

Department of English Structure and Policies

Adopted by the English Department Committee of the Whole, April 22, 2022

Vision Statement

The Department of English will provide programs of the highest quality to graduate effective thinkers, readers, and writers who can address challenges of the new century.

Mission Statement

The UTEP Department of English is committed to innovative teaching, scholarship, and service that promote cultural awareness, diversity, and ethical responsibility through the study of literature, language, and rhetoric. The Department of English is a large and flourishing department, contributing in essential ways to students' personal growth, knowledge, and critical thinking abilities. As part of the university situated on the U.S./Mexico border, the department's undergraduate and graduate programs offer unique opportunities for studying diverse literatures, aesthetics, and cultures; composition, professional writing, and rhetoric in digital formats; and teacher preparation in a bicultural environment. The Department's graduates go on to successful careers in education at all levels, research, professional writing and editing, publishing, business and law.

PART ONE

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

1. CHAIR

The chair of the Department of English ("department") is the primary departmental administrator, with responsibilities as defined by the Institutional Supplement to the Regent's Rules (UTEP HOP I: 3.1.10 and UT System Rule "UTS182," attached). The department will recommend a candidate for chair to the dean of the College of Liberal Arts. The chair is appointed at the recommendation of the dean. The term of appointment is for three years; the appointment may be renewed using the same process. The chair promotes the departmental vision; hires, evaluates personnel, and meets annually with tenure-track faculty to review progress toward tenure and promotion; addresses student concerns; represents the department at the college and university levels; and advocates on behalf of the department and its individual members for equity and support in areas including, but not limited to, research and travel funding, salaries, and technology acquisitions. The chair also oversees curricula development and evaluation, fund raising, the schedule, and the department website. The chair can delegate some of these responsibilities and can create ad hoc committees to assist in departmental work. The chair appoints all departmental administrators, who serve at the chair's discretion, and is responsible for the hiring and evaluation of office staff. As administrative roles in the department open, the chair will encourage and solicit nominations from the general faculty to generate candidates for these roles in the department. Recommendations from all departmental administrators are subject to review by the chair.

The chair represents the department in monthly chairs and directors meetings with the dean and will seek the guidance of the committee of the whole on matters requiring departmental input on College policies and procedures (examples include, but are not limited to, proposed changes in merit evaluation procedures, tenure and promotion

guidelines, etc.); The chair will keep the faculty informed of information coming out of the dean's office that affects the department. In the event the chair cannot attend a chairs and directors meeting with the dean, the department associate chair will represent the department.

At least once in every calendar year the chair will solicit input from the steering committee regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the office staff.

The chair will hold regular steering committee meetings, announced in advance and open to non-voting members of the tenured and tenure-track faculty; minutes of the steering committee will be made available to the faculty in a secure site, preferably electronically.

2. DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATORS

Any part of the duties of the departmental administrators enumerated below may be delegated with the concurrence of the chair.

2.1 ASSOCIATE CHAIR

The Associate Chair also serves as Director of Graduate Studies, and as such coordinates graduate advising and scheduling, serves as the graduate programs' liaison to the Graduate School, and chairs the Graduate Studies Committee for the department. The Associate Chair also oversees matters delegated by the chair, with particular emphasis on the department's website, social media and departmental special events. As necessary, the associate chair will attend college and university meetings on the chair's behalf. The associate chair is a tenured member of the faculty.

2.2 PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Program directors work with faculty members to develop curriculum in the program areas. Directors also oversee course rotation and course scheduling at the undergraduate level and coordinate advising for their programs. The program directors sit on both the Graduate Studies Committee and the Undergraduate Studies Committee.

The Director of Literature directs the undergraduate and graduate Literature programs and chairs the Literature committee.

The Director of English Education directs the undergraduate and graduate English Education programs and chairs the English Education committee.

The Director of Rhetoric and Writing Studies directs the undergraduate and graduate programs in Rhetoric and Writing Studies, including the doctoral program, and chairs the Rhetoric and Writing Studies committee.

The Director of First-Year Composition directs the first-year composition program and chairs the First-Year Composition committee.

PART TWO

COMMITTEES

1. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE:

Purpose: This committee is charged with the following tasks:

- a. Recommendations on hiring (see 3.1 below).
- b. Recommendations to the dean on selection of a chair.

