**Bylaws for the**

**College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences**

University of North Texas

Adopted April 10, 2017 (updated April 2019)

Preamble

Subject to the authorities which govern the University of North Texas, the faculty of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) does hereby specify the organization of the college and the principles and procedures under which the business of the college will be conducted.

ARTICLE I. The Faculty

A. Membership of the Faculty

Every person holding a full-time tenured or probationary appointment in CLASS at the rank of professor, associate professor, or assistant professor shall be a voting member of the college faculty. All non-tenure track full time faculty entering their 4th year and beyond of continuous service shall be voting members of the college faculty.

B. The Faculty Assembly

1. Function

The Faculty Assembly is responsible for approving and revising the college bylaws.

2. Membership

All voting members of the faculty shall be voting members of the Faculty Assembly.

3. Meetings

The Faculty Assembly shall meet at least once in the fall semester and once in the spring semester of each academic year. Special meetings may be called by the dean and shall be called on the written request of ten percent of the voting members of the Faculty Assembly. Any proposal to revise the college bylaws must be considered at a public meeting of the Faculty Assembly prior to a final vote being taken. When no such revisions are pending, the dean will use the fall and spring semester meetings to update the faculty on the state of the college and to answer faculty questions.

4. Organization

At all meetings of the Faculty Assembly, the dean or a member of the Faculty Assembly designated by the dean shall preside.

The dean shall appoint a secretary for the Faculty Assembly. The secretary shall publish and distribute to all faculty the minutes of each meeting within fourteen days following the meeting.

5. Procedure

The Faculty Council (see I.C.1) shall prepare and distribute, at least 96 hours before a meeting, an agenda for the meeting. The agenda must include any proposal to revise the college bylaws submitted on time and in writing either by the dean or by any member of the faculty who carries the endorsement of ten voting members of the faculty.

All proposals to revise the college bylaws either initiated or substantively amended by motion from the floor must receive a second hearing at a subsequent meeting of the Faculty Assembly before a final vote is taken.

Following consideration at a public meeting of the Faculty Assembly, proposals to revise the college bylaws will be decided by electronic vote. For a proposal to be approved, at least twenty percent of the voting members of the faculty must cast a ballot, and two thirds of those ballots must record votes in favor of the proposal.

C. Standing Committees

There shall be standing committees of the faculty that shall have primary responsibility for representing the faculty in the conduct of the affairs of the college. Each committee shall consist of CLASS faculty members elected by the faculty or appointed by the dean. Eligible persons must receive at least two nominations to be placed on the ballot for elected positions on standing committees. If no person has two nominations or if only one person has two nominations, all names submitted for the position will be placed on the ballot. A regular term of membership shall be three years, and each term shall begin on the first day of the academic year (fall semester). On completion of a regular term of membership, no person may be returned to membership, either by election or appointment, for one year.

Following the initial constitution of a committee, the elected membership and the appointed membership shall each be partitioned into three sets approximating as closely as possible one-third of their complement. In each set, the members will serve the same term and, initially, terms shall be determined by lot. Members receiving less than a regular term shall be eligible to succeed themselves. Thereafter, each year those members who are completing a regular term shall be replaced. In the spring of each year, the dean shall conduct elections and make appointments for those whose terms begin the following September.

If an elected member of a standing committee is unable to complete his/her term for any reason, the dean shall appoint a replacement until a special election is held to fill the position. Temporary appointments are subject to the same restrictions on membership as general appointments and elections. A special election will be conducted typically within one month of notification that the original member is unable to complete his/her term. The special election will follow the format of a general election for standing committees.

At no time shall two members of a committee be members of the same academic department. To ensure broad representation, when a term of service has been completed, a vacancy on that committee may not be filled by a faculty member from the same department for a period of one year.

It shall be the duty of all members to attend all regular and special meetings of the committee. The membership of any member who has been absent from two successive regular meetings without cause shall be declared vacant.

