

Department of English
University of Texas at Austin
Guidelines

I. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of five professors, two associate professors, and one assistant professor is responsible for departmental policy and decisions regarding faculty salaries, promotions, terminations, recruitment, and appointments--that is, the usual functions of a Budget Council.

- A. The Chair of the Department, who has a vote in Executive Committee decisions, calls and presides at its sessions. The Associate Chair also is an ex officio member of the Executive Committee, and has a vote.
- B. The Chair may appoint two additional members of the Executive Committee from the tenured ranks. Their term shall be for one year. Reappointment for another year is possible at the discretion of the Chair, but the appointees are then ineligible for election or appointment for one or two years, however long they served.
- C. Professors serve two-year terms, and are elected on a staggered basis so that no more than three begin serving in any one year. Associate professors and assistant professors serve one-year terms. No one of any rank is eligible for consecutive terms of service; at least one full term must intervene before he/she becomes eligible again.
- D. A quorum shall consist of seven members (ex officio members included). A majority of those present shall prevail. The summer quorum shall be one-half plus one of those in residence.
- E. Minutes of the Executive Committee meetings shall be taken by one of its members. Votes concerning personnel decisions are to be considered strictly confidential.
- F. Associate professor and assistant professor members may participate in the discussions about, but may not vote formally on, salary matters affecting their own and higher ranks, or on matters affecting promotion from or continued appointment in their own rank and higher ranks.

II. Executive Committee Policies

- A. The Executive Committee is empowered to make recommendations to the Dean regarding modified service and emeritus status.
- B. Persons who wish to be considered for promotion may send a written request to the Chair.
- C. The Chair, rather than the Executive Committee, will make salary recommendations for Executive Committee members.
- D. Every third year (as required by The Handbook of Operating Procedures) the Governance Committee shall review the operation of the Executive Committee and recommend to the Department its continuation, modification, or replacement.

III. Eligibility for Executive Committee Membership

Tenured and tenure-track members of the Department's professorial ranks who hold full-time university appointments are eligible to serve on the Executive Committee. Faculty members on joint appointment must have at least a fifty percent budgetary position in the Department. Faculty members on visiting or temporary appointment may not serve. The Chair shall rule on any complications regarding eligibility.

- A. Faculty members who begin leaves-of-absence or who retire become ineligible for continued service on the Executive Committee on the date when their departure commences. No one should stand for election who cannot serve at least twelve months of the potential term. Assistant professors whose tenure-track appointments are scheduled to terminate at the end of a year shall not be eligible to serve during that year.
- B. Members of the Department with heavy duties such as those of the Graduate Studies Chair may request that their names be withdrawn from the list of eligible candidates.
- C. Assistant professors are not eligible to stand for election if their potential term would include their fifth year of full-time U.T. service, as computed by the Chair, or if they are requesting an early promotion.
- D. Those faculty members who have been notified of promotion at the time of an election shall be classified on the ballot by their new rank.

IV. Voting in Elections

All full-time members of the continuing English faculty (as detailed in the budget) are eligible to vote in Executive Committee elections. Members who are on leave shall be permitted to vote.

- A. Members of the Executive Committee shall be chosen in elections held as soon as possible after the beginning of the Spring semester. New terms begin on March 1st. If replacement members are needed, a special election will be held at the beginning of the Fall semester.
- B. After the elimination of ineligible and withdrawn names, the Elections Officer will hold a nominating round in order to select one-half of the eligible names within each rank as final candidates. Each voter will mark the names of up to half of the candidates in every rank. Ballots marking more than half of the names within any rank will be discarded for that rank. No order of preference will be shown by the voter in this nominating round.
- C. In the final round of the election, every voter will receive three ballots, each listing the names of the remaining nominees in a particular professorial rank. The voter will number the candidates within each rank in order of preference, assigning the highest number (derived from the total number of candidates on that ballot) to the most-favored person, and continuing down to give number "1" to the least-desired candidate. Ballots omitting some numbers will be counted. The candidate or candidates with the highest number of total points in each academic rank will be declared elected. A tie vote requires a special run-off election for those two candidates.
- D. Vacancies occurring between elections shall be filled by runners-up in the previous election, in the order of votes received, unless the Fall or Spring Executive Committee election will take place within two months.
- E. If unusual problems arise concerning Executive Committee elections, the departmental Chair shall be joined by the Elections Officer and the Chair of the Governance Committee in resolving the question.

V. Departmental Meetings

The Chair may call a full departmental meeting whenever it seems advisable to inform faculty members about significant developments or in instances when the Executive Committee wishes to seek the Department's advice. It is customary for the Department to convene twice a year. An agenda of the meeting will accompany the Chair's call. New undergraduate courses or section topics or other changes in the major and curriculum must be discussed and approved by majority vote at such meetings. Votes of continuing faculty at these meetings are advisory to the Executive Committee and the Chair concerning matters of salaries, promotions, terminations, recruitment, appointments, or other areas normally within the Committee's or Chair's responsibilities.

