

BYLAWS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO
Approved by the Department Faculty on February 6, 2009
Approved by the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts on February 9, 2010

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I. Bylaws

A. Authorization:

Department bylaws are authorized by section 8 of the bylaws of the College of Liberal Arts, and by Section 6 of the bylaws of the University of Nevada, Reno.

B. Scope:

The bylaws provide for the administrative structure and personnel policies and procedures for the department of English, and shall be consistent with the college and the university bylaws, the NSHE Code, the laws of the state of Nevada and the United States, and Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity policies.

C. Adoption:

These bylaws shall be adopted and in full force upon: 1) a secret ballot in which two-thirds of the active faculty (as defined in section III A. below) must vote and two-thirds of those voting must vote yes, and (2) approval of the dean of the college and the president.

D. Amendment:

Any member of the department's continuing faculty may propose amendments to these bylaws. Proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the chair and shall be distributed to the continuing faculty at least five working days before they are discussed in a faculty meeting. Voting shall be by mail ballot. An amendment shall be in full force upon: (1) a secret ballot in which two-thirds of the active faculty (as defined in section III.A. below) of the department must vote and two-thirds of those voting must vote yes and (2) approval of the dean of the college and the president.

E. Suspension:

Any member of the continuing faculty may propose that a portion of the bylaws be suspended. Any such proposal shall be submitted in writing to the chair and distributed to the continuing faculty at least five working days before it is discussed in a faculty meeting. Voting shall be by mail ballot. For the proposal to be approved, two-thirds of active faculty of the department must vote and two-thirds of those voting must vote yes.

F. Interpretation:

Should one-third of the continuing faculty question the interpretation of these bylaws, the department may seek a ruling from the dean of the college. Should a majority of the continuing faculty disagree with the dean's ruling, the department may appeal to the provost for a final ruling.

II. Mission

The mission of the Department of English shall be to pursue and disseminate research into language, literature and culture, with equal priority devoted to teaching and scholarship, and secondary priority to service and related professional activities.

III. Faculty

A. Composition of the Department

1. The Department of English is composed of all continuing faculty members with a primary assignment in the department of .50 FTE or more as described in Section 22 of the UNR Bylaws. Each shall have an equal vote in department elections, in hiring decisions, and on matters of policy. For matters of voting, “active faculty” includes all continuing faculty not currently on formal leave or sabbatical. Unless otherwise specified in these bylaws, a simple majority vote of the active faculty shall be sufficient to approve matters brought before the continuing faculty for a vote. Faculty on formal leave or sabbatical may vote should they choose to do so and in doing so will be considered active faculty for the purposes of computing a simple majority vote.
2. As needed to carry out its mission, the department will hire contingent faculty on one-year contracts and/or instructors on letters of appointment. Individuals in these positions shall not have a vote in department elections, in the hiring of continuing faculty, or on matters of policy.

B. Responsibilities and Role Statements

The responsibilities of each faculty member “shall consist of an assigned combination of teaching, scholarly and creative activity, and service or professional development” (CLA bylaws section 18). Each faculty member will have a statement of professional responsibilities or role statement that documents these responsibilities and serves as the basis for annual evaluation (as specified in CLA bylaws section 20). Faculty assignments typically reflect the priorities in the department’s mission statement. To carry out the necessary work of the department, continuing faculty are expected to serve actively on at least one permanent or standing departmental committee annually unless they are on leave. Continuing faculty are also expected to serve on all tenure, retention, and promotion committees for which they are eligible. Under certain circumstances such as research grants, fellowships, and administrative assignments, faculty may negotiate variations on these norms as part of their annual role statements, but such variations should be tied to the life of the project or assignment and will not affect the department’s standards for tenure and promotion. The revised role statement must include responsibilities in all areas.

C. Meetings

The continuing faculty shall meet at least once per semester, at a time scheduled so far as possible not to conflict with faculty teaching schedules. It shall meet as necessary during the fall and spring semesters to discuss hiring priorities, budget, annual evaluation, curriculum, and other matters of policy. Any member of the continuing faculty may, upon submission of a written request to the Planning Committee, ask that discussion of a department issue be placed on the agenda for a forthcoming department meeting. Any member of the continuing faculty may, upon submission of a written request to the Planning Committee, have the chair call a department meeting to consider any department issue. Meetings shall occur only on contract days.