The meetings of each committee shall be conducted in accordance with generally accepted practices for deliberative bodies of such small size. The presiding officer shall ensure that each member has the opportunity for full participation in the deliberations. All issues, after debate and discussion, shall be decided by simple majority of all members present and voting.

When a standing committee deliberates on specific budgetary or personnel matters, its findings and recommendations shall not be published, but shall be available in the office of the dean.

When a standing committee addresses any matter of general policy, the secretary of the committee shall cause the minutes to be published and distributed within ten days following each such meeting.

Standing committees shall include those specified below.

1. The Faculty Council

The function of the Faculty Council shall be:

* 1. to meet regularly with the dean to discuss matters related to college budget requests to the central administration and/or allocation of the college’s own resources;
  2. to prepare the agenda for all meetings of the Faculty Assembly;
  3. to draft, review, revise, and publish procedures and policies by which the college shall conduct its business;
  4. to advise the dean on any matter not specifically delegated to some other committee;
  5. to appoint ad hoc faculty committees and receive reports from them as necessary;
  6. to ensure that adequate appeals procedures and policies are available to all faculty at appropriate levels regarding decisions identified as appealable in E.1.;
  7. to review regularly, and when appropriate, propose revisions to the college bylaws;
  8. to hold focus group meetings to discuss general morale and concerns of the faculty and report findings to the dean; and
  9. to ensure equitable procedures in assessing faculty merit and salary recommendations on the departmental level.

The membership of the committee shall consist of four elected members of the faculty, one from each voting area (see II.B.), and three members of the faculty appointed by the dean. Faculty members holding the academic rank of associate or full professor are eligible to be elected to this committee. One of the three appointed members may hold the rank of principal lecturer/non-tenure track full time faculty; otherwise, the appointed members will also hold the rank of associate or full professor. Departmental chairs are not eligible for membership on the Faculty Council. The dean or a person designated by the dean shall be non-voting chair of the committee.

2. The Personnel Affairs Committee

The function of the Personnel Affairs Committee shall be:

a. to formulate policy for the college regarding the appointment, promotion, granting of tenure, and termination of faculty in the college;

b. to review and approve departmental criteria and procedures for the evaluation of faculty performance for purposes of promotion, tenure, and progress in rank; and

1. to make recommendations to the dean on promotion, tenure, and progress in rank cases presented to the college by its departments.

The membership of the committee shall consist of four elected members of the faculty, one from each voting area (see II.B.), and three members of the faculty appointed by the dean. The dean, associate deans and department chairs shall not be eligible for election or appointment to this committee. Only faculty members holding the academic rank of professor are eligible for membership on this committee. Each year the committee will select a chair from among its members in their second or third year of service. The dean and associate dean for administrative affairs may attend and participate in presentations made to the committee as part of promotion, tenure, and progress in rank cases, but may not participate in committee deliberations.

3. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

The function of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee shall be:

a. to receive and act on all proposals for undergraduate curricular change from all units of the college;

b. to review and initiate changes in undergraduate degree programs and academic standards of the college;

c. to establish procedures, by which changes in the undergraduate curriculum may be processed in an orderly and expeditious way;

d. to ensure the integrity of the degree programs by periodically conducting a review and evaluation, in depth, of the core requirements in the degree programs

of the college. Such core curriculum reviews shall be initiated in years that are multiples of five; and

e. to review curricular proposals from other schools and colleges at UNT that might affect existing programs in CLASS.

The membership of the committee shall consist of four elected members of the faculty, one from each voting area (see II.B.), and three members of the faculty appointed by the dean. Faculty members holding the academic rank of lecturer, senior lecturer, principal lecturer, and assistant, associate or full professor are eligible to serve on this committee. The dean or a person designated by the dean shall be non-voting chair of the committee. Unless there is no pending business, the committee shall meet at least once each month during the nine-month academic year. Additional meetings may be called by the dean.

