflict Proviso**

On committees where conflict of interest votes may arise (including matters affecting one's own individual position in the Department or on matters relating to one's own professional or academic advancement), committees must define the nature of the issue and reconstitute themselves accordingly for particular votes. If necessary, the Department Council may arbitrate.

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.

#### **E. Standing Committees (in alphabetical order)**

##### **1. Composition**

###### Membership:

Seven faculty, at least three TTF and three Career NTTF: Director of Composition (who shall be chair), Associate Director of Composition, a minimum of one additional faculty member from the Rhetoric/ Composition area, three faculty from non-Rhetoric/Composition fields, one Career NTTF or post-doctoral instructor teaching regularly in the Composition Program. Seven graduate students: the three Assistant Directors of Composition and four other graduate students, two of whom are currently teaching Composition.

###### Functions:

- (a) The Director is given charge of administering the Composition Program by the University.
- (b) In addition to consulting with the Director on substantive matters, the committee shall advise on:
  - (1) establishing guidelines for course content;

- (2) processing WR course changes in consultation with the Department;
- (3) processing changes in graduate Composition teacher-training courses and submitting these to the Graduate Committee for approval;
- (4) establishing policies for screening entrance into the Department's Composition Teacher-Training program;
- (5) selecting composition texts;
- (6) acting as liaison between the Director and the teaching staff, including classroom visits for evaluating teaching;
- (7) administering waiver examinations and petitions.

## **2. Curriculum**

### **Membership:**

Four faculty, two TTF and two Career NTTF, including the Director of Undergraduate Studies, Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies, two instructional faculty, and one Graduate student.

### **Functions:**

- (a) to process course changes in consultation with the Department;
- (b) on courses involving graduate credit, to notify the Graduate Committee of the proposed course changes and get its approval;
- (c) to review Department offerings and requirements, including undergraduate major and minor requirements.

## **3. Diversity**

### **Membership:**

Eight members total: six faculty, half from Composition, half from English, reflecting the disciplinary and demographic diversity of the department; two Graduate students. The committee may add up to two additional undergraduates with Composition or English classroom experience if the committee has substantive work for these members. Co-Chairs shall be one from Composition and one from English. The Co-Chairs serve as Diversity Liaison with the larger University community. At least one faculty member should be drawn from each of the following groups: Assistant Professors, Associate Professors, Professors, Career NTTF.

### **Functions:**

To work toward the University of Oregon's stated goal that diversity is a matter of institutional priority and an integral component of academic success. The

Diversity Committee understands the concept of diversity in the broadest terms, including, but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, class, and other areas of social equality. Further, equity and inclusion serve as the lens through which the committee measures the work of the English Department and the Composition Program. The Diversity Committee works toward the goals of a department and university climate that is welcoming of divergent voices, particularly when those voices have been underrepresented in the institution and the community at large.

Following the University of Oregon Diversity Plan, the Diversity Committee understands that diversity is a goal of the entire university community. The committee will work toward fulfilling the University's diversity goals at the department level, as stated in the Diversity Plan. To these ends, the Diversity Committee will develop concrete strategies for improving demographic and research diversity in the areas of:

- (a) working to create and sustain an inclusive, accessible, and equitable department climate
- (b) recruiting and retaining demographically diverse faculty and staff
- (c) supporting diversity-related research and classroom practices as they are broadly conceived
- (d) recruiting and retaining demographically diverse graduate and undergraduate students

The diversity committee will implement these strategies in a manner that is consistent with UO policies and state and federal law.

#### **4. Graduate Appointments**

##### **Membership:**

Seven faculty, including Department Head (nonvoting except in case of ties), Associate Department Head, Director of Composition, Associate Director of Composition, Director of Graduate Studies, and two other tenure-track faculty.

##### **Functions:**

- (a) to recommend the most qualified applicants from all graduate degree programs for assistantships, consistent with memorandums of understanding with other university departments, programs, and units. Names of those who were not selected for assistantships and fellowships shall be retained on a preference list to be reactivated each time screening processes occur. The names on this list will be made available to faculty and students upon request, as well as the procedures by which the applicants were evaluated and selected;
- (b) to publicize criteria for appointment and reappointment and to review



- automatically the termination of appointments and petitions for extension;
- (c) to notify the Department of all appointment recommendations, when made, and of subsequent action by the Head when taken.

## **5. Graduate**

### Membership:

The Director of Graduate Studies and seven tenure-track faculty regularly reflecting the disciplinary diversity of the Department; two graduate students (post-Orals), who participate in all business of the Committee except business involving the evaluation of other graduate students or graduate applicants.

