



College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

BYLAWS

(As Amended, June 2017)

Section I. COMPOSITION OF THE FACULTY

- A. The voting College faculty shall consist of all tenured and tenure-track professors, associate professors, and assistant professors in the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. In addition, all promotion eligible non-tenure track faculty who have been full time employees at the University of Houston continuously for three years may have the vote on specific issues as defined below in Section III.B.1. In these bylaws, the unmodified use of the word “faculty” refers to the tenured and tenure-track faculty only. In the interests of unambiguous clarity, all references to research or instructional faculty will be explicit.
- B. Other non-tenured track positions in the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics as defined by the Faculty Handbook are:
1. Promotion Eligible
 - a. Research Faculty
 - b. Clinical Faculty
 - c. Instructional Faculty
 2. Non-Promotion Eligible
 - a. Visiting Faculty
 - b. Lecturing Faculty
 - c. Research Scientist and Senior Research Scientist
 - d. Adjunct Faculty

Definitions, qualifications for appointment, appointment procedures, duration and nature of the appointment, general privileges, academic privileges, promotion, compensation, restrictions, and exceptions for non-tenured faculty stated in the University Faculty Handbook shall generally be followed by the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. Specific modifications to University guidelines will be noted as needed below. Additional qualifications, procedures and privileges may be defined by the several Departments of the College in their own policies and by-laws.

- C. Voting and committee membership privileges for non-tenure track faculty are explicitly stated below. In general, promotion eligible non-tenure track faculty who have been in continuous full time employment at the University of Houston for a minimum of three years will be afforded voting rights in the professional domains in which they have

responsibilities. All such areas are specifically enumerated below. Non-tenure track faculty shall not vote on issues pertaining to recruiting, hiring, and tenure and promotion of tenure track faculty; on lab and office space assignments or on teaching schedules of tenure-track faculty or on other tenure-track issues.

Section II. FACULTY MEETINGS

- A. The Dean or a representative designated by the Dean shall preside over College faculty meetings.
- B. Meetings of the College faculty shall be held at least once during each semester, but the Dean may call special meetings. In addition, the Dean shall call a special meeting if requested to do so either by the Committee on College Government or by petition of at least 10 percent of the faculty of the College.
- C. The faculty shall be notified and provided with an agenda at least five business days in advance of all meetings. The agenda and notification may be provided either in writing or by electronic mail.
- D. The minutes of the meetings will be kept by an individual appointed by the Dean. Copies of the minutes shall be distributed to all faculty as soon as possible by electronic mail.
- E. Specific rules to govern the conduct of meetings, in addition to those stated in these bylaws, may be adopted at any time by a vote of two-thirds of the eligible voting members present at a meeting. In the absence of such rules, the meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.
- F. Only those members of the tenured and tenure-track faculty who hold an appointment in the College that is more than half time may always vote. Voting on any issue will ordinarily be by voice or a show of hands but may, at the discretion of the Dean, be by secret ballot or by mail ballot, and will at the request of any five faculty members eligible to vote, be by secret ballot. Voting for membership of College Standing Committees and election to the Faculty Senate will be by mail ballot.
- G. For any given motion or action item, promotion eligible non-tenure track faculty who have been in continuous full time employment at the University of Houston for a minimum of three years and who hold an appointment in the College that is more than half time may be allowed to vote if the subject is in a professional domain in which they have responsibilities, as specified herein in Section III.B.1. Voting rights decisions not provided herein will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Dean, with the advice and consent of the Committee on College Government.
- H. No vote can be taken in the absence of a quorum. A quorum shall consist of one-third of the eligible voting faculty of the College.

Section III. COMMITTEES

A. The Committees of the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics shall consist of the following standing committees and such ad hoc committees as shall be appointed in a manner hereinafter provided.

1. Committee on College Government
2. Committee on Graduate Studies
3. Committee on Undergraduate Studies
4. Promotion and Tenure Committee
5. Instructional and Clinical Faculty Promotion Committee
6. Policy Committee

Each committee shall perform the duties assigned to it below and such other duties as normally devolve upon the academic committee bearing its title. Each committee shall submit a brief report to the Dean at the end of the Spring semester which will be made available to the faculty. Terms of office of all committees shall commence on September 1 of the year in which the member is elected.