4. The Graduate Curriculum Committee

The function of the Graduate Curriculum Committee shall be:

a. to receive and act on all proposals for graduate curricular change from all units of the college;

b. to review and initiate changes in the graduate degree programs and academic standards of the college; and

c. to review curricular proposals from other schools and colleges at UNT that might affect existing graduate programs in CLASS.

The membership of the committee shall consist of four elected members of the faculty, one from each voting area (see II.B.), and three members of the faculty appointed by the dean. Faculty members holding the academic rank of assistant, associate or full professor are eligible to serve on this committee. The dean or a person designated by the dean shall be non-voting chair of the committee. Unless there is no pending business, the committee shall meet at least once each month during the nine-month academic year. Additional meetings may be called by the dean.

D. Academic Freedom

The primary authority governing academic freedom for all faculty members at UNT is University Policy 06.035, “Academic Freedom and Academic Responsibility.” The faculty of CLASS also affirm the following statement developed by the American Association of University Professors in its 2009 report on “Protecting an Independent Faculty Voice: Academic Freedom after *Garcetti v. Ceballos*”:

Academic freedom is the freedom to teach, both in and outside the classroom, to conduct research and to publish the results of those investigations, and to address any matter of institutional policy or action whether or not as a member of an agency of institutional governance. Professors should also have the freedom to address the larger community with regard to any matter of social, political, economic, or other interest, without institutional discipline or restraint, save in response to fundamental violations of professional ethics or statements that suggest disciplinary incompetence.

E. Grievance

1. Appealable Decisions

Any faculty member who disagrees with a decision made by his or her chair may ask the dean to review that decision. The formal procedure described here applies only to disputes related to the following appealable actions or decisions:

1. annual evaluations;
2. termination of tenured faculty;
3. termination of non-tenure track full time faculty of any rank prior to the end of a contract or appointment period; and
4. corrective actions as described in UNT policy on Faculty Misconduct and Discipline (06.025).

If a department decides not to renew a non-tenure track full time faculty of any rank at the end of a contract or appointment period, this action will be subject to review by the dean, but is not an appealable action or decision.

Appeals related to negative tenure or promotion decisions are not governed by these bylaws but rather by UNT policy on Faculty Appointments and Granting of Tenure (06.007, formerly 15.0.1).

1. Grievance Procedure

An appeal to the Faculty Council from a faculty member must come within twenty-one (21) days of when the appellant is first informed of the decision being appealed.

a. If the alleged grievance occurred in a department, the aggrieved party shall exhaust all department grievance procedures available before appealing on the college level.

b. If the aggrieved party is dissatisfied with a decision identified as appealable in E.1, the aggrieved party may appeal in writing to the Faculty Council. The Faculty Council shall review the grievance to ensure that college and university policies have been met, including timeliness, whether an appealable action is being grieved and whether the grievance substantially involves a previously adjudicated appeal. If policies have been met, there shall then be constituted a five-person ad hoc grievance committee chosen from faculty members in CLASS. The Faculty Council and aggrieved party shall each appoint two tenured faculty members to the committee. The persons chosen must not have been directly involved in the proceedings or issues leading to the appeal. Those four members shall, by majority vote, compile a ranked list of at least three nominees, with the same restrictions as govern the selection of the original four appointees, from which the Faculty Council shall select the fifth member and chair of the committee. Following its final selection, the committee shall normally meet within two weeks to hear arguments. The committee shall then render its findings to the dean and aggrieved party (normally within one week of hearing arguments). The dean shall then accept, modify, or reject the ad hoc committee’s findings. If the aggrieved party is dissatisfied with the ad hoc committee’s decision or the dean's ruling, he/she may pursue university-level appeals according to UNT policy.

