

**Washington State University
Department of English Bylaws**

Ratified on March 11, 2020

Washington State University acknowledges that its locations statewide are on the homelands of Native peoples, who have lived in this region from time immemorial. Currently, there are 43 tribes, 36 of which are federally recognized, that share traditional homelands and waterways in what is now Washington state. Some of these are confederacies that represent multiple tribes and bands. The University expresses its deepest respect for and gratitude to these original caretakers of the region. As an academic community, we acknowledge our responsibility to establish and maintain relationships with these tribes and Native peoples, in support of tribal sovereignty and the inclusion of their voices in teaching, research, and programming. We also pledge that these relationships will consist of mutual trust, respect, and reciprocity.

The Department of English upholds Washington State University's commitment to providing a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace, one where all employees and volunteers, whatever their gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, sexual orientation or identity, education or ability, feel valued and respected. We are committed to a nondiscriminatory approach to education and scholarship, and provide equal opportunity for employment and advancement in all of our programs. We respect and value diverse life experiences and heritages and believe that all voices should be valued and heard.

We're committed to modeling inclusion for the entire College of Arts and Sciences and to maintaining an environment that demonstrates equitable treatment for all faculty, staff, and students.

To provide informed and justice-based leadership that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusivity, the English Department strives to:

- See equity, diversity, and inclusion, as connected to our mission and critical to ensure the well-being of our faculty, staff, students, and the community we serve.
- Acknowledge and dismantle any inequities within our policies, systems, programs, and services, and continually update and report any factors (institutional and personnel) that impede our mission to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture.
- Explore potential underlying, unquestioned assumptions that interfere with equity and inclusiveness.
- Advocate for and support broad-level thinking about how systemic inequities impact our department and work, and how best to address them in a way that is consistent with our mission.

- Help work to challenge unquestioned assumptions about what it takes to be effective within and outside of the department and classroom and about who is well-positioned to provide leadership.
- Practice and encourage transparent communication in all interactions regardless of rank or position in the department.
- Commit time and resources to encourage diverse leadership within our department: staff, committee, and advisory bodies.
- Lead with respect, adopt anti-oppressive approaches, challenge implicit biases, and address all forms of injustice through everyday practices.

I. Organization and Operation

The English Department is governed by five interdependent sets of regulations:

- A. Federal and State laws and regulations;
- B. WSU policies and procedures;
- C. College of Arts and Sciences policies and procedures;
- D. The Faculty Handbook;
- E. Departmental Bylaws and policies.

II. Department Membership

The members of the English Department consist of (herein described collectively as “the members”):

- A. Tenured and tenure-track faculty;
- B. Career Track Faculty
- C. Instructors
- D. AP and Civil Service staff assigned to the department (minimum .50 FTE)

III. Department Meetings

A. Department meetings will be run according to the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order (<http://www.robertsrules.com>) and State of Washington Open Meetings Act (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=42.30>).

B. The Department will meet at least monthly during the regular academic year. The Chair of the Department has the authority to schedule additional meetings when necessary and cancel meetings that are unnecessary. In addition, should 25% or more of

the department's total membership request a meeting, that meeting must be convened within one week of the request.

C. Operating rules for Department and Committee meetings:

1. All Department and committee meetings will be conducted in a manner consistent with the principles outlined in the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, and procedural questions not reconciled through existing Department policies will be settled by reference to that manual.

2. Minutes of all meetings will be kept according to Department policies, and distributed promptly after each meeting.

3. An agenda will be circulated by the Department or Committee Chair no later than two days before departmental meetings except in cases in which formal votes are planned, when the notification period will be one week.

4. A quorum for Department meetings will consist of 25% of the entire department membership in residence. Regular attendance at faculty meetings is expected of all members, though the department recognizes that university-approved accommodations, affiliate unit obligations, travel, care responsibilities, or competing professional obligations may prevent individual faculty from attending any given meeting.

5. Voting Rules:

a. All members of the Department as described in II. above are to be considered equal voting members.

b. Decisions will be made, with exceptions noted elsewhere in the bylaws, by a simple majority vote in physical meetings of the department.

c. Voting at department meetings will proceed by secret ballot on all personnel issues and at other times if requested by two or more eligible voters at least 48 hours in advance. In all other instances voting will proceed by voice vote or show of hands.

d. Voting rights on personnel matters are subject to patterns established in the *WSU Faculty Manual* and the Provost's Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion, which may limit the categories of eligible voters and establish procedures that differ from those articulated in these bylaws.

e. Only department members eligible for Graduate Faculty status may vote on matters pertaining to the English Graduate Program.

f. All voting members may vote on matters concerning undergraduate teaching and curriculum matters.

g. All Department faculty and Department officers must abide by the University's conflict of interest policies (see, *EP#27*). They must recuse themselves from any votes or decisions in which they have a conflict of interest.

