

English Department By-Laws

Section 1. Department Mission and Responsibilities

1.1 Department Mission

The Department of English provides student-centered undergraduate and graduate programs characterized by innovative teaching, research, and service, grounded in interdisciplinary, regional, and global perspectives. The department engages our students in educational opportunities guided by a professional and diverse faculty and staff in collaboration with alumni, community, and academic partners. Primarily, the department embraces Academic Excellence, Educational Opportunity, Personal Growth, and Social Responsibility, which inform all business done within and through the department.

1.2 Department Responsibilities

- Provide leadership in reading and writing for all students at the university by means of courses in general education, support for the University Writing Center, and collaboration with other university units;
- Provide practical and theoretical instruction which positions undergraduates for advanced study and careers in its majors—English and English education; its minors—film, professional writing, and creative writing; and in other traditional and emerging professions.
- Provide practical and theoretical instruction and professionalization for graduate students in English studies through the Masters of Arts and post-baccalaureate certificate programs;
- Support student development through activities such as student-managed publications, conferences, and professional and honor societies;
- Foster research and professional productivity by departmental faculty members, which contributes to critical, theoretical, and practical knowledge;
- Support faculty development through professional development opportunities;
- Embrace university and community service roles as demands arise and resources allow.

Section 2. Outline of Faculty Governance

The main governing body of the department is the Unit A and Unit B faculty coming together as a Meeting of the Whole. These meetings are regularly scheduled by the Coordinating Committee seven times per year (4.1). Meetings may be canceled for lack of business, and special meetings may be called by the Chair or the Coordinating Committee if the need arises. Serving the Meeting of the Whole, screening its business in accordance with the terms of these by-laws, preparing its agendas, and running its meetings is the responsibility of the Coordinating Committee.

Section 3. Duties and Responsibilities of the Chair and Program Directors

3.1 Chair Duties and Responsibilities

The Department is led by a Chairperson appointed by the central administration of the University upon recommendation of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The Chair is responsible to the Department and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for the successful management of the Department.

The Chair will provide leadership for the Department and will assist in achieving the objectives of the Department, College, and University. The Chair will maintain good public relations both within and outside the Department. The Chair will encourage members of the faculty to assume a full share in the work of the Department and will try to make the best use of their experience, preparation, and abilities.

The Chair is not a voting member of the faculty. The Chair cannot serve as a voting member of a departmental committee.

In addition to the duties documented in the Official University Policy Manual (<http://wiu.edu/policies/deptchairs.php>), the Chair will be responsible for the execution of University and College policies insofar as they concern the Department.

Travel funds to attend professional meetings will be allocated by the Chair according to a formula established and distributed at the beginning of each academic year.

3.2 Directors Duties and Responsibilities

The Program Directors are assigned by the Chair. Each assignment will be for a four-year, renewable term. Qualified, available, and interested faculty may apply at the end of each term. At the end of each academic year the Chair will provide all program directors with a written evaluation of their performance. This evaluation will be based on the designated duties of each program director (see appendices A-E at the end of this document). The chair may make interim assignments when circumstances warrant such an action.

Section 4. General Policies and Procedures

4.1 Meetings of the Whole

Meetings of the whole will be scheduled as needed. At minimum, these meetings will be scheduled seven times per year—August, September, October, November, February, March, and April. Faculty are expected to make every effort to attend all meetings (Article 18.15 of the UPI contract) and should avoid scheduling other appointments at regular faculty meeting times. These times will be established at the beginning of each term.

4.1.1 A member of the Coordinating Committee is appointed as meeting secretary to take minutes and distribute prior minutes to faculty for an approval/non-approval vote. Minutes of all departmental meetings will be made available to faculty via email and secure web access.

4.1.2 Voting faculty are those who are tenured, on tenure track, full time Unit B instructors, and Temporary Unit A faculty in service for more than one year. Members on leave may attend meetings and may vote. A majority is required for a Meeting of the Whole. Meeting agenda items, which are circulated in advance, may be settled in the Meeting of the Whole by a majority vote of those present. Matters raised in the Meeting of the Whole that were not on the pre-circulated agenda and that require a vote will either be placed on the next agenda for the Meeting of the Whole or sent to the faculty for a ballot vote. In a ballot vote, measures carry by a majority of those voting. A faculty member may request that a matter discussed during a Meeting of the Whole be sent to the faculty for a ballot vote.

4.2 Hiring Procedures

The department will follow the policies and procedures in the Equal Opportunity and Access Recruitment Manual and Hiring Guidelines:

http://www.wiu.edu/equal_opportunity_and_access/search.php

And the department will follow the University Civil Service guidelines:

http://www.sucss.state.il.us/sar_results.asp.)

In addition to following EOA Guidelines, the Department will use the following guidelines for forming a Search and Screening Committee:

- Search and Screening Committees will be formed by election and/or appointment by the Chair and Coordinating Committee as appropriate according to the demands of the search;
- On Unit B faculty searches, preference will be given to Unit B members volunteering for the committee. For example, if two Unit B members volunteer, preference will be given to them. At least one Unit B faculty and one Unit A member will serve on the committee.

