

BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT BYLAWS

February, 2008; amended September, 2010; March, May and September, 2012;
and March 2013

PREAMBLE

These *Bylaws* provide operating guidelines for the Department's faculty, administrative officers, and committees. They codify past practice and record the governance structures, supervisory responsibilities, committee arrangements, voting privileges, and procedural rules necessary for the orderly conduct of the Department's business. Because no such document can anticipate institutional change, provision is made herein for its future alteration. Ultimately, however, we agree that these *Bylaws* can never, and should never, substitute for our good will toward one another, and we have adopted them in a spirit of professional cooperation and mutual trust.

ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP AND OBJECTIVES

The Department shall consist of the Dean of the College, *ex officio*, the Full-Time Faculty, the research faculty, the professional staff, and those duly registered students who are academically advised by members of the faculty. The Department serves the instructional needs of students, supports the research and teaching activities of the faculty, and promotes intellectual community both within and beyond its membership.

ARTICLE II. STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION

Biology is an academic Department of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, comprised of undergraduate and graduate academic as well as research programs related to disciplinary inquiry in the biological sciences. The operations of the Department shall reflect such policies and best practices as are recommended by its professional and accrediting bodies.

DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION

The **Chair of the Department** is a tenured faculty member who serves as chief administrative officer. The Chair has a twelve-month obligation and is appointed at the discretion of the Dean, normally for a renewable three-year term. All Departmental governance activity is understood to be advisory to the Chair. But the roles of other Departmental officers, and the work of the Department's committees, are authorized in the provisions of these *Bylaws* and are, to that extent, independent of the Chair's discretion.

Other **administrative officers** of the Department include the Vice Chair for Academic Programs, the Vice Chair for Research, the Coordinator of Graduate Studies, and the Coordinator of Undergraduate Studies. These officers are nominated by the Chair in consultation with the Advisory Committee and elected by the departmental faculty through a simple majority vote. Persons in these positions will normally serve three-year renewable terms, staggered to assure continuity.

The Review Committee shall evaluate the performance of these administrative officers yearly, and incorporate its judgments into their annual merit evaluations. As necessary, the Review Committee will also use the annual evaluations to formulate recommendations to the Chair for reappointment. The Chair will share the recommendations with the members of the Advisory Committee, who shall advise the Chair on reappointment.

Should the person serving in an administrative position not wish to be reappointed, or should the Chair of the Department, after consultation with the Advisory Committee, not elect to reappoint, the Chair shall inform the faculty of the vacancy and identify a replacement in consultation with the Advisory Committee and upon the ratification of the faculty. If an administrative officer is not reappointed, a search will be conducted to identify a new officer. In the event that an officer, other than the Chair, resigns from an administrative position before completion of a three-year term, someone shall be appointed to fill the remaining years of the term.

The duties of Department administrators are as follows, not listed in priority order:

Department Chair

- Sets Departmental priorities in consultation with the faculty, provides leadership in strategic planning, and assumes final responsibility for all planning documents, self-studies, and annual reports.
- Promotes faculty dialogue about Departmental priorities and strategic plans.
- Represents the Department in communications with the Dean, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and other constituencies both on and off the campus.
- Keeps the faculty current on relevant College as well as University policies and initiatives.
- Meets regularly, and no less than twice a month, with the Advisory Committee.
- Assumes final responsibility for the Department budget.
- Reports periodically to the Advisory Committee on the state of the budget.
- Takes an active role in faculty recruitment, and assumes final responsibility for hiring all faculty.
- Reviews all Full-Time Faculty annually and makes recommendations on reappointment, tenure, and promotion, pursuant to recommendations from the Review Committee.
- Assumes ultimate responsibility for assigning faculty work loads and individual teaching assignments.
- Recommends faculty merit salary increments after consultation with the Review Committee.
- Mentors faculty in the development of their careers.
- Oversees operation of the Departmental office, supervises and evaluates administrative staff, and recruits new office personnel.
- Directs SACS reviews with support from the Advisory Committee.
- Oversees election of, or appointment to, standing committees as well as *ad hoc* committees.

