

**BYLAWS**  
**College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences**  
**University of Houston**

The purpose of this document is to establish the policies and procedures and the organizational structure for faculty governance in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) at the University of Houston. Faculty participation in the governance of the college is essential for achieving academic excellence.

**Section I. The Faculty**

The voting Faculty of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) are tenured, tenure-track or non-tenure track (when applicable) professors, associate professors, and assistant professors, with appointments in the college.

College faculty members who are not tenured or tenure-track (including Clinical and Instructional Faculty, Research Faculty, and Faculty members on VMOE) may in general vote, serve on College Committees, and serve on University Bodies to which the College contributes representatives. At the college and departmental level, all non-tenure track faculty in promotion-eligible pathways shall be entitled to participate in university, college and department level governance on all matters other than voting on tenure and the appointment and reappointment of tenure-track faculty. Other departmental roles of faculty members who are not tenured or tenure-track should be determined by department bylaws. All CLASS faculty members with emeritus/emerita status are non-voting members of the faculty.

**Section II. Meeting of the College**

- A. There shall be at least one meeting of the faculty each semester during the regular academic year, and additional meetings at the Dean's initiative or in response to a written petition from ten percent of the faculty eligible to vote.
- B. Except in emergencies, the Dean or the group calling the meeting shall notify the faculty eligible to vote at least five class days in advance of a meeting and provide them at that time with a written agenda and, whenever possible, a copy of any proposals on which they will be asked to vote.
- C. If the conditions in Section II.B have been met, those voting members of the faculty present at the meeting shall constitute a quorum. A parliamentarian shall be appointed. In the absence of specific rules adopted by the faculty, proceedings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.
- D. All votes that a majority of the faculty present and voting decide to submit to the entire voting faculty of the College shall be conducted by a secret ballot distributed either electronically or by mail. Faculty shall have at least five working days in which to return their ballots. The chair of the Faculty Governance and Advisory Committee and a representative of the Dean's office shall count the ballots and report the results in writing to the Dean.
- E. The Dean shall normally preside at faculty meetings. In the absence of the Dean,

the chair of the Faculty Governance and Advisory Committee shall preside. Only those faculty eligible to vote and present at the meeting shall be allowed to vote.

- F. The chair of the Faculty Governance and Advisory Committee and the Dean shall designate a Recorder at each meeting to take minutes. Within ten days after the Dean and the chair of the Faculty Governance and Advisory committee have approved the minutes, The Recorder shall have a complete set of the minutes distributed to each department within the College and a summary of the minutes to each member of the college faculty.

### **Section III. The Dean**

- A. The Dean must be acceptable for appointment as a tenured full professor in a department of the college.
- B. The Dean shall
  - 1. administer the College's affairs in accordance with the policies of the College and the University.
  - 2. be responsible for preparing and administering the College budget.
  - 3. represent the College to the outside community and serve as a liaison with the rest of the University.
  - 4. call meetings of the faculty mandated by these bylaws.
  - 5. normally preside over faculty meetings of the College.
  - 6. ensure that the College's standards of faculty performance in the areas of research, creative activities, teaching, and service are maintained at a level appropriate to the mission of the University.
  - 7. ensure the College's various departments and schools adhere to the written standards that its several faculties have established for tenure and promotion as well as policies established by the Office of the Provost for Non-tenure track faculty.
  - 8. conduct an independent review and make written recommendations for promotion and tenure of NTT faculty in accordance with the Non-Tenure Track Faculty Policy approved by the Office of the Provost.
  - 9. receive recommendations on tenure, promotion, and post-tenure review from the College Tenure and Promotion Committee and act according to written University procedures and policies.
  - 10. report in writing to the individual candidate, the department chair, and the Tenure and Promotion Committee any recommendations on tenure, promotion and post-tenure review that are transmitted to the Chief Academic Officer.
  - 11. transmit to the department chairs in a timely a manner as possible the dollar amount to be used by each department for annual merit raises.
  - 12. receive recommendations for merit salary increases from department chairs and communicate to the department chair and the faculty members any recommendation that he or she alters. The faculty member whose recommended merit salary increase is altered by the Dean may appeal that decision to the College Grievance Committee.
  - 13. transmit his or her recommendations to the Chief Academic Officer

along with the department recommendations for new faculty appointments.

