

Constitution
of
The Department of Sociology
Washington State University
23 October 1997
May 2001 Addendum
Revision: March 2019

PREAMBLE:

WE, the members of the Department of Sociology at Washington State University, in order to affirm our collegial relationship; to clarify our responsibilities, our mutual obligations, our rights and prerogatives; and to codify the form of organization by which these shall be carried out, do establish this Department Constitution.

Article I: Purpose

A. The mission of the Department of Sociology is to generate and disseminate knowledge pertaining to sociology and related fields and, in cooperation with other components of the University, to promote the general activity of expanding knowledge in all academic fields.

B. Insofar as the Department concerns itself with other matters, it does so because they facilitate our objectives.

Article II: Membership

A. Faculty Members (includes faculty members with clinical and tenure-accruing appointments as defined by the *Washington State University Faculty Manual*). All faculty members who have any fraction of their appointment in the Department of Sociology, and either have gone through the normal Department hiring process or had their membership approved by a majority vote of the Department faculty, shall be deemed faculty members of the Department of Sociology. Unless otherwise stated, clinical faculty carry the same rights and responsibilities as tenure-accruing faculty, with two exceptions: 1) they may not vote on hiring, tenure and promotion decisions for tenure-accruing faculty; and 2) they may not vote on matters concerning graduate education.

B. Participating Members. All other faculty with “Non-Tenure-Accruing Appointments” (as defined by the *Washington State University Faculty Manual*), the Undergraduate Major Advisor, post-doctoral appointees, and graduate students in good standing in the Department of Sociology shall be deemed participating members of the Department of Sociology.

C. Faculty members are entitled and expected, as a matter of professional obligation, to attend department meetings, to vote on department matters, and to serve on department committees. Graduate students (in conformity with procedures defined in the By-Laws) shall elect representatives who may participate in department meetings; may elect other persons to provide recommendations on department matters and, at the discretion of the Department Chair, may serve on department committees.

Article III: Organization

A. Department

- (1) The Department of Sociology shall function as a deliberative body to consider issues and make recommendations through the Chairperson of the Department to the dean and other appropriate officials of the University on matters affecting the general welfare of the Department.
- (2) The Department may allocate some of its deliberative function to committees and some of its administrative responsibility to members of the faculty.
- (3) Department deliberations shall be conducted in accordance with appropriate provisions of the Department Constitution and By-Laws.

B. Standing Committees

- (1) *Undergraduate Studies Committee.* The Undergraduate Studies Committee is responsible for recommending to the faculty programs and policies pertaining to undergraduate students. Such responsibility includes academic advising, analysis of curriculum needs, preparation of necessary reports, program assessment, and suggestions for teaching innovations.
- (2) *Graduate Studies Committee.* The Graduate Studies Committee has the responsibility for formulating, proposing, and maintaining records of Department policies on all phases of graduate student recruitment, instruction, and evaluation, and for administering the policies approved by the Department. This committee's responsibilities include formulating criteria for graduate student admission to programs and applying these to individual cases. It recommends students for funding, approves individual student degree programs, provides for a system of academic counseling, monitors the graduate curriculum, and aids in the design and administration of preliminary examinations.
- (3) *Recognition & Outreach Committee.* The Recognition & Outreach Committee is responsible for general recognition of the department. First, by informing students of the availability of department scholarships and awards, encouraging applications where appropriate, selecting the recipients of scholarships and awards, and assuring that this recognition is bestowed in a dignified way that encourages broad recognition by others for their accomplishments. The committee is also responsible for nominating faculty, staff and students for College and University recognition when such recognition seems appropriate. However, this role is not intended to exclude nominations being made by the department chair and/or individuals or groups of individuals within the department. Second, it is the charge of this committee to consistently update the departmental web page, provides oversight for the publication of the department's regular newsletter to alumni and friends of Sociology, and develop innovative communication strategies in support of the department and its programs.
- (4) *The Executive Advisory Committee.* The Executive Advisory Committee is a representative committee elected by the faculty. It has the responsibility of advising and making recommendations to the Department Chair and to the faculty on Department matters. This committee derives its authority from the faculty and is accountable to the faculty.

(a) The Executive Advisory Committee shall make policy recommendations and offer counsel to the Chairperson of the Department concerning personnel, budgetary, curriculum, and other matters.

(b) The Executive Advisory Committee will respond to grievances submitted in writing. The Committee will hold confidential hearings on complaints and seek agreement through arbitration, negotiation and compromise. Failing that, the Executive Advisory Committee will report its findings and recommendations in writing to the Department Chair, to other appropriate university administrators, and to the parties involved.

(c) From time to time the Executive Advisory Committee may be requested to provide advice and recommendations directly to the Dean's office or other units of the University. Inasmuch as the Executive Advisory Committee derives its authority from the faculty, it will not make such recommendations without advising the faculty that such recommendations are being made.

C. Committee Formation

In consultation with the faculty, the Chairperson of the Department may create additional committees as the need arises, including permanent committees and ad hoc committees that perform a specific function and are then dissolved (e.g., search committees).

D. Chairperson of the Department.

The Chairperson of the Department of Sociology has responsibilities to Department colleagues, to the dean, and to the administration. The Chairperson of the Department is expected to provide leadership and to give particular attention to Department development. The Chairperson of the Department is the executor of and advocate for the Department's recommendations and policies formulated by a majority of Department faculty. In the course of meeting these responsibilities the Chairperson of the Department shall take into account the recommendations of the Executive Advisory Committee. The Chairperson of the Department is also responsible for recurrent administrative duties but may delegate many of these to other faculty members and staff in order to give prime attention to developmental matters.

Article IV: Amendment

The Executive Advisory Committee and Chairperson of the Department of Sociology shall annually review the Department Constitution and By-Laws, but the Department of Sociology may amend its constitution or By-Laws at any time, subject to the applicable rules of the College and the University. An amendment to the Constitution or By-Laws may be proposed by a resolution circulated to faculty and participating members at least one week prior to the Department meeting for action. An amendment to the Constitution shall be adopted when it has been approved by two-thirds of the faculty by secret ballot. An amendment to the By-Laws shall be adopted when it has been approved by a simple majority of faculty by secret ballot.