1. The Committee on College Government shall consist of one tenured faculty member from each department, one promotion eligible non-tenure track faculty member at the associate or full rank from any department in the college who has been in continuous full time employment at the University of Houston for a minimum of three years, and the Dean or an Associate Dean designated by the Dean. Either of the latter will serve in a non-voting *ex officio* capacity. The non-tenure track Committee member may vote on all matters where the subject is in a professional domain in which they have responsibilities except items A.1.e, A.1.f, and A.1.h. They may not hear tenure or tenure track faculty grievance. The Committee shall have the following duties:
 - a. consider and make recommendations to the faculty regarding both Departmental and College Government,
 - b. conduct elections for the College as provided in Section II.F., Section III.B., and Section IX.B.,
 - c. designate faculty members to fill faculty vacancies on standing committees as provided in Section III. B.9.,
 - d. conduct polls of departments for nominations for the chair as provided in Section VI. A.,
 - e. review departmental bylaws as provided in Section VI.B., and .C.
 - f. review and recommend on non-trivial grievances of faculty members, including all non-voting faculty.
 - g. establish and review the policy for administering and criteria for awarding Faculty Development Leaves.
 - h. advise the Dean regarding voting eligibility for any motion or action item not otherwise specified herein.
 - i. review the College bylaws every ten years.

2. The Committee on Graduate Studies shall consist of one tenured or tenure-track faculty member from each department, one graduate student member, and the Dean or an Associate Dean designated by the Dean. Either of the latter will serve in a non-voting *ex officio* capacity. The Graduate Studies Committee may have one at-large research faculty member that holds the rank of research associate professor or above, who has been in continuous full time employment at the University of Houston for a minimum of three years. This committee will be chaired by the Dean or an Associate Dean designated by the Dean and shall:
 - a. consider and make recommendations regarding all changes of graduate curriculum or degree requirements,
 - b. determine the procedures by which graduate curricula within the college are developed and evaluated,
 - c. advise the Dean regarding graduate programs,
 - d. review and recommend on non-trivial grievances of graduate students,
 - e. determine the procedures by which standards for student admissions, grading and candidacy for graduate study are set,
 - f. recommend nominees for vacant positions on the Graduate and Professional Studies Council to the Dean.

3. The Committee on Undergraduate Studies shall consist of one tenured, tenure-track or instructional faculty member from each department in the College, one undergraduate student member, and the Dean or an Associate Dean designated by the Dean. Either of the latter will serve in a non-voting *ex officio* capacity. The instructional faculty Committee members may vote on all matters where the subject is in a professional domain in which they have responsibilities. This committee will be chaired by the Dean or an Associate Dean designated by the Dean and shall:
 - a. consider and make recommendations regarding all changes of undergraduate curriculum or degree requirements,
 - b. determine the procedures by which undergraduate curricula within the college are developed and evaluated,
 - c. deal with general questions of policy concerning the training of teachers in the College.
 - d. review and recommend on non-trivial grievances of undergraduate students,
 - e. determine the procedures by which standards for student admissions and grading for undergraduate study are set.
 - f. recommend nominees for vacant positions on the Undergraduate Council to the Dean.

4. The Promotion and Tenure Committee shall consist of one tenured faculty member holding the rank of professor from each department in the College, and two at-large representatives from the College's promotion eligible Research faculty holding the rank of Research Professor who have been in continuous full time employment at the University of Houston for a minimum of three years. The non-tenure track faculty representatives will not participate in matters involving tenure-track and tenured

faculty. This committee shall:

