

University at Buffalo
College of Arts and Sciences
Bylaws of the Department of English
April 12, 2021

I. Preamble

These *Bylaws of the Department of English* [hereafter '*Bylaws*'] provide for departmental governance within the framework of the College of Arts and Sciences [hereafter 'the College'] and the University at Buffalo [hereafter "the University"]. The faculty and the Graduate Students of the Department of English [hereafter "the Department"] affirm their commitment to collegiality as the most effective basis upon which to manage the affairs of and maintain excellence within the Department.

II. Voting Members

The voting members of the Department shall be all faculty having full-time and joint appointments in the Department as Distinguished Professor, Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor [hereafter "faculty"].

III. Officers

a) The principal officer of the Department shall be the Department Chair, appointed by the President of the University upon recommendation by the Dean of the College after consultation with the Department faculty. The Chair normally serves a term of three years, and may be reappointed after consultation with the Department faculty.

b) The Chair shall guide the teaching, research and service and conduct the administrative operations of the Department, represent the Department to the College and the University, report promptly to the Dean on matters affecting the welfare of the Department, and report and recommend actions regarding the Department's programs, activities and faculty, including faculty appointments, promotions and the terms and conditions of appointments. The Chair shall exercise these responsibilities in consultation with the Department's Executive Committee.

c) Administrative Officers of the Department shall be chosen from among the faculty by the Chair and serve at the Chair's pleasure. They shall consist of a Director of Undergraduate Studies and a Director of Graduate Studies. The Director of Undergraduate Studies shall be a member of the Department's principal committee for its undergraduate program; the Director of Graduate Studies shall be a member of the Department's principal committee for its graduate program. Other officers of the department include Associate Chair, Director of Graduate Admissions, Director of Composition and Teaching Fellows, Director of the MA Program, Director of Graduate Placement, and Director of Creative Writing.

d) The Chair may, upon consultation with the Department's Executive Committee, appoint such other officers as the Chair deems appropriate.

IV. Governance

a) There shall be at least two General Meetings of the Department each semester.

b) The Executive Committee shall meet at least twice during each semester.

c) Each of the other Standing Committees shall meet at least once a semester.

d) Department meeting minutes shall be taken by a Department staff member or a faculty member designated by the meeting chair. Summaries of Executive Committee meetings shall be prepared by the Chair or a Committee member. Minutes of Department meetings shall be available to the Department faculty and graduate students; summaries of meetings of the Executive Committee shall be promptly circulated to the Department faculty and graduate students.

e) For the purpose of voting in General Meetings of the Department, a quorum shall consist of 1/3 of all Resident Faculty and Graduate Student Representatives of the department. For the purpose of this calculation, the term "resident members" excludes members of the faculty who are on leave.

f) Notice and an agenda of a General Meeting must be distributed at least five working days in advance of the meeting, except that an emergency meeting of the Department may be called within 24 hours at the discretion of the Chair or Acting Chair. Items may be added to the agenda of a General Meeting by the vote of a simple majority of those present at the meeting.

g) No matters or items shall be acted upon finally at any General Meeting of the Department unless such matters or items appear on the announced agenda of the meeting. Emergency items, however, as defined according to the Chair or Acting Chair, may be acted upon finally even if they do not appear on the announced agenda.

h) A simple majority of the quorum of Faculty and Graduate Student Representatives present at a General Meeting will be sufficient to refer any vote to a ballot by all resident members of the Department.

i) A Department meeting may be called by petition of 30% of the faculty. The petition shall state the action to be considered. The time, day, date, and location of the meeting shall be determined in consultation with the Chair. The petition may call for the meeting to be held in executive session restricted to faculty. Copies of the petition, including the names of the petitioners, shall be provided to all Department faculty at least ten days in advance of the

meeting; no other matter shall be considered. A quorum for a meeting by petition shall be an absolute majority of the Department faculty and graduate student representatives. Unless specified otherwise in the petition, the meeting shall be chaired by the Department Chair. If the petition proposes a chair, the first order of business shall be to confirm the proposed chair by majority vote; if the proposed chair is not confirmed, the meeting shall adjourn.

j) A Department meeting may also be called by petition of 30% of the resident graduate students. The petition shall state the action to be considered. The time, day, date, and location of the meeting shall be determined in consultation with the Chair. Copies of the petition, including the names of the petitioners, shall be provided to all Department faculty and graduate students at least ten days in advance of the meeting; no other matter shall be considered. Any action proposed shall be submitted to ballot by the resident faculty and graduate students.

V. Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

All standing committees shall be elected by the faculty and the English Graduate Student Association [hereafter EGSA]; all ad hoc committees shall be appointed from the faculty by the Chair and appointed from the resident graduate students by the Chair in consultation with the EGSA. Service on all standing committees shall be for one year unless otherwise specified at the time of appointment or election. Department staff may be a member of any committee except the Executive Committee *ex officio* without vote. Ad hoc committees may be appointed as needed; each ad-hoc committee's charge shall include its termination date. All committees are advisory to the Chair of the Department.

The Department shall have the following standing committees:

- Executive Committee
- Graduate Review Committee
- Undergraduate Review Committee
- Academic and Professional Writing Committee
- Graduate Admissions and Fellowship Committee
- Literature Course/Summer Support Committee
- Creative Writing Committee
- Ombuds Committee

a) The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, the Associate Chair, the Director of Graduate Study, the Director of Undergraduate Study, and the Director of Composition and Teaching Fellows. The Department will elect an additional four faculty members (two tenured, two untenured) from among the department faculty. In cases in which this number of either tenured or untenured members are not available to serve, the department will substitute with at-large positions to be elected from among the faculty. Graduate students will elect three student members, chosen as described in VII c. The Executive Committee shall advise the Chair with regard to the Department's teaching, research and service activities, and recommendations of actions affecting programs and faculty. It shall also serve as the Department's committee on

committees; review any Department policy or policy change proposed by a Department committee and/or recommend amendments to such policy prior to the presentation thereof to the Department for action; and serve as the department's Personnel Committee. A majority of the elected faculty and student members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

b) Graduate Review Committee: consisting of: Ex officio Director of Graduate Studies (Chair), Director of MA Program, Director of Composition and Teaching Fellows, up to 3 elected faculty members and 3 elected graduate students (see VII c).

c) Undergraduate Review Committee, consisting of: Ex officio Director of Undergraduate Studies (Chair), 2 elected faculty members; 1 elected graduate student (see VII c), and 2 nominated undergraduate students (see VII e).

d) Academic and Professional Writing Committee, consisting of: Director of Composition and Teaching Fellows (Chair), the Associate Director of the Academic and Professional Writing Program (clinical faculty), 2 elected tenure-line faculty members (at least one of whom will be chosen from outside the APWP), 3 elected graduate students (see VII c).

e) Graduate Admissions and Fellowship Committee: consisting of: Ex officio Director of Graduate Admissions (Chair), Director of Graduate Studies, 2 elected faculty, and up to 4 elected graduate students (see VII c), in consultation with the Director of MA Program and Director of Composition and Teaching Fellows. Composition of the committee shall be guided by the attempt to represent diverse fields.

Recommendations for Graduate Admissions and Aid shall be decided by the Graduate Admissions Committee in accordance with the directives of the Graduate Review Committee and Departmental policy

f) Literature Course/Summer Support Committee, consisting of: Director of Undergraduate Studies (Chair), Director of Composition and Teaching Fellows, 1 elected faculty member, and 2 elected graduate students (see VII.c).

g) Creative Writing Committee, consisting of the Director of Creative Writing (Chair), 2 elected faculty, and 1 elected graduate student (see VII c), to ensure appropriate staffing and decide policy for all Creative Writing Programs established by the Department.

h) The Ombuds Committee consists of 1 elected tenured faculty member and 1 elected graduate student (see VII c). Neither ombudsperson elected shall hold a concurrent officer position within the department or EGSA. This committee shall provide resources for members of the English Department community who are experiencing difficulty or conflict in their work environment. Typically, PhD students would consult the DGS, MA students the Director of the MA Program, and faculty members the chair to discuss problems. Where such consultation seems inappropriate or has been unsuccessful, each member of the Ombuds Committee will be

available, independently, to listen, mediate, or refer concerns (with consent and if appropriate) to other members of the University. Each ombudsperson will undergo training through the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion as well as agree to adhere to the International Ombudsman Association's code of ethics.

i) Ad-hoc Committees may include:

Development Committee, consisting of 1 or 2 faculty members appointed by the Chair, to work closely with the Chair and CAS Development officers.

Website Committee, consisting of 1 or 2 faculty members appointed by the Chair.

Awards Committee, consisting of 1 or 2 faculty members appointed by the Chair.

Library Committee, consisting of 4 faculty members representing a distribution of fields in the department, appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Chair of the Library Committee, and one graduate student, elected by the EGSA.

Lecture Series Selection Committee: to be appointed by the Associate Chair of the Department (Chair), consisting of 2 faculty, to organize the departmental lecture series.

i) Special Committees: The Department may by a majority vote establish, charge and elect members of a special committee and its chair; any committee so established shall terminate no more than twelve months after its initiation unless renewed by a majority vote of the faculty and graduate student representatives. A special committee shall meet at the call of its chair or a majority of its members; a quorum shall be a majority of the faculty and student members.