ARTICLE II. Administrative Organization of the College

A. Academic Units

The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences consists of the following units:

Division of Communication, Media, and Performance

Department of Communication Studies

Department of Dance and Theatre

Department of Media Arts

Department of Technical Communication

Mayborn School of Journalism

Division of Humanities

Department of English

Department of History

Department of Philosophy and Religion

Department of Spanish

Department of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

Division of Social Sciences

Department of Anthropology

Department of Economics

Department of Geography and the Environment

Department of Political Science

Department of Psychology

Department of Sociology

Interdisciplinary Programs

Aerospace Studies

International Studies Program

Jewish and Israel Studies Program

Military Science

Women’s and Gender Studies Program

The departments and interdisciplinary programs shall be considered the basic organizational units of the college. Proposals to add, abolish, or split departments or interdisciplinary programs shall, after initial consultation of all the members of the groups directly concerned, and of the Faculty Council, be referred by the dean to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for consideration and recommendation. The divisions of “Communication, Media, and Performance,” “Humanities,” and “Social Sciences” provide a framework for discussion, collaboration, and comparison between similar departments and do not denote an additional layer of administrative hierarchy interposing between the dean and the departments in those divisions.

Within the regulations of the university, the departments and interdisciplinary programs shall recommend to the college the establishment of courses and programs, the policies of admissions to these programs, and the requirements for degrees, diplomas and certificates.

Through the standing committees of the college, the faculty and the dean will consider these recommendations from the departments for recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

B. Areas for the Purpose of Voting

Area I

Department of Anthropology

Department of English

Department of Philosophy and Religion

Department of Sociology

Area II

Department of Economics

Department of History

Department of Media Arts

Women’s and Gender Studies Program

International Studies Program

Mayborn School of Journalism

Area III

Department of Geography and the Environment

Department of Psychology

Department of Technical Communication

Department of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

Area IV

Department of Communication Studies

Department of Dance and Theatre

Department of Political Science

Department of Spanish

These voting areas are designed to have roughly equivalent numbers of full-time faculty and of full professors as of Spring 2017. Beginning in Spring 2020, the Faculty Council shall review and rebalance them every three years if necessary, and such rebalancing will not require formal revision of the college bylaws.

C. The Dean

The dean of CLASS is the chief administrative officer of the college and shall be responsible for the orderly and efficient academic operation of the college. The dean shares responsibility for the definition and attainment of college goals consistent with the mission of the university, for administrative action, and for operating the communication system which links the academic components of the college. He or she represents the college to its various publics. As chief administrative officer of the college, the dean has a special obligation to innovate and initiate. The dean may appoint associate deans at his or her discretion.

The dean shall be responsible for communications to the faculty on matters affecting the college as a unit of the university and for carrying out policies adopted by the faculty within its policy responsibility. The dean shall recommend to the faculty procedures for implementing policies and present proposed policies to the faculty for its consideration. The dean shall receive and transmit expressions of faculty concern on policies or actions not directly within the area of faculty responsibility. The dean may create special committees or, with consent of the Faculty Assembly, standing committees for assisting in the conduct of college business.

D. Department Chairs

Chairs shall be appointed by the dean upon consultation with the appropriate department committee and/or faculty.

Chairs shall be responsible for advancing the teaching, research, and service mission of the department in concert with the dean and working within the guidelines of Article III. Although the chairs, as a group, shall not have a specific role in college governance, they shall meet with the dean on a regular basis and a summary of those meetings shall be published to the faculty. Chairs shall serve terms of four years, with quadrennial review and the possibility of reappointment with the mutual agreement of the dean, the department, and the chair.

ARTICLE III. Departments

A. Minimum Standards of Organization and Procedure

1. Each department shall have bylaws that have been approved by the faculty of that unit, the Faculty Council, and the dean.

2. The provisions of such bylaws shall in no way conflict with or supersede the procedures of the college or university.

3. Details as to the structure and procedures of the basic academic unit may vary, but the unit bylaws must have as their objective the creation of an atmosphere that is receptive to individual opinion and that encourages the free exchange of views and the participation of all full-time faculty in the decision-making process.

4. Each basic academic unit shall meet in regular faculty meeting at least once per long semester, and may meet more often as provided in the unit bylaws.