- a. advise the Dean concerning promotion of, awarding of tenure to, post-tenure review of, and termination of tenured and tenure-track faculty members,
 - b. advise the Dean concerning review of, promotion of, and termination of research faculty,
 - c. determine performance criteria used to perform tasks (a), and (b),
 - d. advise the Dean concerning the planning, budget and administration of the College.
 - e. advise the Dean concerning the awarding of Faculty Development Leaves.
5. The Instructional and Clinical Faculty Promotion Committee shall consist of one promotion eligible non-tenure track faculty member holding the rank of Instructional or Clinical Professor from each Department in the College. They shall be elected from the promotion-eligible Instructional and/or Clinical faculty ranks who have been in continuous full time employment at the University of Houston continuously for a minimum of three years and who hold an appointment in the College that is more than half time may vote for the following positions on the College Standing Committees. If any Department does not have any Instructional or Clinical professors, then said Department may nominate a candidate holding the rank of tenured Professor. In addition, this committee shall have four at-large tenured faculty from different Departments holding the rank of professor. This committee shall:
- a. advise the Dean concerning questions that arise relating to the review, promotion and termination of Instructional and Clinical Faculty,
 - b. determine performance criteria used to perform task (a),
6. The Policy Committee shall consist of one tenured faculty member from each department in the College. The Dean or an Associate Dean designated by the Dean will serve in a non-voting *ex officio* capacity. One promotion eligible non-tenure track faculty member from any Department who has been in continuous full time employment at the University of Houston for a minimum of three years will also serve on this committee. The non-tenure track Committee member may vote on all matters where the subject is in a professional domain in which they have responsibilities. This committee shall:
- a. advise the Dean concerning the planning, budget and administration of the College,
 - b. advise and review College policies and procedures, except as otherwise specified above.
 - c. perform biannual reviews of the College Business Office, NSM IT, NSM Facilities, and Associate Deans.

B.

1. Tenured and tenure-track faculty who hold an appointment in the College that is more than half time may vote for all positions on the College Standing Committees. Promotion eligible non-tenure track faculty who have been full time employees at the University of Houston continuously for three years and who hold an appointment in the College that is more than half time may vote for the following positions on the College Standing Committees:
 - a. Research Faculty: College Government Non-Tenure Track At-Large; Graduate Studies Research Faculty At Large; Promotion and Tenure Research Faculty at Large; Policy Committee Non-Tenure Track At-Large.
 - b. Instructional and Clinical Faculty: College Government Non-Tenure Track At-Large; Undergraduate Studies Department Representatives; Instructional and Clinical All Positions; Policy Committee Non-Tenure Track At-Large.
2. Half of the faculty membership on the standing committees shall be elected annually for two year terms. The election shall be conducted electronically by the Committee on College Government during the last week of classes in March each year. By the last day of February, each department eligible for representation on any standing committee shall submit to the Committee on College Government the name of an elected eligible member of that department as nominee for each such position elected in accordance with section VI.B.9. Any department that wishes may submit elected nominees for any and all open unaffiliated Committee positions.
3. The Committee on College Government shall further solicit, during the first week of March, nominations of additional eligible faculty from the entire faculty of the College. These At-Large nominees must belong to the Department that they are being nominated to represent. Five At-Large nominations are required to qualify a nominee for the final vote.
4. A ballot containing the names of the departmental nominees and of all other individuals who receive at least five nominations shall be distributed to the voting faculty members of the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics by the fifteenth day of March 15. Each faculty member may vote for one nominee for each position and shall return the ballot to the Committee on College Government before the last working day of March. Those persons receiving a majority of the vote for each position shall be declared elected. In the event that no person receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off election will be conducted by written ballot.
5. In odd numbered years, the departments of Biology and Biochemistry, Computer Science, and Earth and Atmospheric Sciences shall have representatives elected to the Committee on College Government, the Committee on Graduate Studies and the Instructional and Clinical Faculty Promotion Committee while the departments of Chemistry, Mathematics, and Physics shall have representatives elected to the Committee on Undergraduate Studies, the Promotion and Tenure Committee and the Policy Committee. In even numbered years, the opposite pairing of departments and

committees shall hold.