- A. The meetings shall be conducted by simple procedures of motions, amendments, and substitute amendments, as explained and ruled by the Chair. Mail ballots may be stipulated (by simple majority vote or by a ruling of the Chair) for any major issue.
- B. A quorum shall be forty percent of the voting members of the department as detailed in the budget, but the chair may rule at the meeting that a smaller number may proceed to meet for purely informational and advisory reasons without any votes being taken. When no quorum is present, mail ballots will be issued to decide any questions requiring votes.
- C. The Chair should call a meeting to discuss an urgent issue when one quarter of the tenured and tenure-track faculty sign a petition requesting such a meeting. That meeting must take place within a week of the petition's being presented to the Chair.

VI. Departmental Officers and Standing Committees

Chair: Appointed by the Dean of Liberal Arts, after due consultation with the English faculty. Reviewed before completion of the fourth year of service, as specified by The Handbook of Operating Procedures. Assists the Dean in budgetary evaluations. Has final authority in matters relating to committee, course, and room assignments; also is the chief administrative officer in charge of support staff and public relations. Directs the Executive Committee, recommends and approves actions of other committees and the Department, and is empowered to appoint and charge special ad hoc committees to perform specified tasks not easily carried out by the standing committees.

Associate Chair: Appointed annually by the Chair. Assists in the administrative duties of the Department. Coordinates all course assignments for the faculty.

Graduate Studies Chair: Elected by the English Graduate Faculty in the Spring semester for a (renewable) term of two years. Convenes the Graduate Programs Committee and presides at meetings of the English Graduate Faculty (the Graduate Studies Committee).

Graduate Advisor: Appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies on the recommendation of the Chair, after nomination by the Graduate Studies Chair. The Graduate Studies Chair should consult with graduate students and the Graduate Programs Committee in selecting this nominee. Two-year (renewable) term. Reviewed annually.

Undergraduate Advisor: Appointed by the Chair. Ex officio (voting) member of the Undergraduate Course Committee. Has charge of the student advising procedure.

Undergraduate Course Committee Chair: Appointed by the Chair. Polls faculty preferences and presides (with vote) at meetings of the Undergraduate Course Committee that recommend proposed course offerings.

Elections Officer: Appointed by the Chair from a list of candidates provided by the Governance Committee. One-year term. May be reappointed for another year.

Executive Committee: See above.

Graduate Programs Committee: Ten members, including (as ex officio voting members) the Graduate Studies Chair, the departmental Chair, the departmental Associate Chair, and the Graduate Advisor. Three other members shall be appointed by the Graduate Studies Chair, and three shall be elected by direct vote in the Spring semester soon after the Executive Committee elections; the terms of these six people shall be two years. Vacancies caused by the resignations of elected members shall be filled by appointments of the Graduate Studies Chair for terms lasting until the next Spring election. The Graduate Programs Committee is in charge of graduate course scheduling and assignments and all academic plans and policies relating to the English graduate programs. In matters that significantly alter the degree requirements or change the concept of certain programs, it is customary for the Graduate Studies Chair to convene the English Graduate Faculty (the Graduate Studies Committee) and allow them to debate and vote on the issues. The English Graduate Faculty traditionally meets at least once a semester.

Recruitment Committee: Appointed by the Chair to screen applications and make recommendations about candidates to the Executive Committee.

Governance Committee: Appointed by the Chair. The three members study the structure and functions of the Department, and every three years they conduct the required review of the Executive Committee. They may also make recommendations for alterations in the larger departmental structure during these reviews. Their terms should rotate so that one new member joins the committee each year. The Chair shall designate the member who acts as committee chair.

Undergraduate Course Committee: Appointed by the Chair. Solicits the faculty for course preferences and presents to the Chair a set of course proposals. Recommends new courses or section topics.

Other departmental officers and standing committees (such as the Honors English Committee, the TA-AI Committee, and committees designated to oversee particular courses) will be appointed by the Chair as tradition suggests and when the Chair perceives a need. However, it is understood that the Chair has ultimate authority within the department concerning graduate student financial aid and teaching appointments.

Transition Arrangements

(Spring 1985 Election Only)

Upon adoption of these new guidelines, eligibility for immediate service on the Executive Committee by its present members will be determined as follows:

- Any current (or recently resigned) members who have served for a continuous period of two years on the Executive Committee as professors or associate professors will not be eligible for the next two years beginning this spring.
- Any assistant professor members who have served one or two years are ineligible for those same periods.
- Professors or associate professors who have served only one year of their two-year terms will automatically continue to serve out their elected terms, providing continuity.
- Any problems about eligibility will be resolved by the judgment of the Chair, the Elections Officer, and the Chair of the Governance Committee, as per IV.E (above).