### Functions:

- (a) to review dossiers and select the most qualified applicants for entrance to MA and Ph.D. programs;\*
- (b) to administer Departmental policy with respect to all Departmental graduate programs;
- (c) to process petitions from graduate students;
- (d) to provide for the administration of graduate examinations;
- (e) to recommend changes in policy to the Department, by introduction of motions in Department meeting, or by advice to the Head, Department Council, and Curriculum Committee;
- (f) to provide a channel for grievance procedures.

\*The Graduate Committee will conduct the graduate admissions process under the guidance of the Director of Graduate Studies. Given the diverse areas of study in the department, including fields outside literary studies, such as cinema studies, folklore, and rhetoric, the Committee is charged with identifying qualified applicants in all areas of the department, insofar as that goal is consistent with admitting highly qualified students. Unpredictable variations in the number of applications in each specialty from year to year may affect this mandate. Part of the committee's responsibility shall include consultation about applicant files with faculty members in relevant areas of expertise if these areas are not represented on the committee.

## **6. Six-Year Post-Tenure Review**

### Membership:

Three tenured full professors of the English Department, elected by the tenure-track faculty for a two-year term. Faculty members scheduled for review within two years are ineligible for election to this committee.

### Function:

To conduct reviews of eligible tenured faculty each academic year; the primary function of post-tenure review is faculty development. University policy states that “a post-tenure review will be required at least every three years” for every tenured faculty person except those who are near retirement. University policy also states that “a review for promotion shall be substituted for the post-tenure review.”

After conducting the review according to the procedure outlined by the current Collective Bargaining Agreement, the committee will prepare a report assessing the faculty member’s performance; subsequently, the Head of Department will add his or her own evaluation of the faculty member’s performance to the evaluation file. The faculty member under review will be given the opportunity to review the file and add responsive material or information. Then the total evaluation file will be forwarded to the Head of the Department, who will place it in the faculty member's personnel file and will forward copies to the Dean of Arts and Sciences.

## **7. Non-Tenure Track Faculty (NTTF) Committee**

### Membership:

Six members: the Associate Department Head, the Assistant Department Head, the Director of Composition or an Associate Director of Composition, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and two other faculty, at least one Career NTTF at the Senior I or II rank.

### Functions:

- (a) to advise the Department Head on NTTF policy
- (b) to conduct an evaluation of each Career NTTF during the period of his/her appointment
- (c) to administer promotion reviews for NTTF who are eligible for promotion to Senior Instructor I and II or Senior Lecturer I and II
- (d) to propose adjunct or career appointments (or elimination of appointments) as appropriate
- (e) to conduct national searches to fill approved Career NTTF appointments.

Recommendations of the NTTF Committee will be advisory to the Department Head.

## **F. Occasional and Ad Hoc Committees**

### **1. Search Committees**

#### Membership:

For tenure-track positions, three TTF, and one Graduate Student at ABD status whenever possible and in good academic standing. For non-tenure-track positions, three faculty, at least one of whom must be tenure track; the others may be TTF or Career NTTF; and one Graduate Student at ABD status whenever possible and in good academic standing. The graduate student role is a non-voting, consulting, representative position; the graduate student member shall only be responsible for reading the files of the short-listed interviewees. The committee shall be appointed by the Department Head, typically in consultation with faculty in the research area of the proposed hire.

#### Functions:

To conduct searches for candidates for all full-time, instructional vacancies within the department. The search committee will develop language for the advertisement of vacant positions; will strive to encourage applications from traditionally underrepresented groups through intentional outreach and efforts at inclusion and in consultation with the Diversity Committee; will conduct the screening and interview of candidates; will host on-campus visits for finalists; and will submit a hiring recommendation to be considered at a department meeting. Each faculty member of the committee will have one vote in deciding the ranking of candidates for the hiring recommendation.

### **2. Ad Hoc Committees**

#### Membership:

To be determined by the Head of Department, in consultation with the Department Council.

#### Function:

To address specific problems or tasks not adequately covered within the regular remit of any of the standing committees.

## **IV. Amendments**

This Constitution may be amended at a Department meeting by a vote of two-thirds of those eligible to vote. Proposed amendments must be circulated in writing at least one month ahead of the Department meeting at which the vote is to be taken, except in extraordinary cases, which will require a departmental vote approving accelerated consideration.