The chair search committee (see page 6 below) will call a meeting of the committee of the whole for deliberation on the search for a chair. The results of the vote, conducted by secret ballot, will be forwarded to the chair search committee, the department, and the dean.

Members: All tenured and tenure-track faculty.

In the event that a majority of the tenured faculty shares significant concerns regarding the chair's leadership, they may initiate a formal hearing of the tenured members of the committee of the whole to discuss these concerns with the committee and the chair, the latter of whom should be given opportunity to respond. Causes for concern may include, but are not limited to, such issues as chronic absence from the job, misuse of department funds, lack of effective representation at the college and university level, non-responsiveness to poor chair evaluations, subversion of departmental policies and procedures, etc. A hearing should only be called after routine efforts to ameliorate the situation—faculty complaints, attempted intervention by departmental directors, etc.—have been exhausted. Outcomes from a meeting may include, but are not limited to, such resolutions as a decision to take no action, a formal request to the chair to step down, or a call for a vote of no confidence, to be taken by confidential ballot. In the event of a majority vote of no confidence, the results of the vote will be forwarded to the dean.

- c. Recommendations to the chair on Tenure and Promotion.

The chair will call a meeting of appropriate faculty of the committee of the whole for the purpose of deliberating matters of promotion and tenure. This vote will be conducted by secret ballot, and faculty will be required to initial a cover envelope indicating that they have voted. The vote itself will be reported to the chair and certified by signature and date on the cover envelope by at least three volunteers from the tenured faculty. Sealed and dated envelopes will be sent to the Dean's Office.

Members: Faculty deemed eligible to vote by university regulations.

- d. Any other issue that requires deliberation by the faculty of the department as a whole.

Members: Members and eligibility to vote dependent upon the nature of the issue.

2. STEERING COMMITTEE:

Purpose: The steering committee serves as an executive committee to advise the chair on budget and hiring matters, to recommend scheduling of courses and curriculum changes at all levels, and to evaluate program requirements.

Members: chair (ex-officio), departmental administrators, and three tenured or tenure-track members of the department elected by full-time faculty.

Officers: The chair of the department is the chair of the committee; the committee may also elect a secretary.

Terms: Terms of the elected members of the steering committee are three years, to be staggered.

Elected members whose terms are expiring may be reelected. Special elections shall be held as necessary to fill vacancies.

GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

The Graduate Studies Committee consults with the Associate Chair on scheduling and curriculum matters across the graduate programs in the department. This committee includes the directors of the individual programs in the department and two additional members elected by the Committee of the Whole.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

The Undergraduate Studies Committee includes the directors of each of the individual programs in the department and two members elected by the Committee of the Whole. The committee works with the program directors and the scheduling coordinator on developing the course rotation for our undergraduate offerings across the department.

3. PROGRAM COMMITTEES:

- A. Literature
- B. English Education
- C. Rhetoric and Writing Studies
- D. First-year Composition

Full time faculty in each of the academic programs in the department constitute a program committee to assist the appropriate Directors in program planning, curriculum development, and hiring. If the faculty in a particular program concur, they may elect an executive committee of at least 6 members: terms shall be for three years and shall be staggered, the committee chair shall solicit nominations from all full-time faculty for vacancies, the names of all candidates will appear on ballots, and voting shall be by secret ballot. Each program committee should include at least one member from outside the program in order to encourage coordination across the department.

3.1 HIRING COMMITTEES

The steering committee and the relevant program committee will together constitute a first-level hiring committee to conduct interviews and to vote (by secret ballot) on the recommendations to the faculty and chair of the department. This vote will then be reported, along with the accompanying recommendation, to the general faculty in a meeting of the committee of the whole. After hearing the recommendation of the steering and relevant program committee, the committee of the whole will deliberate and vote (by secret ballot) on its recommendation to the chair. ***Note that faculty who, for whatever reason, were unable to participate in any aspect of the search should notify the chair in writing of their recusal from the vote; the vote reported to the dean should indicate the numbers of such ineligible faculty.***

Proxy Votes: Proxy votes will be accepted for decisions regarding hiring only in cases of demonstrable conflict (such as illness or absence from UTEP on professional business). Faculty needing to cast a proxy must inform the chair of the reasons along with a brief description of their involvement in the hiring process (i.e., attendance at candidate interviews, presentations, teaching demonstrations, etc.).

4. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE (Tenure-Stream Faculty)

Purpose: The personnel committee evaluates the faculty for merit and makes recommendations to the chair. Non-Tenure-Track faculty who teach primarily First Year Composition will be evaluated by a separate personnel committee composed of First Year Composition faculty and chaired by the Director of First Year Composition. Non-Tenure-Track faculty who teach outside First Year Composition will be evaluated by a third committee composed of other faculty in this category.

Members: 2 tenured full professors elected by the full professors, 2 tenured associate professors elected by the tenured associate professors, 2 tenured members-at-large elected by the tenured/tenure-track faculty.

Elections: Elections will take place either during the last four weeks of classes in the spring semester or during the opening two weeks of the fall semester.

Elections will be held in rank by means of a caucus.

After elections in rank, an open meeting of eligible voters will be called to elect the members-at-large. Signed proxies containing votes for a specific members- at-large may be given to the chair by eligible voters who are unable to attend.

Vacancies shall be filled by special election.

To be eligible to serve on the personnel committee, faculty must be appointed for at least two thirds of their time in the English Department and not have a conflict of interest (such as a higher administrative position).

Officers: The chair of the personnel committee is the department chair (ex-officio), who is permitted but not obligated to participate in the committee's activities. The committee may elect a secretary.

Terms: The terms will be staggered so as to assure continuity on the committee. All members will serve for two-year terms.

No one may serve more than two consecutive full terms.

5. CHAIR SEARCH COMMITTEE:

Purpose: To make recommendation to the dean, after consultation with the faculty of the department, about filling the position of chair.

Members: The six members of the personnel committee and a seventh person elected by the six members from among tenured faculty. (The outgoing chair of the department does not attend meetings of the chair search committee.)

Officer: The seven members of the committee shall elect their own chair.

Terms: In the fall of the chair's third year (or in any earlier semester in which the chair

leaves office or announces the intention to leave office), the members of the personnel committee will be reconstituted as a chair search committee. It will then sit until a chair has been appointed.

Vacancies shall be filled immediately by special election.

6. LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Purpose: The committee reviews departmental philosophy, organization, and procedures, and recommends changes to the department.

Members: Eight tenured or tenure-track faculty, five of whom are appointed by the department chair and three of whom are elected tenured and tenure-track faculty.

Officers: The members of the long-range planning committee will elect their own chair and may elect a secretary.

Terms: Three-year term is renewable. Vacancies shall be filled immediately by appointment or special election as appropriate.

Committee meetings, with the exception of the personnel committee, are announced in advance, open to the participation of all interested faculty.

PART THREE

FACULTY EVALUATION POLICY

Preparation of materials for annual merit evaluation, and of the evaluation itself by the personnel committee, shall follow the procedures established by the College of Liberal Arts and the University.

The department offers the following guidelines to members of the Personnel Committee in evaluating faculty work:

In evaluating our colleagues' work, we should attend to issues of quantity and quality, and look for ways of ensuring that we are acknowledging our colleagues' efforts as thoroughly and appropriately as possible. These deliberations should be informed by the recommendations and guidelines as laid out by our professional organizations and by best practices in our respective fields.

Each April, the Steering and Personnel Committees should hold a joint meeting to debrief on the PAR process and to update guidelines for the Personnel Committee on how best to evaluate files. For research, this should probably include some discussion of the relationship among authored books and edited books and textbooks, between single-author and co-authored or multi-authored work, between more traditional forms of scholarly dissemination and digital and/or public-facing scholarship, between journal articles and book chapters, and between authorial and editorial work in general. For teaching, it might consider ways in which excellence in teaching can be documented beyond SAQs. For service, it might include some guidance for evaluating committee service, contributions to public programming, and administrative service. The Steering and Personnel Committees will

review and revise the guidelines each spring and follow up on these revisions with the new committee membership in October.

Preparation of materials for promotion and tenure decisions, and evaluation for purposes of promotion and tenure, shall follow the procedures and rules established by the College of Liberal Arts and the University. Please see attached guidelines prepared by the Office of the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

In addition to the procedures set forth by the College, the English Department has established the following recommendations to faculty on possible paths to tenure and promotion related to research and publication:

Tenure and Promotion Guidelines for Candidates and Committees

In accordance with university policy set forth in the *Handbook of Operating Procedures* (HOOP), attached, the English Department acknowledges evidence of a candidate's ongoing contributions to research, teaching and service in considering applications for tenure and promotion. The following guidelines suggest a number of possible paths toward meeting the research component of the tenure and promotion portfolio.

Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor

The general research standard for tenure and promotion in the Department of English at UTEP is the authorship of a peer-reviewed scholarly book or its equivalent. Possible paths are indicated below, although this list should not be seen as exhausting the range of possibilities for demonstrating a level of research excellence compatible with the award of tenure and promotion. With regard to any of the options below, the quality and scope of the contribution is paramount, and the evaluation of the contribution by external reviewers is given special weight in determining the question of quality. Promotion and tenure committees will make every effort to follow the published guidelines of the relevant professional organizations (CCCC, MLA, NCTE) in evaluating scholarship.

Examples of success:

1. One published, peer-reviewed, scholarly monograph (additional publications in the form of articles, book chapters, etc., encouraged, but not necessarily essential). The typical range in length for such a publication is anywhere from 60,000 to 110,000 words. As detailed in number 5 below, a completed book manuscript that is under contract or at a significant stage of review may be considered as part of the tenure package, although by itself may not fulfill the requirements for tenure and promotion.
2. One published, peer-reviewed scholarly edited collection or scholarly edition (additional publications in the forms of articles, book chapters, etc., required). Both edited books and edited special issues of journals fall under this category. Because the variability within the categories "edited book collection" and "edited special issue" is more extensive than the variability between the categories, these contributions will be judged on their individual

merits, without the *a priori* assumption that one is more substantial than the other.^a

3. An innovative, substantial textbook. Such a textbook, grounded in the author's own research, can be considered significant scholarship (with additional publications in the forms of articles, book chapters, etc., required). Depending on the textbook's scope, design, and publisher (and perhaps even influence) such a textbook could be considered the equivalent of a monograph or of an edited collection or scholarly edition. In literary studies, textbook authorship is less common, but a substantial contribution in this area can also be considered on its individual merits in making a tenure decision.

4. No book, a combination of peer reviewed published scholarly articles and book chapters that are the equivalent of a book. Generally, 50,000 words should be reached under this option, and the appropriateness of the venues should be clear.^b

5. Book manuscript completed *and* under contract or under review. The unpublished manuscript must be supplemented by the publication of significant articles and book chapters, although not necessarily as much as if there is no completed manuscript. In this case the judgment of external reviewers on the quality of the completed manuscript is especially important. College guidelines indicate that for full credit to be given for a book, it should be at least the proofs stage, but this does not preclude offering an evaluation of work at earlier stages.^c

Promotion to Professor

The standard for promotion from associate professor to professor is the production of a second peer-reviewed scholarly book or its equivalent, with the same level of scholarly productivity post-tenure that is required pre-tenure for tenure and promotion necessary. The department recognizes that scholarly contributions at this level may be more reflective of an individual's specific trajectory than at earlier stages in an individual's career.

EMERITA/EMERITUS STATUS POLICIES

Nominations of retired faculty for Emerita/Emeritus Status, preparation of supporting materials, and evaluations and recommendations concerning such status shall follow the guidelines and procedures of the College of Liberal Arts and the University.

PART FOUR

APPROVAL AND AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

Upon the approval of two-thirds of the tenured and tenure-tracks members of the Department, the procedures and functions herein become accepted policy. This document may be repealed, altered, or amended by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the tenured and tenure-track members of the Department of English.

^a Collaborative scholarship is common and highly valued in the fields of Rhetoric and

Writing Studies and English Education. The assumption in these fields is that collaborative projects can be as labor intensive and noteworthy as single-authored publications. The precedents for co-authorship are less extensive in literary studies, but co-editing is very common, and there are instances of co-authored work that have been considered groundbreaking in the field, so cases will be considered on their individual merits.

^b The above still does not fully account for the existence of digital scholarly projects, which can range from the equivalent of a brief essay to the equivalent of a monograph depending on the size and ambition of the project. As such projects become more common, more detailed discussion of how to evaluate them will be required. Promotion and tenure committees will make every effort follow the published guidelines of the relevant professional organizations (CCCC, MLA, NCTE) in evaluating digital projects. When appropriate, external evaluators with expertise in digital scholarly projects will be selected.

^c Also noteworthy is that some faculty may obtain grant support to fund their research. This is an important supplement to publication, but should not be understood to replace it entirely, particularly if the grant obtained is designed to support publication. In the fields of English Education and Rhetoric and Writing Studies, grants that support the development of new programs, as well as faculty research, are highly valued.