

Generic Departmental Governance Document

Most recent revision approved September 28, 2022 Senate Meeting

[The following document shall be used by departments until they have produced their own document, and it has been approved.]

Adopted Month XX, 20YY

A. Definition of Membership

All faculty of the department, other than lecturers and visiting faculty, who hold more than a half-time appointment in the department, are members of the departmental governance body (hereafter referred to as the Assembly). Faculty who hold an appointment as described above during only one semester of an academic year shall have membership only during that semester. Faculty who qualify for membership shall have all privileges, including voting right, as set forth in this document.

B. General Charge of the Assembly

The Assembly is charged with the governance for the academic program of the department in a manner consistent with the goals and objectives of the department, college, and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

C. Jurisdiction of the Assembly

The Assembly shall have legislative power over the academic business of the department, including, but not limited to, the following matters:

- Curriculum including course and program additions, changes, and deletions.
- Degrees offered and degree requirements.
- Class scheduling within the parameters of meeting student needs and university requirements.

In addition, the Assembly, in cooperation with the department chairperson, shall recommend personnel policies to be observed within the department and shall perform a monitoring function to ensure that such policies are being observed.

Included in this authority are

- The authority (within UALR's Procedures and Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure) to review faculty performance, including tenure and promotion, and to make recommendations in this regard, in addition to those recommendations provided by the chair.
- The authority to recommend the hiring and dismissal of faculty.

- Recommendations on budgetary priorities concerning the department's discretionary funds.

D. Assembly Meetings

1. Presiding Officer

The chairperson or their designated representative shall preside at all meetings of the Assembly.

2. Schedule of Meetings

A meeting of the Assembly shall be scheduled by the department chairperson no later than the sixth day of classes for both the fall and spring semesters. The department chairperson may also call additional meetings and shall honor requests for called meetings by 25% or more of the Assembly's membership, or three members of the Assembly, whichever is less. A department meeting may be called at any time during the summer or during vacation periods provided a notice of the meeting and the agenda are mailed to the home of each faculty member at least seven calendar days prior to the meeting. Normal rules and requirements apply during the summer and vacation meetings. At the next regular meeting, the chair will summarize actions taken during the summer and/or vacation meetings.

3. Place of Meetings

Meetings will be held at a place convenient to members of the department, normally on the University campus in close proximity to department offices, hybrid or synchronously.

4. Meeting Agenda

Agendas shall be prepared by the department chair for all regularly scheduled meetings of the Assembly and shall be distributed to the members no later than 5:00 p.m. of the day before the meeting. Items may be placed on the agenda by any member of the Assembly.

5. Quorum

A quorum of 60% or more of the membership of the Assembly is required in order to conduct business requiring a vote at meetings of the Assembly. Meetings may be held without a quorum for discussion purposes only.

6. Voting Procedures

A simple majority of all members voting on an item of business of the Assembly is required for approval, except where otherwise specified in this document or in Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised. No proxy voting is allowed. The Assembly may consider a motion on any item of business pertinent to the department. The Assembly may submit recommendations to the department chairperson on items not

within the jurisdiction of the Assembly. While the chairperson is not bound to honor the Assembly's recommendations on such items, the chairperson is expected to inform the Assembly of his or her actions. Members of the Assembly may challenge actions of committees of the Assembly through motions submitted at meetings of the Assembly.

7. Rules of Order

The business of the meeting shall be conducted in accordance with the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised, unless specified otherwise in this departmental governance document.

8. Meetings Open

Meetings of the department are open to anyone who wishes to attend, except when personnel matters are being considered or when student privacy rights must be respected.

9. Record of Meetings

A department Assembly member will be elected or assigned by the chairperson to record minutes of each meeting, which shall be distributed to all members following the meeting. Copies of the minutes shall be maintained in the department office.

10. Voice and Voting Rights

All members of the Assembly shall have voice and vote at meetings of the Assembly. Other persons invited to attend meetings, including lecturers, staff members, and students of the department, have voice without vote.

E. Committees of the Assembly

Members of committees shall be elected by majority vote of members present and voting at a meeting of the Assembly that was publicized in advance for the purpose of such election. Members of committees shall be elected for a term of one year.

Each committee shall select a chairperson. Business of the committees shall be conducted by majority vote of members present and voting. Committee members are expected to attend all meetings of their committees.

The following committees shall function as herein described:

1. Curriculum Committee

The general charge to this committee is the overview of all academic matters of the department. Specific duties include:

Review and approval of all course additions, deletions and changes, all program additions and deletions, and all curriculum changes.

Other academic matters.

2. Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee is responsible for monitoring all matters involving personnel including but not limited to the matters as directed below. After adoption of policies on these matters by the assembly, the committee shall continue to evaluate and recommend changes to the Assembly, as warranted.

The Personnel Committee shall coordinate and review the development of promotion and tenure criteria and procedures and submit them to the Assembly for consideration. These criteria must be in accordance with Board of Trustee and University policies.