14. meet at least twice each semester with the chairs of all College departments for the discussion of major policy initiatives, policy changes, issues facing the College, major issues facing departments, or any other matter of significant consequence facing the College and its departments.
  15. select department chairs according to the provisions stated in Section IV of these bylaws.
  16. evaluate annually the performance of department chairs.
  17. determine the merit raises for department chairs.
  18. select associate deans, in consultation with department chairs.
- c. The Dean may
1. appoint ad hoc committees to be concerned with matters that clearly do not affect the functions of standing committees in consultation with the Faculty Governance and Advisory Committee.
  2. make recommendations to any college committee.
  3. suspend a department's bylaws and put a department into receivership, with cause after consulting with the Chairs and Directors Committee and the Faculty Governance and Advisory Committee.
  4. relieve a department chair of his or her appointment during his or her term after consulting with the faculty of the department.

#### **Section IV. Department Organization and Operations**

- A. Departments shall be governed through bylaws of their formulation, subject to approval by the College and University. The bylaws of the college shall take precedence in cases of conflict or lacunae.
- B. Only department members who are associate or full professors with tenure may vote on promotion to associate professor with tenure or granting of tenure to associate professors; only full professors may vote on promotion to full professor.
- C. Selection and Evaluation of Department Chairs.
  1. Department Chairs & directors shall serve three-year terms and may serve an indefinite number of terms. Chairs & directors will undergo mandatory third year reviews by the Department and Dean, the Faculty Governance and Advisory Committee will conduct the evaluation procedure.
  2. In cases where an outside chair is to be recruited, the process for recruiting shall be determined by the department in consultation with the Dean.
  3. Procedure for the internal selection of a chair.
    - a. A department shall conduct a search for its chair during the final year of the chair's term or when the Dean determines that a new chair is needed.
    - b. The Faculty Governance and Advisory Committee shall oversee the selection process according to the following procedure. The Faculty Governance and Advisory Committee shall
      1. call for nominations for chair from the department faculty.
      2. within five working days after the close of nominations, ask

those who have been nominated if they will accept nomination for department chair.

3. administer an election among all persons who accepted nomination.
4. recommend to the Dean any candidate who receives at least one vote more than 50 percent of the votes cast.
5. If no candidate receives a majority vote, if a procedure for run off is specified within department bylaws, that procedure for a runoff election will be followed. If no run off procedure is specified in departmental bylaws, the two candidates with the most votes will be in a runoff election.
4. If the Dean finds the department's selection to be acceptable, he or she shall notify the members of the department of his or her decision within two weeks.
5. If the Dean finds the department's selection to be unacceptable, he or she shall notify the members of the department within two weeks and ask for a second election within two weeks. This second election will be conducted under the procedures specified in 3 above. If the Dean finds the department's second selection to be unacceptable, he or she shall consult with the department within two weeks before making his or her recommendation to the Chief Academic Officer.
6. If the Dean should decide there were procedural flaws in the search process, he or she shall confer with the department and may call for another election.

## **Section V. Standing Committees**

The College shall have eight standing committees, and the terms for committee members shall begin on August 15.

- A. Chairs and Directors Committee
- B. Faculty Governance and Advisory Committee
- C. Graduate Affairs Committee
- D. Undergraduate Studies Committee
- E. Grievance Committee
- F. Tenure and Promotion Committee
- G. Technology and Facilities Committee
- H. Research, Scholarship, & Creative Activity Committee

## **Section VI. Chairs and Directors Committee**

- A. The Chairs and Directors Committee shall be chaired by the Dean and shall comprise all chairs of departments and directors of schools in the College.
- B. The committee shall meet at least twice each semester to discuss in an advisory capacity with the Dean all matters affecting the College, including CLASS priorities, faculty positions, and budgetary priorities. Members of the committee shall then be charged with communicating to their faculty members news of the College and matters that require action.

## **Section VII. Faculty Governance and Advisory Committee**

- A. The Faculty Governance and Advisory Committee shall include one member per department, elected by the department. Chairs and associate deans shall be excluded from consideration. Committee members shall serve two year staggered terms. The committee shall elect its own chair at the first meeting of the year, at which the outgoing chair of the committee initially shall preside.
- B. The committee shall meet at least twice a semester to be a medium, independent of the Chairs and Directors Committee, for bringing all issues of consequence affecting departments and individual members of the College to the attention of the Dean. Results of consultations then shall be communicated to the faculty.
- C. The committee shall
  - 1. call meetings of the CLASS faculty, based on a written petition of ten percent of the members of the faculty eligible to vote.
  - 2. review the overall College budget and inform the Dean and all faculty members of the results.
  - 3. plan with the Dean the agenda for any meeting of the College faculty.
  - 4. conduct departmental chair elections and evaluations as specified in section IV C above.
  - 5. periodically review the College bylaws, and, when appropriate, recommend amendments to the faculty of the College.
  - 6. interpret the College bylaws when a dispute arises as to their meaning.
  - 7. resolve conflicts between departmental bylaws and the College bylaws.
  - 8. serve as a rules committee to department committees.
  - 9. call for nominees, verify that they are willing to serve, and conduct elections, as appropriate, for Faculty Senators and for College representatives to any other University bodies that require elected representatives from the College.
  - 10. call for nominees, verify that they are willing to serve, and conduct elections for members of the College Grievance Committee.
- D. The committee may
  - 1. make recommendations to the Dean regarding the administration and operation of the College.
  - 2. prepare reports on the issues, controversies, activities and decisions in the College.
  - 3. appoint sub-committees of the committee as necessary for the purpose of completing the business of the committee's responsibilities.
- E. The chair of the committee shall
  - 1. set the meeting times of the committee;
  - 2. prepare and supervise the distribution of the agenda.