Vice Chair for Academic Programs

- Assumes responsibility for fall, spring, and summer schedules.

- Assists the Chair in managing the budget for academic programs, including the allocation of equipment and lab fee monies to match instructional needs.
- Processes academic petitions, suspension appeals, grade appeals, and serves as a first contact for all student issues/complaints.
- Coordinates recruitment, orientation, supervision, and evaluation of part-time teaching faculty.
- Works with the Graduate Coordinator on the selection and supervision of Teaching Assistants.
- Oversees the assessment of student learning outcomes.
- Contributes significantly to both Departmental and SACS self-studies.
- Consults with the Chair on a broad range of issues.
- Serves *ex officio* on the Advisory Committee.

Vice Chair for Research

- Assists the Chair and works with faculty in supporting and developing the Department's research programs.
- Explains and promotes Departmental research programs among various internal and external constituencies.
- Identifies complementary faculty research activities and proposes synergies among them.
- Assists the Chair in apportioning bench space relative to research productivity.
- Serves as liaison between the Department's research programs and those of other research entities, including CRI and CMC.
- Provides guidance in developing grant proposals, evaluates and signs proposals, and serves as liaison with College as well as University pre- and post-award offices.
- Assists the Chair in monitoring full-time-faculty effort reporting and signs faculty effort documentation.
- Serves as liaison with IACUC and the IRB.
- Coordinates the purchase, use, and maintenance of shared instrumentation and equipment.
- Consults with the Chair on a broad range of issues.
- Serves *ex officio* on the Advisory Committee.

Coordinator of Graduate Studies

- Chairs Graduate Committee, *ex officio*.
- Oversees graduate program policies, changes in program requirements, evaluation of admissions applications, distribution of teaching assistantships, revision of catalog copy, and degree checks.
- Works with the Vice Chair for Academic Programs on the selection of Teaching Assistants.
- Assumes administrative responsibility for graduate exams, theses, and dissertations, and supervises progress toward degrees.
- Provides administrative support to graduate students.
- Organizes the interdisciplinary colloquium.
- Oversees maintenance of graduate records.

- Oversees maintenance of graduate program literature and web site.
- Represents graduate programs in a variety of contexts on campus.
- Takes responsibility for advertising and promoting the graduate programs.
- Serves as information resource for prospective graduate students.

Coordinator of Undergraduate Studies

- The Undergraduate Coordinate
- Is a member of the Undergraduate Committee, *ex officio*.
- Administers policies related to admission to the major, acceptance of transfer credits, program requirements, course substitutions, academic petitions, and degree checks.
- Oversees development of new courses, changes in program requirements, and revision of catalog copy.
- Coordinates undergraduate advising.
- Oversees maintenance of undergraduate program literature and web site.
- Coordinates representation of the Department at SOAR and school outreach programs.

ARTICLE IV. DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES

Procedures for Election to Standing Committees

Each spring semester, not later than April 1, the Chair of the Department shall call for nominations (including self-nominations) for membership on the Advisory Committee and the Review Committee for the upcoming academic year. Each nominee must indicate a willingness to serve if elected. Not later than April 15, the Full-time Faculty shall vote by written ballot on the candidates for these committees, with a run-off ballot in case of a tie. If the number of candidates equals the number of available positions, the slate is elected “by acclamation.” Results should be announced no later than May 1. If an elected member becomes unable to serve, the position shall be filled by the same process of nomination and ballot vote.

Each spring, not later than April 15, the Chair of the Department shall call for nominations (including self-nominations) for membership on the Graduate and Undergraduate Committees for the upcoming academic year. Each nominee must indicate a willingness to serve if elected. Only members of the Graduate Faculty are eligible to serve on the Graduate Committee. Not later than April 25, the Graduate Faculty shall vote by written ballot on the candidates for the Graduate Committee, with a run-off ballot in case of a tie. Not later than April 25, the Full-time Faculty shall vote by written ballot on the candidates for the Undergraduate Committee, with a run-off ballot in case of a tie. If the number of candidates equals the number of available positions, the slate is elected “by acclamation.” The Chair shall announce the results no later than May 1. If an elected member becomes unable to serve, the position shall be filled by the same process of nomination and ballot vote.

