

**BYLAWS OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

**ARTICLE I
MISSION AND PREAMBLE**

Section 1. Mission. As South Carolina's only PhD granting Philosophy Department, we have an important responsibility to educate undergraduate and graduate students and the public about the study of philosophy, its value, and relevance. We strive to provide the highest quality instruction, learning opportunities, and research capabilities for our students and communities. As a core discipline of the liberal arts, philosophy involves the critical examination or development of ideas, values, practices, and policies associated with the full range of topics addressed by a modern comprehensive research university. Philosophical research covers a broad array of topics, uses diverse methods, and involves diverse forums and products for presenting the results of research. The mission of the Department of Philosophy includes promoting and supporting such critical examination and development. Activities advancing this mission include original and creative research, education of undergraduate and graduate students, training of professionals in practice settings, and service to the university, the broader community, and national and international societies, organizations, and government bodies.

Section 2. Preamble. Department of Philosophy Bylaws provide a framework in which faculty members may consider, create, and implement department-level policies and procedures relating to instruction, research, and general governance. This framework establishes the department's leadership structure, its committee structure, and its voting rules. In affirming the rights and responsibilities of faculty members to participate fully in departmental governance, the Department of Philosophy commits itself to transparent, cooperative decision-making on matters pertaining to research, undergraduate and graduate programs, service, and departmental resources. Final authority on all matters relating to Department governance resides with the Faculty Manual and University rules and regulations.

**ARTICLE II
MEMBERSHIP AND VOTING**

Section 1. Department Membership. The Regular Faculty of the Department of Philosophy consists of full-time university personnel:

- tenured faculty (e.g., associate and full professors)
- tenure-track faculty (e.g., assistant professors)
- professional-track faculty (e.g., instructors)
- research faculty (e.g., research professors)

The regular faculty also includes faculty with joint appointments in other university units.

The following university personnel are not included in the Regular Faculty:

- research associates
- department affiliates (including faculty appointed in other units)
- temporary faculty
- visiting faculty
- post-doctoral researchers

Section 2. Voting. All members of the Regular Faculty have equal voting rights, except in the following cases specifically restricted to tenured and/or tenure-track faculty:

- per University policy, only tenured faculty may vote on matters concerning tenure and promotion guidelines and advancement of tenure-track faculty;
- only tenured and tenure-track faculty may vote on faculty hires (relating to tenure track or professional track positions, joint appointments, and adjunct appointments);
- only tenured and tenure-track faculty may vote on the election of a Department Chair;
- only tenured and tenure-track faculty may vote on the allocation of financial resources (including IDC).

Other members of the Regular Faculty, while not voting, must be given ample opportunity to voice their opinions on faculty hiring and appointments, including the election of the Department Chair.

ARTICLE III MEETINGS

Section 1. Meetings. Meetings are generally once per month from August through May (nine meetings per year), with special meetings convened during regular academic terms at the request of the Department Chair. Special meetings may also be convened during the regular academic year if requested in writing by five members of the Regular Faculty, or one-quarter of Regular Faculty Members (whichever is smaller). Except in cases of emergency, at least three days' notice should be given for special meetings. Meetings requested by faculty must be held within ten business days of receipt of the request. Meetings may be conducted online if necessitated by emergency circumstances. Meetings are open to the public but can be taken into executive session by the Department Chair.

Regular Faculty members must have an opportunity to discuss, in a regular or special faculty meeting, any issue that requires a vote. Voting on tenure, promotion, hiring, and Department Chair election will follow procedures laid out in the Faculty Manual and Article II herein; eligible voters who are not able to attend the meeting must be given an opportunity to vote by paper or digital ballot within 48 hours of the faculty meeting. All other votes may be undertaken by a hand count unless a faculty member requests an anonymous written or digital ballot. All votes, with the exception of tenure and promotion and faculty-advancement votes, will require a simple majority to pass. This includes changes to bylaws. The vote outcome (passed or failed) should be recorded in meeting minutes.

Section 2. Quorum. A quorum of greater than 50% of Regular Faculty members must be present at a meeting for the transaction of business. The Department Chair is responsible for approving and maintaining the quorum.

Section 3. Agenda. An agenda must be circulated at least three days in advance of the meeting and posted on the Department's administrative website within two weeks of the meeting.

Section 4. Minutes. A scribe must be present at all meetings to take minutes, and minutes must be emailed to the faculty within two weeks of the meeting.