## **Section VIII. Graduate Affairs Committee**

- A. The Graduate Affairs Committee shall include all graduate directors in the College or a faculty member appointed to represent a department. The associate dean overseeing graduate affairs shall serve without a vote. The committee shall elect its own chair and select two graduate students – one a master's degree student and one a doctor's

degree student – to participate as voting members.

- B. The committee shall
  - 1. recommend to the faculty changes in College graduate degree requirements and programs.
  - 2. approve additions or deletions of courses at the graduate level.
  - 3. review and coordinate the development of interdisciplinary courses and programs.
  - 4. concern itself with procedures and standards for admission, candidacy, and graduation from graduate programs.
  - 5. work in relationship with the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies.

### **Section IX. Undergraduate Studies Committee**

- A. The Undergraduate Studies Committee shall consist of a faculty member selected by faculty of each department and school to represent that unit, and two CLASS undergraduates. The associate dean who oversees undergraduate studies and curricular matters shall serve without a vote. The committee shall elect its own chair who shall serve a two-year term.
- B. The committee shall meet at least two times a semester.
- C. The committee shall:
  - 1. recommend to the faculty changes the College's undergraduate degree requirements and programs.
  - 2. approve additions, alterations or deletions of courses at the undergraduate level.
  - 3. review and coordinate the undergraduate curriculum, including the core curriculum and interdisciplinary courses and programs.
  - 4. concern itself with procedures and standards for admissions, candidacy, and graduation from undergraduate programs.
  - 5. nominate representatives from the CLASS faculty to the Undergraduate Council to be elected at large in April by the CLASS faculty. These representatives will serve as liaison with undergraduate programs in other colleges in the University as well as with the Undergraduate Council.

### **Section X. Grievance Committee**

- A. The Grievance committee shall consist of seven tenured faculty members, no more than one from any department, elected by a college vote to serve two-year staggered terms. No administrator or department chair may serve on the committee. The committee shall elect its own chair and shall invite two students to serve as voting members in grievance cases involving students.
- B. The committee, in both hearings and appeals, shall follow the procedure listed in the *University of Houston Faculty Handbook*.

### **Section XI. Tenure and Promotion Committee**

- A. The Tenure and Promotion Committee shall consist of seven (7) full professors one from each relevant department. In cases where non-tenure line faculty are up for promotion review, at least one non-tenure line Associate or Full Professor will be added to the committee for consideration in these cases.
- B. Four shall come from Ph.D. degree granting departments and at least two from master's degree granting departments. The Chairs and Directors Committee, in consultation with the Dean, shall consider appropriate rotation when selecting the seven departments that shall provide members to serve two year staggered terms. A committee member from a candidate's department shall recuse him- or herself from discussions and votes on that person's candidacy. The candidate may invite the chair of his or her department to name a faculty colleague representative of the candidate's choice to provide information to the committee.
- C. The committee shall make recommendations to the Dean regarding promotions and tenure as well as the continuance of faculty members in the College according to University procedures, departmental criteria, and the College standards set forth in Sections XV-XVI of these bylaws.

## **Section XII. Technology and Facilities Committee**

- A. The Technology and Facilities Committee shall consist of one faculty representative from each department or school. The designated associate dean shall convene the committee, but will serve without vote.
- B. The committee shall meet at least once a semester to ensure that all Technical Support Services (including instructional technology and web support) in the college are operating satisfactorily, that information is being shared throughout the college, that needs for instructional space and other facilities usages are being addressed, and that the Dean's Office is aware of changes in faculty and staff needs and necessary improvements in infrastructure.

