

Department of Rhetoric & Language By-Laws  
(Non-highlighted sections last approved 2/12/20)

I. Focal Activity of the Department

The Department of Rhetoric and Language promotes various facets of academic and civic discourse at the undergraduate and graduate levels. To facilitate achieving these goals, the Department is currently organized into three curricular areas: Academic English for Multilingual Students, Composition, and Public Speaking. The Department reserves the right to reconfigure these areas in order to best achieve its goals.

II. Department Faculty

A. Membership

1. Full-time faculty: All faculty who hold full-time tenured, probationary, or term appointments in the Department of Rhetoric and Language and teach at least two courses per year in the Department shall be considered voting members (unless assigned to courses outside the department by the Dean). This course load requirement shall not apply to members on sabbatical leave, those with up to a one-year leave of absence, and those with course load reductions.
2. Adjunct faculty: Adjunct faculty within the Department shall be invited to attend at least one designated meeting per year (usually at the beginning) of the semester regarding departmental information). Dates and agenda for these meetings will be set by the chair. Adjunct faculty shall not have voting rights.

B. Duties

1. Full-time members are expected to attend regularly and punctually, all Department and appropriate committee meetings, and to be available for the University for the full-contract period (normally 10 months per the academic calendar, except when the university is closed).
2. Faculty are expected to conduct themselves professionally in all of their dealings with students, administration, staff, and fellow faculty. This includes, but is not limited to, respect for the Department Chair's and Coordinators' roles, responsibilities in assuming workload arrangements, which includes maintaining explicit communication with the chair when negotiating assignments outside the department, cooperation and courtesy, discretion in maintaining confidentiality with respect to departmental business, independent thinking and expression, and support once a vote is taken. (Revised and Approved by the faculty 1/30/19)

C. Committees

1. Ad-hoc committees may be created at the initiative of the chair, a coordinator (with approval of the chair), or the Department.

2. Full-time faculty may volunteer for or be appointed by the chair to committees. They have precedence over part-time faculty to serve and chair said committees. They may decline to serve on a committee.
3. Adjunct faculty may volunteer or be appointed to serve on ad hoc committees at the chair's discretion. They may decline to serve on a committee.

### III. Chair

#### A. Election and term

1. The chair shall be a full-time faculty member and shall be elected by a majority vote of the full-time faculty members. The chair will serve for a term of three years. A chair may be re-elected once consecutively.
2. The Chair shall form an election committee (2-3 full-time faculty) before September 1 of the last year of their term.
3. Nominations for the position of chair shall be solicited by the election committee from September 1 until October 15 of the last year of Chair's term. Nominees shall be contacted to determine their willingness to serve, and any individual may withdraw their name from consideration at any time up to the date of the election. The list of candidates will be circulated among all voting members of the Department by November 1.
4. Elections shall be held in accordance with the USF Faculty Association Collective Bargaining Agreement [Section 27.3] (i.e., they shall be secret, written, and subject to a simple majority of those members who vote.) Absentee ballots will be included. The initial vote shall be taken by November 15.
5. If no member receives a majority, a runoff election between the top two vote-getters shall be held by November 30.

#### B. Duties of the chair

1. The chair shall represent the Department to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, or to any other administrative official. The chair shall present fully and accurately the formal resolutions of Department faculty as well as their informal consensus in all matters concerning administrative-faculty relations and policies. If the chair cannot in good faith advocate a departmental position, they shall appoint someone of the majority to represent that position to the Dean.
2. The chair shall serve as the ordinary conduit of information to and from the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, or any administrative official, on all matters of concern to the Department as a whole. They shall consult with the Department on matters requiring such consultation through a Departmental meeting, if possible, or if that is not possible because of extenuating circumstances by consulting with coordinators and faculty members individually.
3. The chair shall represent the Department on the College Council and the Arts Council and shall inform the Department members of the business of the councils.
4. The duties enumerated below shall be in addition to those given to the chair by the administration for the conduct of university business.
5. Scheduling and Setting the agenda:

- a. The chair shall schedule at least two department meetings a semester.
- b. The chair shall ask for agenda items in writing sufficiently in advance so that the agenda may be published before the meeting and distributed to all Department members, both voting and non-voting members.
- c. Meetings shall be canceled if no old business remains and if no new business is brought to the attention of the chair prior to the meeting. New items may be placed on the agenda at the meeting by consensus.
- d. Robert's Rules of Order shall be considered normative but not mandatory for conducting Department meetings, subject to the discretion of the chair of the meeting. However, any two members present may invoke Robert's Rules on a given issue.
- e. The chair shall have a vote in all proceedings and the privilege of a voice in all discussions.
- f. Motions shall be decided by a majority of the eligible voters present. Absentee or proxy ballots shall be allowed, provided that they are presented prior to the vote.
- g. A quorum is defined as a simple majority of voting members of the Department. If a quorum is not achieved at any departmental meeting all voting shall be postponed until a future date. **Approved by Full-time Faculty 2-12-20**

#### IV. Coordinators

##### A. Appointment and Term

1. The chair shall appoint coordinators for identified curricular areas in the department with approval of the Dean's office.
2. Coordinators are generally full-time faculty of the Department.
3. Coordinators will serve for a term of three years. A coordinator may be re-appointed once consecutively.
4. On January 15 in the year a coordinatorship term ends, the chair will solicit statements of interest for that position.
5. The Chair will notify the faculty of those interested in serving as a coordinator and provide an opportunity for commentary.
6. By the 10th week of the last semester of an incumbent's term, a new coordinator shall be appointed by April 15.

##### B. Duties

1. Each coordinator shall represent faculty of a designated academic area as appropriate.
2. Each coordinator shall work closely with the chair and faculty to perform identified duties. Duties might include curriculum development, curriculum coordination, course scheduling, and promotion of an area, as well as participating in the hiring and retention of adjunct faculty.

## V. AEM Program Director

### A. Appointment

The faculty of the Department will participate with the Dean's office of the College of Arts and Sciences in hiring a faculty member, who must have relevant training and experience in the field of adult second language learning and program administration, as director of the AEM Program.

### B. Duties

1. Coordinate the curriculum development and assessment of the Program.
2. Monitor registrations and enrollments in order to schedule all the courses for the Program each semester.
3. Hold AEM meetings with the Full-time faculty at least twice each semester, and at least once each semester with the Part-time faculty.
4. Manage all the testing and placement activities with new and continuing AEM students. This includes the English Placement Test, testing of new students recruited by their Gaokao scores, and other special tests organized with the Office of International Admissions.
5. Coordinate AEM advising with other faculty of the AEM program (including advising all the AEM students when the other advisors are not on contract as in the summer).
6. Maintain regular communication with the students in the Program beginning with pre-arrival contact. This includes communication with other advisors on campus (CASA and individual major advisors).
7. Advocate broadly for the support of international students for whom English is not the primary language. This includes working with ISSS on International Education Week and many other initiatives to support international students.

## VI. By-laws

- A. In the event that amendments or additions to the by-laws are deemed necessary by a majority of the faculty, the chair may appoint an ad-hoc committee to recommend such changes.
- B. By-laws shall be approved by a two-thirds majority of all voting members of the Department. If this majority is not achieved, the chair may request that the ad-hoc committee revise their proposals accordingly for a second vote by the Department.

## VII. Savings Clause

If any provision of the by-laws conflicts with the provision of any federal or state statute, or Executive Order having the effect of law, now in force or hereafter enacted, the remainder of these by-laws shall remain in full force and effect unless the parts so found to be void or illegal are wholly inseparable from the remaining portions of these by-laws.