1. Agendas for faculty meetings shall be distributed five working days in advance. Annotated meeting agendas recording attendance and formal decisions made by faculty vote shall be circulated after department meetings, approved formally at the next meeting, and kept on file in the department office.
2. A faculty member unable to attend a meeting may ask another member of the continuing faculty to vote on his or her behalf by proxy. Written proxy authorization must be submitted at the faculty meeting to which it applies.
3. Faculty meetings shall be run according to the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

D. Hiring

1. Continuing faculty: once the dean has approved the department's request to fill a replacement or new continuing faculty position, the chair shall appoint a search committee from the continuing faculty to conduct a search for the best applicants to fill the position. The committee may include a nonvoting graduate student member. The committee shall advertise, screen and select applicants for interviews, make recommendations to the department concerning finalists to be brought to campus for interview, and then recommend a candidate for the position. The department's vote on candidates shall be by secret ballot. To be hired, a candidate must be supported by two-thirds of the active faculty.
2. Contingent faculty: once the dean has approved the request to fill a contingent position, the chair shall appoint a search committee from the continuing faculty and contingent faculty to conduct a search for the best applicants to fill the position. The committee may include a nonvoting graduate student member. The committee shall advertise, screen and select applicants for interview, conduct phone interviews, and recommend a candidate for the position to the chair. These hiring decisions need not be voted on by the active faculty. The department shall not hire an individual in a contingent position for more than a total of three years.
3. Letters of appointment: the chair shall hire instructors on letters of appointment and do so in consultation with the Core Writing Director if the instructors will teach first-year writing courses. These appointments need not be approved by the active

faculty.

IV. Administration and Committees:

A. Department Chair

In accordance with Section 3, Chapter 6, Paragraph 62 of the UNR Bylaws, chairs of departments “as administrators shall be directly responsible to their supervisor or supervisors for the operation of their departments.” In accordance with Chapter III, section 13.A of the Bylaws of the College of Liberal Arts, “Chairs and directors shall be responsible to the dean for implementing college policies and procedures, and responsible to faculty for implementing policies and procedures mandated by department or unit bylaws.” The department chair shall be an ex officio member of all department committees. The department chair shall discuss curricular, scheduling, budgeting, and planning issues with the Planning Committee. The chair will work with the Planning Committee to produce a budget that the faculty will then review and discuss. He or she shall be responsible for administering all department budgets.

1. Appointment: The continuing faculty shall recommend a candidate or candidates for department chair to the dean of the college, who in turn recommends a candidate to the provost, for final appointment by the president. The department chair serves for a period of three years. When a vacancy occurs in the office, the Planning Committee shall ask three members of the continuing faculty to form an election board. The board shall seek nominations from the continuing faculty and then distribute ballots to the continuing faculty for a confidential written vote. The nominee receiving the majority of votes shall be recommended to the dean. In the case of three successive tie votes, or votes which do not produce a majority candidate, the names of all the candidates for chair shall be forwarded to the dean. Under normal circumstances a chair may serve no more than two terms in succession.

2. Removal: Should one-third of the continuing faculty at any time desire that the chair step down, they may upon written notification (five working days) to the continuing faculty call a meeting to vote upon the question. Should a majority of the continuing faculty in secret ballot vote affirmatively, the recommendation shall be made to the dean. Upon approval by the dean, new nominations shall be made and an election held.

3. Faculty Recourse: In the event any faculty member objects to a decision or action or omission on the part of the chair, she or he may submit the case to the dean, providing the faculty member (1) submits to the chair a copy of any written objection, and (2) notifies the chair of any interview with the dean on the issue.

4. Temporary Chair: Should the chair need to be absent for a brief period, he or she shall appoint a temporary chair. Should the chair be absent for an extended period of no more than one year, the department shall recommend an acting chair to the

dean following procedures outlined in IV.A.1. The period for which the chair is absent shall not count as part of his or her term.

B. Directors

The department's instructional programs shall be administered by three directors: the Director of Core Writing, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and the Director of Graduate Studies. The directors work in consultation with the department chair and serve on the Planning Committee. Each director shall present a report to the department at a meeting prior to the end of the spring semester. Each director shall be elected by the continuing faculty to a term of three years. When a vacancy occurs in the office, the Planning Committee shall ask three members of the continuing faculty to form an election board. The board shall seek nominations from the continuing faculty and then distribute ballots to the continuing faculty for a confidential written vote. The nominee receiving the majority of votes shall be appointed by the chair. Should no candidate receive a majority, a runoff election shall be held between the two candidates who received the most votes. Should any of the directors be absent or unable to perform the duties of his or her position for an extended period not longer than a year, the department chair, in consultation with the Planning Committee, shall appoint an acting director. A period of one year for which the director is absent shall not count as part of his or her term. Under normal circumstances a director may serve no more than two terms in succession in one of these positions.