Each spring, not later than April 15, the Chair shall solicit faculty members to serve on the Library and Seminar Committees, shall call for a ballot vote of the Full-time Faculty no later

than April 25, according to the procedures described above, and shall announce the results no later than May 1.

Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee consists of the Chair, Academic Vice Chair, and Research Vice Chair, *ex officio*, as well as three additional members elected by the Full-Time Faculty, each serving a one-year term. One member of the Committee shall be a lecturer. The Chair of the Department serves as chair of the Committee.

The Committee constitutes the Chair's advisory body on matters pertaining to academic programs, research programs, long-range planning, budgetary policy, and all other matters of policy that the Chair shall bring before it. Members may also bring such matters of policy to the attention of the Chair and/or the Committee as they shall deem appropriate.

The Committee advises the Chair on the appointment of the Vice Chair of Research, the Vice Chair of Academic Programs, and the academic program coordinators.

The Committee authorizes and forms such *ad hoc* committees, sub-committees, or task forces as the Chair may designate, including those pertaining to recruitment, strategic plans, and SACS reviews, among others.

The Committee meets on a regular basis, at least twice a month.

The Chair shall circulate minutes of Advisory Committee meetings among the Full-Time Faculty, exclusive of privileged executive sessions.

Review Committee

The Review Committee consists of five tenured members elected by the Full-Time Faculty of the Department. One elected lecturer shall join the Committee each spring to participate in lecturer evaluation, merit evaluation, and Chair as well as vice-Chair review. At least two members of the Committee shall hold the rank of Full Professor. Tenured members serve two-year terms, staggered to ensure no fewer than two returning members every year. The lecturer serves one term. Tenured faculty may not serve more than two consecutive terms or serve in any year in which they are being considered for reappointment, tenure, or promotion.

The Review Committee makes recommendations to the Chair regarding tenure-line personnel cases related to reappointment, promotion, and/or tenure (RPT), as well as cases related to tenured faculty performance review (TFPR), lecturer reappointment, and lecturer five-year review. It also conducts annual merit evaluations, the annual review of the Chair, and the annual review of the vice-Chairs.

After Review Committee elections in the spring (see above), the Committee meets as soon as possible to select its chair and make preparations for upcoming reviews. The Committee meets at the beginning of the fall semester to establish its timetable for the upcoming year; thereafter, it meets as often as necessary to conduct its business.

The University Code, the *Tenure Policies, Regulations, and Procedures of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte*, the *College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Procedures for Reappointment, Promotion, and Conferral of Permanent Tenure*, and the policy documents adopted by the Biology Department articulate the roles and practices of this reviewing body. All matters affecting personnel review are subject to due process requirements as explained in the Code and the local campus policy documents. Due process at UNC-Charlotte follows AAUP guidelines for mandatory review and notification.

Graduate Committee

The Graduate Committee consists of the Coordinator of Graduate Studies, who serves as chair with the privilege of one vote, and four members of the Biology Graduate Faculty. Committee members serve staggered two-year terms.

The Graduate Committee advises and supports the Coordinator on all matters related to the Department's doctoral and master's programs. These matters include the administration of program policies, the development of graduate curricula, admission to programs, appointment of teaching assistants, completion of degree requirements, and all other matters that the Coordinator shall bring before it. On behalf of the faculty, the committee reviews and approves submitted course descriptions and tentative topic outlines for courses not listed in the course catalog including "Special Topics" and "Advanced Topic" courses. For courses that are listed in the course catalog with permanent course numbers, the committee will review a tentative topic outline only if the assigned instructor will teach this course for the first time. Course description and topic outline review must be completed before the course can be scheduled. The Committee meets as often as necessary to conduct its business."