IV. Governance

A. The Chair

1. The Chair will serve as the academic and administrative leader of the Department. The Chair will perform in this capacity in accordance with the duties and responsibilities of this office as set forth in the Bylaws of Board of Regents and in any relevant, written guidelines issued by the College of Arts and Sciences. The Chair will also be guided by any WSU Faculty Senate policies regarding the professional duties of department chairs.

2. Eligibility and processes for the appointment, renewal, and conclusion of the Chair are governed by the WSU Faculty Manual.

3. In consultation with the appropriate committees, the Chair will oversee the implementation of department policies in the following areas:

a. The Chair is the main administrative officer of the English Department, and is responsible to both its members and to the university administration.

b. As per the *WSU Faculty Manual*, the Chair represents and executes the will and policies of the Department. In doing so the Chair is also provided the latitude to permit the making and the execution of day-to-day operating decisions and the exercise of leadership responsibilities.

c. The Chair is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the English Department, including but not limited to:

- i) Staff supervision.
- ii) Preparing and signing all necessary paperwork.
- iii) Registration and scheduling.
- iv) Curriculum implementation and development.
- (v) Budgeting, strategic planning, oversight of equipment and facilities.
- (vi) Convening and presiding over department meetings, and ensuring that department committees are meeting to fulfill their responsibilities.
- (vii) Personnel processes as specified in English Department and University policies.

- (viii) Serving as the final level of student appeal within the Department.
- (ix) Implementation of the department's faculty mentoring policies.
- (x) The appointment of chairs/directors and members of standing committees (subject to the terms of appointment to the standing committees outlined below in section 6), with the exception of the Director of the Program in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, who is appointed by the Dean of the College of Arts in Sciences, in consultation with the Chair of English and the WGSS Advisory Committee. WGSS is governed by WGSS bylaws, with WGSS affiliate faculty serving as members both of WGSS and of their home or appointing unit.
- (xi) Representing (or selecting individuals to represent) the Department on CAS or university committees

B. The Associate Chair is appointed by and responsible to the department Chair. The Associate Chair prepares the semester course schedules and University catalog copy, serves as acting chair in the absence of the Chair, and performs whatever other occasional duties are assigned by the Chair.

C. Other Department Officers

1. To assist in the smooth operation of the Department and its curriculum, the Department maintains the following additional officers: the Director of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, the Director of Graduate Studies, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, the Director of Composition, the Assistant Director of Composition, , the Director of Creative Writing, and the Director of the Visiting Writers Series (collectively "the Department Officers"). Individuals are appointed to these positions by the Chair, subject to the processes described below.
2. The normal term of a Department Officer will be three years, renewable by mutual agreement between the Chair and the Officer for an additional three years. Department Officers may stand for additional terms beyond six years but are then subject to the new appointment procedures described below. Appointments as a Department Officer and any associated duties will be confirmed in writing.
3. New appointments to any Department Officer position will be made via the following process:
 - a) The Chair will announce the position(s) for which candidates are sought and solicit nominations of candidates. Self-nominations are permitted for all offices; nominees may either accept or decline candidacy.

b) The Chair will then meet with each nominated candidate to discuss the position, its duties, and the candidate's interest. Only after meeting with all nominees will a Chair select the candidate to fill that office.

D. Department Committees

1. The English Department's standing committees are an important part of the shared governance of the Department and committee service should be distributed as widely and equitably as possible. The standing committees are the Graduate Studies Committee, the Undergraduate Studies Committee, the Composition Committee, the Awards Committee, and the Career Track Advisory Committee (CTAC). In furtherance of their responsibilities (outlines below), these committees may also form sub-committees of their membership to handle specific, time-limited tasks.

2. With the exception of the CTAC, for which see D.3, appointments to standing committees are made by the Chair upon consultation with the relevant Director or committee chair. Appointments to standing committees are for two-year terms. Whenever possible, the membership of Standing Committees will be rotated among appropriate faculty and will be balanced by rank and representation from all campuses.