Section 5. Amending the By-Laws

Amendments are approved by a majority of the faculty. A proposed amendment must be presented at a Meeting of the Whole, either a regularly scheduled meeting or one specially scheduled for the purpose by the Coordinating Committee. Normally, a proposed amendment reaches the Coordinating Committee from a standing or ad hoc committee. After discussion in the Meeting of the Whole, the proposed amendment is submitted to the faculty for a ballot vote. Upon approval by the Chair, the amendment becomes part of the by-laws.

Section 6. Standing Committees

Department committees and coordinators work with the Chair, faculty, staff, and students to perform the business of the department, as specified below.

Unless otherwise noted:

- Committee members are elected based on faculty willingness to serve and also a reasonable distribution among major areas in the Department;
- Elections for all departmental committees occur in spring. Special elections occur as needed;

- A staggered appointment system is followed, which provides for member rotation;
- All committees are responsible for developing their own working policies and procedures, in congruence with these by-laws;
- Standing committees may be assisted by each other, by coordinators, or by ad hoc committees as needed;
- When appropriate, standing committees consult with the Chair, the Coordinating Committee, the Meeting of the Whole, students, and/or staff;
- Coordinating Committee should notify department faculty on College and University committees, such as CAS Faculty Council, Faculty Senate, Council on General Education, Council on Curricular Programs and Instruction, and University Graduate Council, when departmental business is moving through those committees;
- All committees regularly deliver action minutes or activity notes, with relevant supporting materials, to the Department's Staff Clerk who will email the materials to the department as a whole and will post the materials on the Department's secure web site;
- Announcements, if any, from standing committees, the English Education Coordinator, Directors, and area groups will be embedded in the relevant agenda for the Meeting of the Whole;
- All committees elect a chair;
- All *ex officio* committee members, except for the Chair of the Department, have voting rights;
- All committee members may serve successive terms if re-elected;
- Regular terms of office are three (3) years, except where indicated otherwise, and all committee seats are open to both Unit A and Unit B, except where specifically excluded;
- Generally, no one will serve on more than two standing Department committees during an academic year. Exceptions to this guideline will be addressed on an individual basis.

6.1 Academic Integrity Committee

The Academic Integrity Committee acts in accordance with the University Academic Integrity Policy (<http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php>).

6.1.1 Academic Integrity Committee Membership

The Academic Integrity Committee is composed of five members:

- Three at-large faculty elected by the department;
- Two students (either undergraduate or graduate, depending on circumstances) appointed on a meeting-by-meeting basis by the committee chair in consultation with the committee and Chair.

A committee chair will be annually elected by the committee from its elected faculty members. She or he will serve as a voting member of the committee. The committee chair should be a continuing member of the committee.

If there are issues related to impartiality or membership requirements as per University policies, or the committee requires replacement faculty members or students for a specific case, the Chair will appoint new committee members after consultation with the committee.

6.2 Associate Faculty Executive Committee

The Associate Faculty Executive Committee reviews and makes recommendations regarding issues of associate faculty welfare.

6.2.1 Associate Faculty Executive Committee Membership

The Associate Faculty Executive Committee is composed of four members:

- Two Unit B faculty members elected for two-year terms by the Associate Faculty;
- One Unit B faculty member elected for a one-year term by the Associate Faculty;
- Associate Faculty Coordinating Committee member (*ex officio*, voting);
- The elected members of the Executive Committee determine who will serve as chair, vice chair, and secretary for that year.

6.3 Coordinating Committee

The following are the specific duties of the Coordinating Committee:

- Scheduling and coordinating department elections;
- Coordinating assessment and program reviews;
- Assisting the Chair with creating department reports;
- Coordinating recruitment efforts;
- Assisting the Chair with scheduling;
- Assisting the Chair with strategic planning, including hiring and retention;
- Assisting the Chair with identifying and addressing general department needs;
- Coordinating the department calendar;
- Producing a monthly department memo;
- Setting the dates for Meetings of the Whole and officiating at those meetings;
- Setting and distributing, in a timely fashion, agendas for Meetings of the Whole;
- Assisting the Chair with forming ad hoc committees;
- Asking faculty to voice concerns or problems;
- Bringing faculty concerns to the attention of department as a whole;
- Advocating for the best interests of the department!

At least one Coordinating Committee meeting is held in preparation for each Meeting of the Whole. Coordinating Committee will usually meet every two weeks on Mondays from noon to 1 p.m. However, the chair may call Coordinating Committee special meetings if the Chair and/or the chair of the Coordinating Committee determine the need for additional meetings. Scheduling provisions will be made for faculty wishing to serve on Coordinating Committee. Coordinating Committee meetings are open to all.

Business to be sent by the Coordinating Committee to the Meeting of the Whole includes, but is not limited to:

- Curricular matters, other than simple changes in course title, prerequisite or description, or minor modifications of a program;
- Long-range planning;
- Changes in committee rules;
- Policy matters;
- General welfare of the department.