1. The Director of Core Writing has responsibility for implementing the Core Writing Program. He or she shall further be responsible for supervising the teaching of graduate teaching assistants and instructors hired on letters of appointment, and for other duties related to the supervision and administration of the university English requirement. The Director of Core Writing shall be either a regular or ex officio member of all committees whose business is relevant to the first-year writing program and shall chair the Core Writing Committee.
2. The Director of Undergraduate Studies has responsibility for implementing the undergraduate program in English. She or he shall be either a regular or ex officio member of all committees whose business is relevant to the undergraduate program and shall chair the Undergraduate Committee. He or she shall act as departmental liaison to undergraduate students in the department.
3. The Director of Graduate Studies has responsibility for implementing the graduate program in English. The director shall be either a regular or ex officio member of all committees whose business is relevant to the graduate program and shall chair the Graduate Committee. He or she shall further be responsible, in consultation with the Graduate Committee, for overseeing the appointment of graduate students to teaching assistantships. She or he shall act as departmental liaison to graduate students in the department.

C. Committees

The department shall have permanent, standing, and temporary committees. Permanent committees include the Planning, Core Writing, Undergraduate, Graduate, Personnel, Tenure, Retention, and Promotion committees.

1. The Planning Committee shall be responsible for departmental planning, as required by the college and university, programmatic issues, and coordinating the work of the department's permanent, standing, and temporary committees. The committee shall be composed of the department chair and the directors of Core Writing, Undergraduate Studies, and Graduate Studies. At regular intervals set by the university, the Chair, working closely with the Planning Committee, will initiate and coordinate departmental program reviews. The Planning Committee will be assisted in this by other permanent committees and individuals as appropriate.
2. The Core Writing Committee shall be responsible for reviewing and revising the department's first-year writing course offerings, policies and procedures, and curriculum; for assessing the Core Writing Program; and for making recommendations to the faculty concerning these and related issues. The committee shall be chaired by the Core Writing Director, and shall include current Core Writing Program officers (e.g., assistant directors and curriculum coordinators) as members. Other members of the committee shall be appointed from the continuing faculty by the department chair, in consultation with the director, in order to ensure as far as possible (1) continuity of experience; (2) a representative mix of faculty ranks and areas of expertise; and (3) opportunities for breadth of service across the department.
3. The Undergraduate Committee shall be responsible for reviewing the department's undergraduate degree programs, course offerings, policies, and procedures; for assessing the undergraduate program; for administering the department's undergraduate scholarships and awards; and for making recommendations to the faculty concerning these and related issues. The committee shall be chaired by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Members of the committee shall be appointed from the continuing faculty by the department chair, in consultation with the director, in order to ensure as far as possible (1) continuity of experience; (2) a representative mix of faculty ranks and areas of expertise; and (3) opportunities for breadth of service across the department.
4. The Graduate Committee shall be responsible for reviewing the department's graduate degree programs, course offerings, policies, and procedures; for assessing the graduate programs; and for making recommendations to the graduate faculty of the department. Members of the committee shall be appointed from among the graduate faculty of the department by the chair, in consultation with the director, in order to ensure as far as possible (1) continuity of experience; (2) a representative mix of faculty ranks and areas of expertise; and (3) opportunities for breadth of service across the department. The committee shall evaluate the needs of new graduate students, advise the graduate faculty and students regarding examinations and other requirements, and help evaluate the progress of graduate students toward degrees. The committee shall determine graduate admissions and, in consultation with the Director of Core Writing, shall recommend to the chair on the appointment

and reappointment of teaching assistants.

5. The Personnel Committee shall be composed of the department chair, who shall chair the committee, and four members of the continuing faculty, three tenured and one non-tenure-track faculty member who has been retained. Committee members shall be appointed by the chair to two-year terms, on a staggered schedule. All continuing faculty who have been tenured or retained shall serve on this committee in turn. The committee shall evaluate the performance of each faculty member annually in conformity with section 20 of the CLA bylaws and section 40 of the university bylaws. Each member shall be asked to submit materials relevant to teaching, research, and professional service during the year under review. On the basis of this evidence, the committee shall evaluate each faculty member's performance and make a corresponding recommendation regarding merit. The evaluation in all areas, including the overall evaluation, shall be determined by majority vote of the Personnel Committee. The committee must rank or group its evaluations.