3. Career Track Advisory Committee

a) Membership on the CTAC is determined annually by election in the spring semester. The Chair will solicit nominations (including self-nominations) of potential members from the department faculty, seeking individuals at both the instructor and clinical ranks. After confirming their willingness to serve, the Chair will prepare a ballot to be distributed to all instructors and clinical faculty members. Based on the results of this balloting, the Chair will identify at least two members from both the Career Track ranks to serve on the committee, the total membership also including at least one representative from Vancouver and Tri-Cities.

b) The role of the CTAC will be to advise and assist the Chair on matters pertaining to the status, professional development, and working conditions of instructors and clinical faculty within the department.

4. Graduate Studies Committee

a) The Graduate Studies Committee will consist of the Director of Graduate Studies, the Chair, the Director of Composition, and three to six additional members appointed by the Chair from among the active faculty. One student representative will be elected by the Department's graduate student body.

b) The Graduate Studies Committee will assist and advise the Director to:

- i) Review, develop and update long-range goals for the English Graduate Program and plans for their attainment.
- ii) Provide guidance on administration of the English Graduate Program.
- iii) Assist with English Graduate Program assessment process.
- iv) Review all student applications and in conjunction with the Director and the Program Coordinator decide the disposition of applications as to acceptance or rejection in a timely manner.
- v) Engage in a regular review of the English Graduate curriculum.
- vi) Make recommendations regarding curricular revision.
- vii) Prepare drafts of course or curricular change forms for revision and submission by the Department Chair.
- viii) Make recommendations for graduate student scholarships and awards.

5. Undergraduate Studies Committee

- a) The Undergraduate Studies Committee will consist of the Director of Undergraduate Studies, the Director of Creative Writing, the English Academic Advisor, and three to six additional members (including at least one from both the Tri-Cities and Vancouver campuses) appointed by the Chair from among the active English faculty. The Director of Undergraduate Studies will also select an undergraduate student representative.
- b) The Undergraduate Studies Committee will assist and advise the Director to:
 - i. Review, develop and update long-range goals for the English undergraduate program and plans for their attainment.
 - ii. Assist with English undergraduate program assessment process.
 - iii. Work with the Academic Advisor to develop and maintain recruiting materials as required.
 - iv. Make recommendations regarding scholarships and awards for undergraduate students.
 - v. Engage in a regular review of the English undergraduate curriculum.
 - vi. Make recommendations to English Department faculty regarding curricular revision.
 - vii. Prepare drafts of course or curricular change forms for revision and submission by the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

6. Composition Committee

- a) The Composition Committee will consist of the Director of Composition, the Assistant Director of Composition, and three to six additional members (including at least one from both the Tri-Cities and Vancouver campuses) appointed by the Chair. One student representative will be elected by the Department's graduate student body.

- b) The Composition Committee will assist and advise the Director to:
- i. Review, develop and update long-range goals for academic composition instruction in the English undergraduate program and plans for their attainment.
 - ii. Coordinate expectations for and design of academic writing courses across all campuses.
 - iii. Engage in a regular review of the English undergraduate writing curriculum.
 - iv. Make recommendations to English Department faculty regarding curricular revision.

7. Scholarships and Awards Committee

- a) The Scholarships and Awards Committee will consist of three to five members appointed by the Chair from among the active English faculty.
- b) The Scholarships and Awards Committee shall review applications for undergraduate scholarships in the Department with the exception of Creative Writing scholarships and awards, which are reviewed by Creative Writing faculty, and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies scholarships and awards, which are reviewed by WGSS faculty and the Director of WGSS. The Committee is also charged with nominating and soliciting nominations from department members for CAS and WSU awards.

E. Ad-Hoc Committees

1. For projects or issues not adequately covered by any of the department's standing committees, the Chair is empowered to convene Ad-Hoc committees.
2. The formation of such committees will be announced to department members in advance and nominations solicited for their membership. Only after reviewing all nominations (including self-nominations) may the Chair appoint the membership of an Ad-Hoc committee.
3. Ad-Hoc Committees must be formally charged by the Chair and that charge reported to department members.

V. Ratification, Review, and Amendment

- A. The bylaws of the Department of English will be ratified by a majority of those present and voting in the Department meeting.

B. Nothing in these bylaws or future amendments may contravene the rights of faculty guaranteed by University policies and procedures or the Washington State University Faculty Handbook. If any portion of these bylaws must be abrogated, the rest will remain in effect.

C. The bylaws will be reviewed by the Department at the end of every fifth academic year. At that time, decisions regarding their continuance and/or modification will be made by a majority of those present and voting in Department meeting.

D. Subsequent to modifications made to the bylaws pursuant to Section V. C, amendments may be proposed by any member of the Department. Amendments must be presented for discussion at two successive regular Department meetings. Passage will require a two-thirds majority at the second of these meetings.