The Personnel Committee shall coordinate and review the development of detailed criteria and procedures for annual evaluation of faculty and submit them to the Assembly for consideration. These criteria and procedures shall include their application to determining merit raises. These criteria and procedures shall include any specific items needed to accomplish post-tenure review. These criteria must be in accordance with Board of Trustee and University policies.

3. Promotion and Tenure Committee

Due to the varying requirements to participate as a member of a promotion and tenure committee under the University's Promotion and Tenure Guidelines, the Assembly shall establish committees as needed to review applications for promotion or tenure. Each committee shall consist of three members, meeting the requirements in the University's Promotion and Tenure Guidelines, and elected by the Assembly. In the event that there are not enough faculty members eligible under University Promotion and Tenure Guidelines, the Assembly shall create a list of qualified individuals from outside the department. The list shall contain at least one name more than the number of additional members needed and shall be used by the College Dean to select the remaining members

4. Assessment Committee

The Assessment Committee will recommend goals and means to the faculty for the assessment of student learning outcomes and will oversee their implementation. The committee will provide assessment assistance to faculty as needed and will analyze and report assessment results to the department and to other University officials.

5. Ad Hoc Committees

The Assembly may establish ad hoc committees. The department chair may also establish ad hoc committees, with notice to the department of the membership and assignment of any such ad hoc committee.

F. Department Administration

1. Chairperson

The department chairperson is the academic leader of the department. As such, the chairperson is expected to provide leadership with the goal of developing and maintaining academic programs of distinctive quality. The chairperson shall allocate available budget and other resources to support and encourage all faculty to seek excellence in teaching, Scholarly, Creative and Professional Activity and service. The chairperson shall ascertain that all students of the department are receiving appropriate advisement. The chairperson shall ascertain that student organizations within the department have chosen faculty members to be advisors in accordance with their by-laws. The chairperson shall evaluate faculty for salary increases, tenure, and promotion in accordance with procedures and criteria approved by the Assembly. The chairperson then shall forward his/her recommendations for tenure and promotion, along with the recommendations for promotion and tenure of the Promotion and Tenure Committee to the Dean. The chairperson shall prepare budget requests to the administration and report such requests to the Assembly. The chairperson shall review class schedules to ensure that all scheduled courses are staffed and shall assist in hiring part-time instructors.

2. Selection of Department Chairperson

Recommendations to the dean for the department chairperson position shall normally be made by election from among faculty members of the Assembly. The chairperson shall be elected for a term of three years and shall be elected by written ballot by majority vote of Assembly members that was publicized in advance for the purpose of such election.

The department chairperson must be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member within the department.

G. Annual Review of Faculty

1. General guidelines

The annual review of the work of each faculty member shall be made in accordance to criteria and procedures required in Board Policy 405.1 (revised) and other pertinent Board and University policies.

The goals of the annual review are to: a) evaluate the activities and achievements of the faculty during a given year; b) identify meritorious accomplishment by faculty; c) identify inadequate performance by faculty in order to provide guidance for faculty development.

This review is to provide guidance and assistance to all faculty in their professional development and academic responsibilities. The annual review of each faculty

member shall provide the primary basis for the Chair's recommendation relating to salary, promotion, granting of tenure, successive appointment, non-reappointment and dismissal.

Review of faculty performance shall be based on three broad categories: teaching; scholarly, creative, professional activity; and service. Each year, at the time of the preparation of the self-evaluation, each faculty member shall estimate a percentage of his/her work to be allocated among teaching; scholarly, creative, professional activities; and service. In no case shall the percentage for teaching be less than 50% and some activity is expected in both of the other areas. For Instructors, it is assumed that the percentage for teaching will be significantly greater.

The department recognizes the various talents of individual faculty members and their respective interests as well as the difficulty in assigning to faculty a specific percentage of their efforts that should be dedicated to each of the areas. Tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to contribute in all three areas. Non-tenure-track faculty are expected to emphasize teaching and contribute in the other areas as their interest and assigned tasks permit.

2. Criteria

a. Teaching

The Roles and Rewards Task Force I (policy 403.20) identified universal qualities of effective teaching. Although they were listed with tenured faculty in mind, they apply to non-tenured faculty as well. “The nature of effective teaching may vary across disciplines, but certain qualities are universal: respect for students, faith in student abilities, a focus on student learning, and a commitment to student success. Equally important, faculty should view themselves as role models who convey the values of their disciplines and initiate students into their professions. In the pursuit of excellence in teaching, faculty members must remain current in their discipline and in pedagogical strategies. They should consider teaching a continual process of improvement and growth.”

All faculty are expected to meet classes regularly, require appropriate work from students, make themselves available for student consultations, maintain regular office hours, provide and follow a course outline/syllabus, respond adequately and fairly to student work and offer examinations and other forms of student assessment that are fair in the sense of giving each student an equal chance to succeed and are relevant to the content of the course. Teaching effectiveness will be evaluated, and performance below Departmental standards will be deemed unsatisfactory.

