

CLASS bylaws

Section I. The Faculty

The voting faculty of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) are full-time, tenured or tenure-track professors, associate professors, assistant professors and instructors with appointments in the College. All CLASS faculty members on VMOE or with emeritus/emerita status are non-voting members of the faculty.

Section II. Meeting of the College

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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 by mail. Faculty shall have at least five working days in which to return their written 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.
5. 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.
6. 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

1. The Dean must be acceptable for appointment as a tenured full professor in a department of the college.
2. 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.
 8. 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.
 9. 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.
 10. 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.
 11. 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.
 12. transmit his or her recommendations to the Chief Academic Officer along with the department recommendations for new faculty appointments.
 13. 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.
 14. select department chairs according to the provisions stated in Section IV of these bylaws.
 15. evaluate annually the performance of department chairs.
 16. determine the merit raises for department chairs.
 17. select associate deans, in consultation with department chairs.
3. 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

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Selection and Evaluation of Department Chairs.
 1. Department chairs shall serve three-year terms and may serve an indefinite number of terms.
 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.
 1. 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.
 2. 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 run off 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 run off 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.
4. If the department requests an evaluation of their chair, the Faculty Governance and Advisory Committee will conduct the evaluation procedure.

Section V. Standing Committees

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

1. Chairs and Directors Committee
2. Faculty Governance and Advisory Committee
3. Graduate Affairs Committee
4. Undergraduate Studies Committee
5. Grievance Committee
6. Tenure and Promotion Committee
7. Technology Committee

Section VI. Chairs and Directors Committee

1. 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.
2. 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

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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 & D 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.
4. 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.
 5. The chair of the committee shall
 1. set the meeting times of the committee and prepare and supervise the distribution of the agenda.

Section VIII. Graduate Affairs Committee

1. 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.
2. 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. designate representatives to the Graduate Council.
 6. work in relationship with the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Section IX. Undergraduate Studies Committee

1. 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.
2. The committee shall meet at least two times a semester.
3. 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

1. 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.
2. 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

1. The Tenure and Promotion Committee shall consist of nine full professors. Five shall come from Ph.D. degree granting departments, two from master's degree granting departments, and two from the arts. The Chairs and Directors Committee, in consultation with the Dean, shall consider appropriate rotation when selecting the nine 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.

2. 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 Section XIII of these bylaws.

Section XII. Technology Committee

1. The Technology Committee shall consist of one faculty representative from each department. A faculty member shall chair the committee.
2. The committee shall meet at least once a semester to ensure that the Technical Support Services in the college are operating satisfactorily and that the Dean's office is aware of changes in faculty and staff needs and necessary improvements in the infrastructure.

Section XIII. Criteria for Tenure and Promotion to Associate and Full Professor and for Faculty Reviews in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

1. Candidates for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, which normally occur together, shall be evaluated on the basis of their record of scholarship, creative work or performance, teaching, and service to the university, community, and/or to their profession. Successful candidates shall demonstrate excellence in scholarly and creative activities, teaching, and effective service. The awarding of tenure shall be based on the promise of national visibility and the prediction of continued excellence in these areas throughout the candidate's career.
2. Candidates for promotion to Full Professor shall be evaluated in the same three areas of achievement delineated above. In addition to continued excellence in teaching and a commitment to service, successful candidates shall have achieved a national reputation in their scholarship, creative work, or performance.
3. The purpose of the Third Year Review shall be to ascertain whether the candidate is making acceptable progress toward tenure. Departments shall conduct this important review during the third year and forward the copy to the dean.
4. 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, at his or her discretion, the annual faculty activity reports and updated curriculum vitae along with the outcomes of annual merit and post-tenure reviews.

Section XIV.

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 XV. 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 by mail ballot within twenty class days after the meeting in which it was discussed.