## **Section XIII. Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Committee**

- A. The CLASS Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Committee shall contain 7 members, representing the 3 major types of research and scholarship conducted within the college: (1) Humanities and Creative Writing, (2) Social Sciences, and (3) Behavioral and Health Sciences.
  - 1. The RSCA committee shall consist of at least 2 members from the Humanities and Creative Writing, 2 from the Social Sciences, and 1 from the Health Sciences, with the additional 2 members being chosen at-large. Committee members will serve 2-year staggered terms.
  - 2. The RSCA will maintain a regular rotation of departments within each category, so that each department is represented frequently. No department may have more than one member on the committee at a time. This rotation will be maintained by the Associate Dean for Faculty and Research in consultation with the Chairs and Directors.
  - 3. Departmental representatives will be elected by their

department at the beginning of the academic year of that department's turn in the cycle.

- B. The RSCA Committee shall
  - 1. Work with the Associate Dean for Faculty and Research to develop ideas for stimulating scholarly activity within the College; to assist faculty in obtaining support to engage in scholarly activity; and to advocate for research and creative work in the College.
  - 2. Evaluate and make recommendations to the Dean on proposals for CLASS internal research activities and programs, including small grants, new faculty research support, and other modes of support for faculty research and scholarship;
  - 3. Develop recommendations and procedures to ensure fair and equitable use of resources necessary for research, scholarship, and creative work.

#### **Section XIV. Annual Reviews and Pre-Tenure Reviews of Tenure-Track Assistant Professors**

- A. Every tenure-track faculty member will be reviewed annually by the department chair/director or appropriate administrator according to departmental procedures. The chair/director will provide the faculty member with a written summary of the review.
- B. A full pre-tenure review normally occurs in the tenure-track assistant professor's third year. Eligible faculty in the department will conduct a comprehensive review of his or her record of (a) scholarship, creative work or performance; (b) teaching; and (c) service to the university, community, and/or profession for the purpose of assessing progress toward tenure. Following committee review, the department chair/director will conduct an independent review and write a letter to the faculty member discussing strengths and weaknesses of the pre-tenure portfolio. This letter will be forwarded to the dean of the college and placed in the candidate's personnel file.

#### **Section XV. Procedures and Criteria for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences**

- A. All College and Department policies and procedures must comply
- B. with the Provost's annual Promotion and Tenure Guidelines.
- C. Mandatory review for tenure and promotion will take place no later than the sixth year of a tenure-track assistant professor's appointment, unless the candidate received an extension of the probationary period under the provisions of the University of Houston Faculty Handbook.
  - D. Each department shall develop and make available to faculty members, upon their appointments, written criteria for tenure and promotion consistent with University and College policies.
- E. Successful candidates for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, which normally occur together, are responsible for the timely submission of tenure and promotion materials consistent with the criteria of the Department, the College and the University. Additionally, department chairs shall be based

on the candidate's serious and significant contributions in scholarship, creative work, or performance; the promise or achievement of a national or international reputation in his or her field; and the expectation of continued excellence in these areas throughout the candidate's career.

- F. Only tenured faculty in the department may vote on the granting of tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. All deliberations are conducted in confidence. The department committee shall provide a written report evaluating the candidate's scholarship/creative work, teaching, and service, including a recommendation based on the majority of votes cast. The department chair shall provide an independent written report with his or her recommendations and assessment of the candidate's record. Copies of these reports shall be made available to the candidate; the reports should not reveal the identity of the external reviewers. These reports will be submitted to the College Tenure and Promotion Committee for review as part of the candidate's portfolio.
- G. The College Tenure and Promotion Committee shall review the candidate's tenure and promotion materials, external review letters, the department's recommendation, and the department chair's report and shall make written recommendations to the Dean, based on the majority of votes cast, regarding promotion and tenure as well as the continuance of faculty members in the College according to University procedures, departmental criteria, and College standards. The Dean shall make an independent evaluation of the candidate's portfolio and provide a written report and recommendation. The reports of the college Committee and the Dean will be included in the portfolio, and the entirety will be submitted to the Provost's Office for review at the University level. A copy of the Committee's and the Dean's reports shall be made available to the candidate; the reports should not reveal the identity of the external reviewers.