VI. Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure Procedures

a) Initial Appointment/Hiring

1) Candidates for initial appointment as Department faculty shall normally be solicited by published notices of the position to be filled; the notices shall include any specialization sought and the rank of the proposed appointment. Candidates shall be screened by a Search Committee appointed by the Chair of the department, and normally consisting of 3 or more faculty and 2 graduate students. The graduate students will be appointed in consultation with EGSA. Notices, screening, and faculty consideration of candidates for appointment shall fulfill search policies, protocols and procedures of the College and the University.

To be recommended for appointment, a candidate shall receive a majority vote in favor, and when applicable also a majority vote in favor by those holding continuing appointment or equal or superior in rank to the proposed appointment; if the proposed appointment includes continuing appointment [tenure], the votes of faculty holding continuing appointment shall be reported separately and in addition to the total votes; if the proposed appointment is as Associate Professor without continuing appointment, the votes of faculty equal or superior in rank to the proposed appointment shall be reported separately and in addition to the total votes.

2) It shall be the official policy of this Department that no University at Buffalo PhD or PhD candidate shall be considered for a tenure-track appointment in the Department unless he/she shall have held a full-time academic position at another college or university or relevant employment outside of the University for a period of at least five years.

b) Reappointment: Faculty holding term appointments shall be considered for reappointment within the time limits specified by the policies and procedures of the College and University. Reappointment of term appointment faculty holding any faculty rank shall be considered by Department faculty holding appointments superior to that of the proposed reappointment. See Appendix A for procedures for pre-tenure reappointment reviews.

c) Promotion and Continuing Appointment

1) Faculty holding term appointment shall be considered for promotion to Associate Professor or Professor, or to continuing appointment [tenure], pursuant to policies and procedures of the College and the University. Faculty holding continuing appointment as Associate Professor shall be considered for promotion to Professor upon request by the candidate to the Chair or to the Executive Committee. In all matters of promotion, rank will vote on rank; only those eligible to vote may attend the promotion meeting and have access to internal and external letters of evaluation. The Chair or Executive Committee may convene a preliminary meeting of the eligible faculty to discuss whether or not promotion consideration should be initiated, and shall convene a meeting upon request of any three eligible faculty. To be recommended for promotion, a candidate shall receive a majority vote in favor. See Appendix B for guidelines governing review for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor and Professor.

2) The Chair shall appoint an *ad hoc* internal reading committee for the review of promotion and continuing appointment [tenure] cases consisting of 2 or more faculty members.

d) Joint Appointments: Candidates for joint appointments in English shall be considered following the procedures for appointments. Faculty holding joint appointments in English shall be considered for promotion and continuing appointment following the procedures for promotion and continuing appointment.

e) Affiliate Appointments: Affiliate faculty may be proposed by the Chair, in consultation with the Executive Committee, for a departmental vote. To be invited a candidate shall receive a majority vote in favor.

f) Part-time Faculty Appointments: A part-time faculty appointment for one semester or for two semesters at less than half-time, and a part-time reappointment at less than half-time for two semesters or less shall be recommended by a majority of the Executive Committee unless submitted to the faculty for ballot. Any proposed part-time appointment or reappointment may be submitted to the faculty for ballot; every proposed part-time appointment or reappointment for a term of more than one year or more than one semester at more than half-time shall be

submitted to the faculty for ballot. The call for the ballot shall be accompanied by the candidate's resume.

The Chair or the Executive Committee may convene a meeting of the faculty to discuss any proposed part-time faculty appointment or reappointment, following the procedures for appointment, reappointment and promotion specified elsewhere in these *Bylaws*. If a part-time appointment or reappointment is for more than an academic year or more than half-time, the Chair shall convene a meeting to consider the action upon request of any three faculty. A proposed part-time appointment or reappointment shall be submitted to the faculty for ballot or follow the procedures for appointment, reappointment and promotion specified elsewhere in these *Bylaws* upon request of 30% of the faculty.

To be recommended for appointment or reappointment, a candidate for a part-time appointment submitted to the faculty shall receive a majority vote in favor.

g) Visiting Appointments: Appointments of visiting faculty shall follow the procedures for appointment of part-time faculty.

h) The Department shall adhere to the Mentoring and Tenure Guidelines established for junior faculty, being especially mindful of the critical nature of the pre-tenure reviews, in compliance with the Provost's directive of May 20, 1999.

i) The Chair will appoint the administrative and clerical staff of the Department.

VII. Rights and Responsibilities of Graduate and Undergraduate Students

a. Graduate students shall be voting members of all standing committees. Undergraduate students shall be voting members of the Undergraduate Review Committee. The Chair, in consultation with the Executive Committee, may also designate undergraduate student representatives to ad hoc committees as appropriate.

b. Graduate Student Representatives shall have the right to vote in General Meetings of the department or by ballot on all departmental matters except as otherwise specified in this document. Graduate students will not vote on matters on which untenured faculty are disqualified from voting. The Graduate Student vote shall represent half the number of resident faculty. No student may have more than one vote. It is understood that Graduate Students will have full freedom of individual choice in voting and may not be bound to vote as a bloc.