6. The Tenure Committee shall consist of the tenured faculty and shall be chaired by the department chair. The committee shall make recommendations on tenure and on the reappointment of probationary tenure-track faculty members; the chair shall forward these recommendations to the dean with any minority reports or dissenting opinion. Every probationary tenure-track member of the faculty shall be assessed each year. The committee shall evaluate the progress toward tenure of each probationary tenure-track faculty member each year and conduct the third-year review of each tenure-track faculty member, as required in section 21 of the CLA bylaws. The committee shall formally evaluate the application for tenure of each probationary tenure-track faculty member, as specified in section 22 of the CLA bylaws.

7. The Retention Committee shall consist of all non-probationary faculty members and shall be chaired by the department chair. The committee shall make recommendations on the retention of non-tenure-track faculty; these recommendations shall be forwarded to the dean with any minority reports or dissenting opinion of the chair that may be offered. Every probationary non-tenure-track faculty member shall be assessed each year. In the third probationary year, the candidate's progress toward retention will be thoroughly reviewed by both the department and by the College Personnel Committee, as specified in section 21 of the CLA bylaws. The chair shall forward to the dean with any minority reports or dissenting opinion of the chair that may be offered. The committee shall formally evaluate the application for retention of each probationary non-tenure-track faculty member, as specified in section 23 of the CLA bylaws.

8. Promotion Committees shall be constituted as follows: for promotion to Rank IV, all faculty members at Rank IV; for promotion to Rank III, all faculty members at Rank III and above; for promotion to Rank 0 (IV), all faculty members at Rank IV or Rank 0 (IV); for promotion to Rank 0 (III), all faculty members at Rank III or Rank 0 (III) and above. They shall be chaired by the department chair, if she or he is eligible to serve (otherwise he or she shall be an ex officio non-voting member). The

committees shall formally evaluate application for promotion, as specified in sections 22 and 23 of the CLA bylaws. Promotion Committees shall make recommendations which shall be forwarded to the dean with any minority reports or dissenting opinion of the chair that may be offered. Each faculty member shall be eligible to be considered for promotion each year and may submit information relevant to this consideration to the appropriate promotion committee.

9. Standing Committees and Temporary Committees shall be responsible for the matters assigned to them. The former shall include field committees, to address curricular, advising, and research issues in the various specializations within our degree programs and discipline. The latter shall include ad hoc committees, to address specific issues such as bylaws revision. Members of such committees shall be appointed from among the continuing faculty of the department by the chair, in consultation with the Planning Committee, in order to ensure as far as possible (1) continuity of experience; (2) a representative mix of faculty ranks and, when appropriate, areas of expertise; and (3) opportunities for breadth of service across the department.

V. Personnel Policies and Procedures

All personnel actions and decisions shall conform to the requirements of the department, college, and university bylaws, the NSHE Code, and Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity policies.

A. Annual Evaluation

The performance of each faculty member shall be evaluated annually by the Personnel Committee in conformity with section 20 of the CLA bylaws and section 40 of the university bylaws. Each member shall be asked to submit materials relevant to teaching, research, and professional service during the year under review. A faculty member shall have the right to read the evaluation before signing it and the right to meet with the department chair regarding it. Annual evaluation helps to gauge progress toward tenure/retention or promotion but a favorable evaluation does not necessarily mean that all the requirements for tenure/retention or promotion are being met. A summary showing the distribution of faculty evaluations for the year shall be available to evaluated faculty upon request.

1. Teaching: faculty must submit syllabi and student course evaluations from all courses taught. Student evaluations should be administered following departmental guidelines. Faculty must also submit a list of all graduate, honors thesis, and similar advisory committees, with notations regarding each student's progress during the year. Faculty may also submit evidence of teaching awards, pedagogical grants, and other teaching-related activity.
2. Research: faculty must submit copies of any published work to be credited that year. Professional publications other than books may be credited once, either when accepted or published. Book-length works should be credited three times, usually in the year formally accepted, the year published, and the year following publication. Works of textual editing, edited collections, and co-authored book-length works will

be evaluated and credited on a case-by-case basis. Manuscripts shall be regarded as accepted from date of formal acceptance of the final manuscript by the publisher. Faculty should clarify the status of materials when they are submitted. The relevant distinctions include: work in progress, work in circulation, accepted work, published work, reprinted work, work previously credited. Continuing non-tenure-track faculty must submit evidence of professional development activities to be credited that year. Faculty may also submit evidence such as research awards, conference papers, and grant proposals.

3. Service: faculty must submit a list of service roles and assignments, with brief descriptions of work done and, as appropriate, copies of non-confidential documents completed in the role.