6. The student members on the Committee on Graduate Studies and the Committee on Undergraduate Studies shall be elected in a manner decided by the Dean in collaboration with the Department Chairs. This procedure may vary from department to department as dictated by individual circumstances but should involve input from student organizations when feasible. The student members will serve one year terms. The departments will provide student committee members on a rotating basis such that two departments are always represented. The Government Committee will solicit student member names for the upcoming academic year from the relevant departments at the same time nominations for faculty membership on standing committees are solicited.
 7. The Chair of all standing committees shall be elected from and by the respective committees, unless otherwise specified above. When a Committee is hearing a grievance or grade appeal, the Chair must be elected from and by that Committee itself.
 8. The Dean may place any items of business that would normally come before them on the agendas of any of the standing Committees.
 9. The Dean may appoint *ad hoc* committees.
 10. In the case of an extended absence of a faculty member of a standing committee, the committee may request that the Committee on College Government name a substitute faculty member to serve as a member of the committee until the absent member returns or the term expires. This substitute shall be named from the department of the absent member by the Committee on College Government. In the case of the College Policy Committee, vacancies must be filled by special election. In the event of a student vacancy on a standing committee, the appropriate Department Chair will provide a replacement nominee in accordance with selection procedures developed in concert with the Dean.
- C. Staff governance issues arising in the College of Natural Science and Mathematics, including staff grievances, shall be addressed in accordance with Staff Council and University policies and procedures. As provided by those procedures, the Dean may appoint staff standing committees to advise the Dean regarding staff grievances and other issues.

Section IV. FACULTY SENATE MEMBERS

In accordance with the Constitution of the Faculty Senate of the University of Houston, Senators from the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics shall be elected for a term of three years. The terms of office shall be arranged so that the number of senators elected each year is one-third of the total number allotted to the College of Natural Sciences and

Mathematics. The election will be conducted by the Faculty Senate under their rules. The method of nomination shall be the same as that for nominations to College Standing Committees, to the extent permitted by Faculty Senate rules. Positions will be allocated to Departments to the extent that each Department can be represented equally. Any remaining positions will be considered to be College-wide and can be filled by any eligible faculty member. However, no Department will hold more than one College-wide position. In the event two or more candidates from the same Department receive the most votes for College-wide positions, only the candidate with the highest number of votes will be considered elected. Ties will be broken by a run-off election. In case of a senatorial vacancy (or vacancies) the person (or persons) receiving the next highest number of votes in the most recent applicable balloting shall fill the vacancy (or vacancies).

Section V. NEW FACULTY MEMBERS

The dean shall, except under unusual circumstances, recommend new faculty for appointment based on the recommendation of the department concerned.

Section VI. DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

The faculty of the College shall be divided among departments, each of which has its own by-laws and Chair.

A. The Chair of each department shall be appointed or reappointed annually by the President upon recommendation of the Dean. As a general rule, the Chair shall serve for a period of three years. The following procedure will normally be followed in obtaining departmental nominations for the Chair. Early in the Spring semester of the third year of the Chair's term, the Committee on College Government shall determine those tenured and tenure-track members of the department on continuing appointment eligible to vote. The Committee or the Dean will notify those members that they will be polled not less than two weeks later on their nomination for the Chair. The Committee on College Government shall conduct the poll by secret ballot. The results of the poll shall be transmitted to the Dean. The Dean's recommendation for Chair will be transmitted to the Department involved and the Committee on College Government. If the Dean does not recommend that person with the largest number of votes for the Chair, the Dean's recommendation will be transmitted to the Committee on College Government and the Department involved. The results of the poll will be made available to members of the Department at the time notice to the department of the appointment is given. Poll results will never be released by the Committee on College Government before the Dean has officially announced his recommendation. Exceptions to this procedure are appropriate in the following circumstances:

1. If a Chair resigns before the expiration of the usual three-year term, or if a vacancy should otherwise occur in the departmental Chair, the Committee on

College Government will institute the polling of the department when notified of the vacancy by the Dean.