If within a departmental General Meeting a vote is held on which Graduate Student Representatives may cast an advisory vote, Graduate Students will vote first, and their votes shall be counted separately. If a vote is held by ballot, voting will proceed according to the procedures of VII.d.: all Graduate Students will be issued a ballot and will vote first; that vote will be reported to students and faculty members; then faculty will be issued ballots to vote. If a motion is made in a General Meeting to vote by ballot, Graduate Student Representatives will vote directly with faculty on the question, and the majority of student and faculty votes combined

will carry the issue.

c. Graduate students Representatives at the General Meetings and graduate student members of Standing Committees shall be elected in the following manner:

Any graduate student may declare himself/herself a candidate for membership in the student electorate of the General Meetings or a candidate for service on a Departmental Committee for the position or positions of his/her choice by submitting his/her name to the English Graduate Student Association [hereafter EGSA]. Voting will be conducted by written ballot. Students serving in the previous year will continue to serve until such elections are completed. In the event of there being no nominations for a particular student office, that office will be left open, to be filled by election at a later date.

d. Resident Graduate Students shall vote on initial appointments to the department. This vote will take place in advance of the faculty vote in the following manner:

- 1) Following the final candidate's visit, the Chair shall schedule a departmental meeting with faculty and graduate students to discuss qualifications of all candidates.
- 2) The Chair's office shall issue ballots to all resident Graduate Students. The student vote shall be reported to the department.
- 3) After this report is made known, the Chair's office shall issue ballots to voting members of the faculty. The faculty vote is reported to the department and the Dean.
- 4) If the Graduate Student vote differs markedly from the tenor of departmental discussion and time permits, the Chair shall call a second meeting following the student vote and preceding the faculty vote.

e. Undergraduate Students shall be voting members of the Undergraduate Review Committee. The chair, in consultation with the Executive Committee and the Director of Undergraduate Studies, may also appoint undergraduate student representatives to ad-hoc committees. Undergraduate members of the Undergraduate Review Committee and *ad-hoc* committees shall be chosen in accordance with the policies of the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

f. Amendments to Section VII of these *Bylaws* may be proposed by the Executive Committee, a committee appointed pursuant to these *Bylaws* to recommend amendments to them, by petition of 30% of the faculty, or by the EGSA. Any proposed amendment shall be considered at a meeting of the department, at which it may itself be amended by majority vote if a quorum of resident faculty and of graduate students is present. A quorum of Graduate Students shall be 50% of the number of students constituting their proportional representation in departmental voting. Proposed amendments shall be referred to ballot after the department meeting, and referred without change, if no quorum is present. If multiple mutually independent

amendments are included on a ballot, each shall be subject to separate vote. Adoption shall be by a two-thirds plus one majority vote, assuming that graduate students represent one-third of the voting body.

VIII. Academic Integrity and Grievance Procedures

The Department shall follow the policies and procedures of the College and the University for violations of academic integrity and for grievances. Academic integrity and grievance committees shall be appointed by the Chair or the faculty members of the Executive Committee, and shall report their findings and recommendations to the Chair or the Dean of the College.

IX. Parliamentary Authority

Meetings, elections and ballots of the Department of English and its committees shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, except as otherwise provided by these *Bylaws*, the Standing Orders and *Bylaws of the College of Arts and Sciences*, or the *Bylaws of the Voting Faculty* of the University.

X. Amendments

Amendments to these *Bylaws* may be proposed by the Executive Committee, a committee appointed to recommend amendments to them, by petition of 30% of the faculty, or by petition of 30% of the Resident Graduate Students. Any proposed amendment shall be considered at a meeting of the department, at which it may itself be amended by majority vote if a quorum is present. Proposed amendments shall be referred to ballot after the department meeting, and referred without change if no quorum is present. If multiple mutually independent amendments are included on a ballot, each shall be subject to separate vote. Adoption shall be by a combined sixty percent majority vote, of faculty and Graduate Student Representatives, except as specified in Section VII f.

These *Bylaws* shall be reviewed by the Department faculty every five years.

XI. Compatibility and Separability

These bylaws shall be compatible with and subordinate to the *Bylaws of the College of Arts and Sciences*, the University at Buffalo's *Bylaws of the Voting Faculty*, the authority and policies of the Council of the State University of New York at Buffalo, the authority and policies of the Trustees of the State University of New York, and the laws of the State of New York and the United States of America.

If any portion of these *Bylaws* is adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not invalidate the remainder thereof.