B. Tenure and Promotion: Tenure-track Faculty

1. Acting under the provisions of the Code and department, college, and university bylaws, Tenure and Promotion Committees shall evaluate the performance of tenure-track faculty in the areas of teaching, research, and service. Such committees shall make qualitative judgments in reviewing each of these areas.

a. Teaching: A record of effective teaching as suggested by course syllabi, written evaluations submitted by students, visit reports by peers, and service on graduate committees, all evidence assembled according to uniform methods. In addition, candidates may present other relevant evidence.

b. Research: Achievement in research or creative work, necessarily including peer-reviewed publication at the national level. Achievement is evidenced by published books or articles, other professional publications, grants and awards, and papers read at professional meetings. Professional publications include but are not limited to scholarly articles, essays, fiction, poetry, and reviews. Manuscripts shall be regarded as accepted from date of formal acceptance of the final manuscript by the publisher.

c. Service: Active participation in department, college, university, and/or national service. Involvement in professionally related community service and other professional activities shall be considered.

2. Criteria for Tenure: The faculty member shall demonstrate a record of achievement in teaching, scholarly and/or creative work, and service as defined in CLA bylaws section 18 and consistent with the faculty member's role statement and the department's mission. That record shall include scholarly and/or creative work published prior to the faculty member's appointment at the university. The Tenure Committee must evaluate the candidate as "excellent" in teaching or research and at least "satisfactory" in the other two areas.

3. Criteria for Promotion to Assistant Professor (Rank II): To be eligible for promotion, a faculty member in Rank I shall have obtained a terminal degree in an appropriate professional field and have demonstrated potential for achievement in

teaching, research, and service.

4. Criteria for Promotion to Associate Professor (Rank III): To be eligible for promotion, a faculty member in Rank II shall have established “a substantial record of achievement in teaching, scholarly and/or creative work, and service” (CLA bylaws 22.E.2). The Promotion Committee shall obtain external reviews of the faculty member’s achievement in research. The committee must evaluate the candidate as “excellent” in teaching or research and at least “satisfactory” in the other two areas.

5. Criteria for Promotion to Professor (Rank IV): To be eligible for promotion, a faculty member in Rank III shall have established a national reputation through “sustained record of excellence in a professional field” since promotion to Rank III. “The record shall document publications or creative work judged significant by peers in the field; distinguished professional service; and distinction in teaching and related activities. The record may document exceptional administrative achievement as well” (CLA bylaws 22.E.3). The Promotion Committee shall obtain external reviews of the faculty member’s achievement in research.

C. Retention and Promotion: Non-tenure-track Faculty

1. Acting under the provisions of the Code and department, college, and university bylaws, Retention and Promotion Committees shall evaluate the performance of non-tenure-track faculty in continuing positions in the primary area of teaching, and in professional development and service. Such committees shall make qualitative judgments in reviewing each of these areas.

a. Teaching: A record of effective teaching as suggested by course syllabi, written evaluations submitted by students, and visit reports by peers, all evidence assembled according to uniform methods administered by the department. In addition, candidates may present other relevant evidence.

b. Professional Development: A record of achievement in the following areas: presentation of lectures or readings outside the classroom; reading of papers or membership on panels at professional meetings; publication of scholarly or creative work (including work published prior to the faculty member’s appointment at the university); development of new areas of teaching and scholarly expertise that results in publications, presentations, or new courses.

c. Service: Active participation in department, college, university, and/or national service. Involvement in professionally related community service and other professional activities shall be considered.

2. Criteria for Retention: The faculty member eligible for retention shall demonstrate a record of achievement in teaching, professional development, and service as defined in CLA bylaws section 18 and consistent with the faculty member’s role statement and the department’s mission. The Retention Committee

shall obtain external reviews of the faculty member's achievement in teaching, which is the major area of responsibility, and either professional development or service

3. Criteria for Promotion to Rank 0(III): To be eligible for promotion, a faculty member in Rank 0(II) shall have established "a substantial record of achievement in his or her major area of responsibility" (CLA bylaws 23.D.2). The Promotion Committee shall obtain external reviews of the faculty member's achievement in teaching, which is the major area of responsibility, and either professional development or service.

4. Criteria for Promotion to Rank 0(IV): To be eligible for promotion, a faculty member in Rank 0(III) shall have established a "sustained record of excellence in his or her major area of responsibility" since promotion to Rank 0(III) (CLA bylaws 23.D.3). Professional development since promotion to Rank 0(III) shall consist of achievement in at least two of the areas listed above (20.C.1.b.). The Promotion Committee shall obtain external reviews of the faculty member's achievement in teaching, which is the major area of responsibility, and either professional development or service.