2. If any department informs the Committee on College Government that they wish to nominate for the chair a person who is not at that time a member of the University of Houston faculty, the procedure for polling the department may be followed at another time than specified above.
- B. The members of each department shall adopt departmental bylaws and transmit them to the Committee on College Government. These bylaws shall include procedures for the following:
1. Scheduling and conduct of departmental meetings,
 2. Selection and operation of departmental committees and their work,
 3. Determination of performance criteria used for promotions, terminations, post-tenure review and salary increments,
 4. Recommendations concerning promotions, terminations, post-tenure review, and salary increments,
 5. Adjudicating faculty grievances and merit increment appeals, consistent with College and University policy;
 6. Conduct of the academic programs,
 7. Selection of new faculty members and other changes in departmental personnel,
 8. Changes in curriculum and teaching materials,
 9. Democratic nomination of representatives to College standing committees and the Faculty Senate. In the event that the Committee on College Government finds the bylaws of a department to be inadequate regarding faculty participation, the committee will so inform the department.
 10. Leadership development that trains current faculty to become potential faculty administrators and Chairs.
- C. The bylaws of the College shall take precedence over departmental bylaws whenever they are in a conflict.
- D. Nothing in any Departmental bylaws should be construed to supersede policies and rules established by the statutes of the University of Houston as described in the Faculty Handbook and other materials provided by the Office of the Provost.

Section VII. GRIEVANCES

The procedure for faculty grievances is governed by the faculty handbook. A potential grievant should note that there are strict time limits to steps in the process, which if not met, will waive consideration of the grievance. These policies and procedures apply to all categories of faculty. The following further details the treatment of grievances at the college level.

- A. Initial Resolution Effort: The by-laws of each Department shall govern the initial

resolution effort insofar as said bylaws are consistent with University policy and these bylaws. In the absence of Departmental bylaws, the following initial resolution effort procedure shall be followed. Faculty members believing that they have cause for grievance should discuss the matter in a personal conference with their department Chair. If the grievance is against a department Chair, it goes directly to the college grievance committee. If the matter cannot be resolved by mutual consent at this point, the faculty member may request the matter be referred to the elected departmental grievance committee. The issue may be submitted in writing or the grievant may request a hearing at which they may have the assistance of a representative and may present evidence. In the event that the department has not yet constituted an elected grievance committee, the post-tenure review committee will serve as the grievance committee. In either case the committee will issue findings of fact with a recommendation in writing within ten working days. If the matter cannot be resolved by mutual consent at this point, the issue should be discussed in a personal conference with the Dean.

- B. Submission of a Formal Written Grievance: Only after the grievant has engaged in informal personal conference(s) with the Department Chair and the Dean and if the matter has not been resolved by mutual consent at the foregoing levels, the faculty member may send a formal letter of complaint to the Dean. If the grievance is against the Dean, it goes directly to the University Grievance Committee. The Dean's decision may be appealed by a presentation of the complaint to the Committee on College Government, which serves as the college grievance committee. Within 28 working days from the receipt of the formal letter of complaint, unless in the meantime the issue shall have been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, the committee shall hold a hearing on the complaint. The grievant may have a representative present and may present evidence. An accurate record of the hearing will be made. Otherwise, the procedure of the hearing will be determined by the committee. The committee's decision shall be presented to the Dean, as a recommendation, within ten working days of the hearing, unless, with the grievant's permission, additional time to gather facts is required.

Section VIII. OTHER

- A. The Dean shall take appropriate measures to ensure opportunities for leadership development and continued training for Associate Deans, other faculty administrators and Department Chairs.
- B. Nothing in the College bylaws should be construed to supersede policies and rules established by the statutes of the University of Houston as described in the Faculty Handbook and other materials provided by the Office of the Provost.

Section IX. AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended by either of two procedures:

- A. At any meeting of the tenured and tenure-track faculty by a two-thirds vote of those present, provided that a copy of the proposed amendment or amendments is given to the faculty at least two weeks in advance of the meeting at which it is voted on.
- B. By mail ballot with two week prior distribution of the proposed amendment or amendments with approval by at least two-thirds of those voting, if at least one-third of the eligible tenured and tenure-track faculty participate.