ARTICLE IV DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP

Section 1. Department Chair. The department is overseen by a Chair, who is selected through a formal election process organized by the College of Arts and Sciences in accordance with the Faculty Manual. The Chair is normally appointed for a three-year term. The College of Arts and Sciences oversees the evaluation of the Chair. The Chair must be a tenured Regular Faculty member (full or associate professor). The Chair presides over faculty meetings; evaluates faculty annually; selects committee chairs, committee members, and graduate and undergraduate directors; makes recommendations for faculty sabbaticals and leave; oversees the allocation of department space; supervises and evaluates staff members; organizes teaching schedules for all degree programs; negotiates with other departments for the service and teaching loads of joint appointments; and leads long-term strategic planning related to hiring, graduate programs, undergraduate instruction, research, and infrastructure. The Chair is the department's primary liaison with the College and is responsible for communicating College and University policies to faculty. The Chair has final say over the allocation of department resources to individual faculty members, graduate students, and departmental programs. The Chair is also the department's chief budget officer and oversees the allocation of department funds.

Section 2. Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). The DGS must be a tenured associate or full professor. The DGS is appointed by the Chair normally for a three-year term beginning August 15. The DGS is responsible for coordinating the recruitment of new graduate students (including nominations for recruiting awards); ranking graduate program applicants for admission and funding consideration in consultation with the Chair and with the advice of the Admissions Committee; orienting new graduate students and ensuring their familiarity with program policies and procedures; coordinating graduate student assistantships, tuition supplements, and hiring in consultation with the Chair, department Graduate Program Coordinator; notifying graduate students about TA/RA assignments and managing hiring letters; tracking the progress of graduate students through their course of study; coordinating annual feedback from faculty regarding student progress; completing reporting for University accreditation purposes; and liaising with the College of Arts and Sciences and the Graduate School on all matters pertaining to graduate

education. The College of Arts and Sciences determines the release or compensation for this service in consultation with the Department Chair and the DGS candidate.

Section 3. Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUGS). The DUGS may be any member of the Regular Faculty of the department. The DUGS is appointed by the Chair normally for a three-year term beginning August 15. The DUGS is responsible for overseeing key elements of the undergraduate program, including program assessment, undergraduate awards, revisions to undergraduate programs, and events for philosophy majors. The DUGS also is responsible for liaising with the College of Arts and Sciences and the Provost on all matters pertaining to undergraduate education. The College of Arts and Sciences determines the release or compensation for this service in consultation with the Department Chair and the DUGS candidate.

ARTICLE V COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing Committees. Graduate and Undergraduate Committee chairs and members are appointed by the Department Chair each year. There are no term limits on committee membership or committee chairs. Committee membership is open to all Regular Faculty members except where indicated. Non-Regular Faculty (including graduate students and staff) may participate in committees at the Chair's discretion. Committee terms begin on August 15. Committees may be given a charge by the Department Chair but are capable of establishing their own annual agenda.

Undergraduate Committee: This committee is responsible for vetting course change proposals and new course proposals, and for advising on other matters relating to curricular or programmatic changes. The curriculum committee is also responsible for bringing proposals before the faculty for approval. The curriculum committee may assist faculty members in submitting proposals for College review.

Graduate Committee: This committee is responsible for updating the Graduate Student Handbook and for graduate admissions. With the Graduate Program Coordinator, this committee organizes information about graduate-program applicants and provides an initial evaluation of each application to determine admissibility. The committee identifies potential advisors, collects feedback on applicants from potential advisors and other faculty members, and makes admission decisions. The committee is advisory to the Department Chair and the DGS, who are responsible for offers (admission and funding). This committee also reports on each year's applicant pool to the faculty.

Tenure and Promotion: The T&P chair convenes committees of tenured professors, as specified in unit criteria, to evaluate faculty-advancement cases, including Tenure and Promotion Review, Promotion Review, Tenure Progress Review (formerly 'third-year review') and Post-Tenure Review. The T&P chair guides T&P candidates through the process, leads faculty discussion on each case, solicits external reviews, organizes faculty votes, and submits candidate materials, in

accordance with unit T&P guidelines, College protocols, and the Faculty Manual. The T&P Chair must be a full professor.

Section 2. Ad hoc committees. The Department Chair may appoint temporary, ad hoc committees as needs arise. The size and composition of ad hoc committees is at the Chair's discretion.

ARTICLE VI

AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Section 1. Amendments. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any member of the Regular Faculty. Proposed changes to Department bylaws must be circulated to the full voting membership at least two weeks in advance of a regular or special faculty meeting for consideration. A written proposal must also be submitted to the Chair for inclusion on the agenda of the next faculty meeting. Voting to amend bylaws follows normal voting rules and procedures.

Section 2. Adopted and Amended.

These bylaws were adopted September 6, 2023, in Columbia, South Carolina.