Teaching is defined in terms of providing for student learning in a variety of ways including classroom or laboratory instruction, team teaching, supervision of independent study or research, multi-disciplinary teaching activities, student advisement, course preparation, curriculum design and development, use of creative teaching strategies and technologies, and innovative activities.

Documentation of teaching performance may include, but is not limited to evidence of the following:

- appropriate teaching methods
- innovative teaching methods
- appropriate usage of technology
- currency of course content and presentation techniques
- ability to inspire and stimulate students
- development of courses and/or instructional material
- effectiveness/leadership in academic advisement and mentoring
- teaching awards/honors
- student/peer evaluations

b. Scholarly, Creative and Professional Activity

For tenured and tenure-track faculty, there is the expectation that they be involved in scholarly, creative and professional activities. A continuing lack of involvement in such activities will be deemed unsatisfactory. For Instructors desiring advancement, there is the expectation that they be involved in scholarly, creative or professional activities.

Documentation used to evaluate scholarly, creative, professional activity may include evidence of:

- academic publications (books, monographs, articles, reviews, scholarly newsletters)
- grants
- papers/presentations at professional meetings
- creative works
- membership on editorial boards of professional journals
- service as manuscript referee—preparation of instructional materials (texts, videos, lab manuals, etc.).
- training and certification in specialized skills
- professional honors/awards

c. Service

Service involves service within the university, the community and the profession. All voting members are expected to perform committee work within the department and

from time to time at the college and university levels. Members are expected to be responsive to community needs as time and expertise allow. A continuing lack of involvement in service activities will be deemed unsatisfactory.

Tenured and tenure-track faculty shall be evaluated in terms of service to the profession, the public, the university, and the department and may include activities such as discipline-related community service, work on college or university committees, department service, administrative service, working with professional organizations and participation in professional meetings. Instructors desiring advancement shall be evaluated for their work in service as described below as well.

Documentation of service may include evidence of:

- activities intended to enhance community understanding
- involvement in professional organizations
- holding office or positions of leadership in professional organizations
- involvement in student life activities
- service to other University programs
- participation in discipline-related service organizations
- leadership in college/university governance
- participation in college/university committees/councils

H. Post Tenure Review

Criteria and Procedures: to include the following:

With regard to tenured faculty an annual rating of unsatisfactory in any two categories of teaching, service, or research shall constitute an overall unsatisfactory performance rating for that year. Before making a determination of overall unsatisfactory, the chairperson must take into consideration the faculty member's assigned workload and evidence of relevant, documented efforts and outcomes within the context of that workload.

If there is a determination of overall unsatisfactory performance, then post-tenure review will be initiated. If the faculty member is not rated overall unsatisfactory, then the faculty member is overall satisfactory.

If the faculty member is determined to be overall unsatisfactory, the Promotion and Tenure Committee, the chair, and the dean shall prepare a professional development plan supported by appropriate resources. The plan must be developed within 30 days of the final overall evaluation of overall unsatisfactory and must contain measurable objective benchmarks identifying what is necessary to attain meaningful progress and, separately, satisfactory performance.

If the faculty member receives one additional overall unsatisfactory review during the professional development plan period, and fails to demonstrate meaningful progress in remediating overall performance deficiencies, the department chairperson, informed by the recommendation of the Promotion and Tenure Committee and the dean, may initiate the process for terminating with cause the tenured faculty member as specified in the UA Little Rock and UA Board policies.

I. Evaluation of Faculty and Staff for Salary Increases

Annual reviews of non-classified personnel shall be conducted in accordance with criteria and procedures approved by the Assembly. The department chairperson shall provide each person a written copy of their evaluation, listing strengths as well as weaknesses, and specifically addressing any problems that require correction.

J. Amendments

Amendments may be proposed by any member of the Assembly through motions submitted at a meeting of the Assembly. Amendments must receive a favorable vote from two-thirds of the members present and voting at two consecutive meetings to become effective. All amendments to this document are subject to review and approval in accordance with the constitution of the University Assembly before they come into effect.

Coda

As a generic departmental governance document, this document is to be used by a new department or department lacking an approved governance document until it can write and get approved a document of its own. The expectation is that each department will replace this document with a document of its own designed to meet the specific needs of their department. To approve a replacement for this document requires a favorable vote from a majority of the members present and voting at two consecutive meetings of the department Assembly. The proposed document must then go through the normal review process of the university with approval being at the discretion of the chancellor.

Commentary:

Originally approved by the Faculty Senate in May, 2011, the changes and additions to the generic governance document are needed to assure conformity to current practices and so that an academic unit using the document utilizes annual review and post-tenure guidelines that conform to newly approved campus policies that meet Board of Trustees requirements.