## **Section XVI. Procedures and Criteria for Promotion to Full Professor in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences**

- A. All College and Department policies and procedures must comply with the Provost's annual Promotion and Tenure Guidelines.
- B. Each department shall develop and make available to faculty written criteria for promotion to Full Professor consistent with University and College policies.
- C. Candidates for promotion to Full Professor are responsible for the timely submission of promotion materials consistent with the criteria of the department, the College and the University. Additionally, department chairs shall solicit four to six external reviews of the candidate's materials from well-qualified senior scholars. To the extent allowed by law, external reviews are to be treated as confidential and are intended to be read only by the reviewing committees and university administrators or faculty involved in the review process.
- D. Successful candidates for promotion to Full Professor shall demonstrate continued excellence in (a) research, scholarship, and/or creative work, (b) teaching, and (c) service to the university, community, and/or profession appropriate to the particular

- discipline. The promotion to full professor shall be based on the candidate's serious and significant contributions in scholarship, creative work, or performance; the achievement of a national or international reputation in his or her field; and the expectation of continued excellence in these areas throughout the candidate's career.
- E. Only full professors in the department may vote on the candidate's promotion to Full Professor. All deliberations are conducted in confidence. In the event that there are fewer than three full professors eligible to undertake the committee review in a department, additional full professors will be named by the Dean to the departmental committee in consultation with the chair of the department. The department committee shall provide a written report evaluating the candidate's scholarship, creative work or performance, teaching, and service, including a recommendation based on the majority of votes cast. The department chair also shall provide an independent written recommendation and report with his or her assessment of the candidate's record. Copies of these reports shall be made available to the candidate; the reports should not reveal the identity of the external reviewers. These reports will be submitted to the College Tenure and Promotion Committee for review as part of the candidate's portfolio.
  - F. In a department where the chair does not hold the rank of full professor, the Dean shall appoint a full professor from the department, or from another department if there are no full professors in the department at issue, to oversee the department's deliberations regarding a candidate's promotion to Full Professor and to provide an independent written recommendation and report with his or her assessment of the candidate's record.
  - A. The College Tenure and Promotion Committee shall review the candidate's promotion materials, external review letters, the department's recommendation, and the department chair/director's report and shall make written recommendations to the Dean, based on the majority of votes cast, regarding promotion to Full Professor. The Dean shall make an independent evaluation of the candidate's portfolio and provide a written report and recommendation. The reports of the college Committee and the Dean will be included in the portfolio, and the entirety will be submitted to the Provost's Office for review at the University level. A copy of the Committee's and Dean's reports shall be made available to the candidate; the reports should not reveal the identity of the external reviewers.

## **Section XVII. Reconsideration of Tenure and Promotion Decision**

- A. In cases of a negative recommendation, candidates for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor or for promotion to Full Professor are entitled to a reconsideration of the decisions of the department, the department chair, the College Tenure and Promotion Committee, and the Dean. Reconsiderations are limited to errors of fact and procedure.
- B. Each department shall establish procedures for reconsideration. Departmental reconsiderations normally occur before the deadline for portfolio submission to the College.
- C. A candidate requesting a reconsideration of the College Tenure and Promotion Committee's decision must submit a written notification of this request to the

Committee chair within five days of receiving the Committee's report. No later than five days thereafter, the candidate must provide to the Committee any new evidence or evidence to rebut statements made. When the candidate meets with the Committee, the candidate may invite the chair/director of his or her department or another faculty colleague to provide information to the Committee.

- D. A candidate requesting a reconsideration of the Dean's decision must submit a written notification of this request to the Dean within five days of receiving the Dean's report. No later than five days thereafter, the candidate must provide any new evidence or evidence to rebut statements made. When the candidate meets with the Dean, the candidate may invite the chair/director of his or her department chair/director or another faculty colleague to provide information to the Dean.

### **Section XVIII. Annual Merit Reviews and Post-Tenure Reviews**

Departments shall develop their own procedures and criteria for both the annual merit reviews and post-tenure reviews, subject to the approval of the Dean. Department chairs shall forward to the Dean the outcomes of annual merit and post-tenure reviews.

### **Section XIX. Class Faculty Senate Delegation**

- A. The CLASS Faculty Senate Delegation shall include one departmental representative from each department, elected by the department. If it so chooses, a department may forego having a departmental representative for a given three-year term, in which case the representative will be chosen at-large.
- B. Any additional CLASS faculty senate positions, including those where departments chose not to supply a representative, shall be at-large positions, with senators elected in a college-wide vote.

### **Section XX.**

In these bylaws, unless otherwise indicated to the contrary, schools of the College and their directors are implied wherever departments and their chairs are mentioned.

### **Section XXI. Amendments**

Any proposed amendment to these bylaws shall be discussed in a meeting of the college faculty, a copy of the amendment having been distributed to faculty members at least ten class days prior to the meeting. Amendments shall be adopted by a two-thirds vote of all faculty eligible to vote and voting. Voting on an amendment shall be conducted either electronically or by mail ballot within twenty class days after the meeting in which it was discussed.

*Amended and Approved 9-30-2016*

*Amended and Approved April 2013*

*Amended and Approved by University administration October 2003*

*Originally Adopted by CLASS faculty March 2001*