Undergraduate Committee

The Undergraduate Committee consists of five members of the Full-Time Faculty, each with the privilege of one vote, one of whom is the Coordinator of Undergraduate Studies, *ex officio*, one of whom shall serve as the Honors Coordinator, and at least one of whom is a lecturer. The committee members not serving *ex officio* shall serve staggered two-year terms. At the beginning of the academic year, the committee elects a Chair who shall coordinate the programmatic development of the Biology Undergraduate Curriculum. The Academic Vice Chair shall attend the Undergraduate Committee as an *ex officio* member, without the privilege of a vote.

The Undergraduate Committee advises and supports the Coordinator on all matters related to the administration of the Department's undergraduate programs. These matters include the administration of program policies, admission to programs, completion of degree requirements, and all other matters that the Coordinator shall bring before it. On behalf of the faculty, the committee facilitates the development of undergraduate curricula, reviews and approves submitted course descriptions and tentative topic outlines for courses not listed in the course catalog including "Special Topics" courses. For courses that are listed in the course catalog with permanent course numbers, the committee will review a tentative topic outline only if the assigned instructor will teach this course for the first time. Course description and topic outline review will typically be completed before the course can be scheduled. The Committee meets as often as necessary to conduct its business."

As a member of the UG Committee, the Honors Coordinator coordinates the

Departmental Honors Program and provides representation to the University Honors Council. The Honors Coordinator assumes responsibility for the Honors Seminar and coordinates student placement in Honors Research I and II.

Seminar Committee

The Seminar Committee consists of two ~~tenure-line~~ members of the Full-time Faculty and shall serve for a minimum of two years. The Committee solicits faculty recommendations for speakers, organizes the yearly seminar schedule, manages the seminar series budget, and attends to the details of arranging visits, conducting weekly events, and reimbursing speakers.

Library Committee

The Library Committee consists of two members of the Full-time Faculty and shall serve for a minimum of two years. The Committee monitors library holdings, reviews new publications relevant to the discipline, and facilitates faculty requests for acquisitions. The committee meets as often as necessary to conduct its business.

ARTICLE V. DEPARTMENT MEETINGS

The Biology Department meets on a regular basis during the academic year, and at least three times each semester. Meetings are called no less than one week in advance by the Chair of the Department, who shall ordinarily preside and who shall circulate an agenda at least three days before the meeting. When necessary, the Chair may appoint a designee to serve as chair of the meeting in his or her absence.

At the request of one-third of the Full-Time Faculty, the Chair must call a meeting of the Department.

ARTICLE VI. VOTING PRIVILEGES

All members of the Full-time Faculty shall have full voting privileges on all matters except those directly related to the Graduate Program, which are reserved to the Graduate Faculty, and such other matters as College or University policies shall identify. Part-time faculty, associate/adjunct faculty, research faculty, administrative staff, and students are not eligible to vote.

ARTICLE VII. QUORUM

A quorum shall consist of a simple majority (51%) of the Full-Time Faculty. Before an official vote in a Department meeting, any faculty member in attendance may question the presence of a quorum. If the Chair of the Department, or other presiding officer, discovers and declares that there is not a quorum present, no final vote will be taken on any issue. By a simple majority vote of those present, however, the group attending this meeting may declare itself a committee of the

whole. This committee may then, by a simple majority vote, place a proposal on a ballot to be voted on by the entire faculty. Such a motion will pass if it receives a majority of votes cast.

ARTICLE VIII. VOTING

Voting at a Department meeting shall be conducted by show of hands unless a simple majority of the faculty at that meeting vote to place the motion on a written ballot. In the latter instance, faculty shall have five days from receipt of the ballot to register their votes. A simple majority of the faculty voting is required for passage of a motion.

Voting by proxy will be permitted by faculty members who cannot attend meetings at which votes are taken. If so desired, faculty members may give their proxies to other faculty members who will be allowed to vote for the absent members. Faculty wishing to vote by proxy should give to the Department Chair, at or prior to the meeting, signed statements identifying their representatives and the issue(s) to be voted upon.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

Any member of the Full-Time Faculty may propose an amendment to these *Bylaws*, which then, presuming the motion is seconded, must be approved in two stages. A simple majority vote in a meeting of the Department places the proposed amendment on a written ballot to be voted on by the Full-Time Faculty. It is approved if it receives two-thirds of the votes cast.