## MEETING ATTENDANCE PRACTICES<sup>1</sup>

KINDS and/or PARTS OF MEETINGS	ATTENDANCE			VOTING		
	TTF <sup>2</sup>	NTTF	Grad	TTF <sup>1</sup>	Career NTTF <sup>3</sup>	Grad
Department Meetings	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
• Disc. of undergrad curriculum	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
• Disc. of grad. curriculum	✓	✓	✓	✓		
• Department Head Selection	✓	✓		✓	✓	
• Meetings to determine area of faculty hire	✓	✓	✓	✓		
• TTF hire decisions	✓	✓	✓ <sup>4</sup>	✓		
• Career NTTF hire decisions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
• Research Postdoctoral Fellowship decisions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Amendments to the Department Constitution and approval of governance policies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
TTF Tenure/Promotion meeting <sup>5</sup>	✓			✓		
NTTF Promotion meeting <sup>6</sup>	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Committee <sup>7</sup>	MOC <sup>8</sup>	MOC	MOC	MOC	MOC	MOC
Merit Review, Professorial	MOC					
Merit Review, NTTF		MOC		MOC	MOC	
NTTF Review	MOC	MOC		MOC	MOC	
Oral Exam	MOC	MOC		MOC	MOC	
Dissertation Defense	✓	✓	✓	MOC	MOC	

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- 1 All TTF and Career NTTF are eligible to participate in faculty governance as stipulated in this chart, even when they are on leave, but they must be present for deliberations at meetings in order to vote on policies and faculty hires (unless they have made arrangements to vote by absentee ballot because of a conflict with other University business). Those voting by absentee ballot must provide documentation of the conflict to the head and consult with the appropriate committee chairs about the committee recommendations in advance of the meeting.
  - 2 Includes faculty in the Tenure Reduction Program during a term in which they are teaching. TRP faculty who have reduced tenure may not vote on TTF personnel decisions. Their voting rights will parallel NTTF voting rights when they are on contract. TRP are operating with reduced tenure when they enter the 600 hours program.
  - 3 NTTF must be on payroll to vote during the term that a vote is held.
  - 4 Graduate students may attend the graduate student search committee member's report and recommendation and participate in the graduate student portion of the discussion.
  - 5 Only faculty at or above the rank the candidate aspires to may attend tenure and/or promotion meetings.
  - 6 Only faculty at or above the rank the candidate aspires to may attend promotion meetings.
  - 7 Includes standing, ad hoc, and department council; non-MOC may request permission from committee chair to attend specific meetings. Graduate members of search committees are non-voting.
  - 8 MOC = Member of committee

## **PROCEDURES FOR RECOMMENDING NEW DEPARTMENT HEAD**

*Adopted at February 2006 Department Meeting*

1. **Memo distributed early in Winter term (after CAS Dean's visit with Faculty) by Chair of Department Council calling for nominations.**
  - a. All full and associate professors are eligible for nomination. Candidates may self-nominate or be nominated by others. Full, Associate, and Assistant Professors and Career NTTF may nominate.
  - b. Deadline for Nominations: One week after call.**
2. Upon nomination, nominees are notified of their opportunity to withdraw. Withdrawals should be reported to the Council.
3. **A list of candidates distributed to the Department (2 days after deadline for nominations).** The CVs of the candidates are made available at the Department Secretary's desk for any faculty member who wishes to look at them.
4. Candidates should meet separately with the following groups to discuss the headship and the department: graduate students, NTTF, assistant professors.
5. **Executive Department Meeting (early in March).** Executive meeting of department (TTF and Career NTTF). Each candidate will make a statement about the department and its headship; a half hour for questions and answers will follow. No candidate will be present during any other candidate's statement and question and answer period. The Faculty will then discuss all the candidates, who shall be excused from this portion of the meeting as well. Faculty on official business who are unable to attend the meeting can meet with a member of the Council, who will summarize this discussion.
6. **Meet to vote (one week after Executive Meeting – see #5 above).** At the beginning of this meeting, the graduate student member of the Department Council will report on the graduate students' discussions with the candidates. After this report and discussion, the graduate student will leave, and a vote will be taken; ballots will be written and signed. If there are more than two candidates, applicable voting procedures for searches will be in effect. Arrangements will be made for faculty on leave or with other duties to submit ballots.
7. The faculty members of the Department Council (excluding any member standing for election) will verify the ballots, tally the results, and rank the candidates by vote.
8. **Ranking and tabulation distributed to Department the day after the vote is taken.**
9. **Ranking and tabulation reported to Dean the day after the vote is taken.** The signed ballots will not be available to the next department head. After being counted, they will be kept by the Manager of Administrative Services until the department head is appointed by the dean, and after that they will be destroyed.

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