Any faculty member or the Department Chair may ask the Coordinating Committee to place an item of business before the Meeting of the Whole. This may be an item that has not arisen through a standing or ad hoc committee but fits the above definition of business appropriate for the Meeting of the Whole. When the Coordinating Committee is approached by a faculty member to place an item on the agenda, someone from Coordinating Committee must respond to that faculty member.

6.3.1 Coordinating Committee Membership

The Coordinating Committee is composed of ten members:

- One at-large Unit B faculty member elected by the department (this member will also serve *ex-officio* on the Associate Faculty Executive Committee);
- One at-large faculty member from Unit A or Unit B elected by the department;
- One Creative Writing area representative elected by the department;
- One Film area representative elected by the department;
- One Literature area representative elected by the department;
- Coordinator of English Education;
- Director of Graduate Studies;
- Director of Writing;
- Director of University Writing Center;
- Department Chair (*ex officio*, non-voting).

The quorum for Coordinating Committee meetings is seven of the nine voting members. The Coordinating Committee acts only on a majority vote by its members, a vote of five. In the event that a seat cannot be filled by election, that seat may remain vacant and quorum and majority numbers will be adjusted accordingly. The Coordinating Committee will elect from its members a chair, who will be responsible for running Meetings of the Whole, and a secretary, who will be responsible for taking minutes at Meetings of the Whole.

6.4 Curriculum Advisory Committee

The Curriculum Advisory Committee will be formed on an as needed basis and members will be recruited by Coordinating Committee. The committee reviews all proposed program and course changes or developments in the department. Area groups and ad hoc curriculum committees who are working on program or course changes/developments must alert this committee. Curriculum Advisory Committee will assist area groups and ad hoc committees in this process by reviewing proposals, ensuring coordination with affected constituents as needed, and communicating with Coordinating Committee and the faculty as a whole.

6.4.1 Curriculum Advisory Committee Membership

The Curriculum Advisory Committee is composed of four members:

- One at-large Unit A faculty member;
- One at-large Unit B faculty member;
- One at-large faculty member;
- Department Chair (*ex officio*, non-voting).

6.5 Department Personnel Committee

The Department Personnel Committee (DPC) is an autonomous five-member committee established by and operating in accordance with the WIU-UPI Agreement (<http://wiu.edu/provost/upiagreement/>).

The DPC is not subject to the authority of the Meeting of the Whole. They develop their own working policies and procedures. They do not submit an annual report to the department.

6.5.1 Department Personnel Committee membership

Membership policies for the Department Personnel Committee are established in the Department Criteria for Unit A Faculty, in accordance with the WIU-UPI Agreement.

6.6 Grade Appeal Committee

The Grade Appeal Committee acts in accordance with the University Grade Appeal policy (<http://www.wiu.edu/policies/gradeapp.php>).

6.6.1 Grade Appeal Committee Membership

The Grade Appeal Committee is composed of five members:

- Three at-large faculty elected by the department;
- Two students (either undergraduate or graduate, depending on circumstances) appointed on a meeting-by-meeting basis by the committee chair in consultation with the committee and Chair.

A committee chair will be annually elected by the committee from its elected faculty members. She or he will serve as a voting member of the committee. The committee chair should be a continuing member of the committee.

If, in order to meet the impartiality or membership requirements (such as ensuring Graduate Faculty representation) of the University policies, the committee requires replacement faculty members or students for a specific case, they will be appointed by the Chair in consultation with the committee.

6.7 Graduate Committee

The Graduate Committee has the following responsibilities:

- To assist with the administration of the graduate program, including but not limited to curriculum, recruiting, scheduling, program policy, and assessment;
- To determine the admissibility of applicants to the graduate program of the department;
- To approve degree plans and petitions for changes before they are forwarded to the Graduate Office;
- To review and evaluate applications for departmental graduate assistantships, in consultation with the Writing Program Director and the University Writing Center Director;
- To review and evaluate the department's graduate program and make recommendations to the Chair.

6.7.1 Graduate Committee Membership

The Graduate Committee is composed of five members:

- Three members of the graduate faculty, elected by the graduate faculty;
- One graduate student representative, elected by the English Graduate Organization for a one-semester term (non-voting);
- The Director of Graduate Studies in English (*ex officio*, voting).

6.8 Student Advisory Council

The English Student Advisory Council is devoted to representing the interests of English undergraduate students. The Council, which will meet at least one time per semester, will serve as a student voice to the department by working with the English administration to ensure that the opinions and concerns of the students are heard. The Council will also encourage a sense of community among students and promote student life within the department by publicizing various social and academic events.

6.8.1 Student Advisory Council Membership

The Council is composed of five members:

- Up to one Undergraduate Student Representative, each serving a one-year term, from each of the following areas:
 - Creative Writing
 - English Education
 - Film
 - Literature
 - Professional Writing;
- Faculty Advisor, at-large faculty member elected by department (*ex officio*, non-voting).

Area representatives will be self-nominating. In the event that an area has more than one student self-nominating, or has no student self-nominating, the area group will be responsible for selecting the student representative.

6.9 Writing Committee

In consultation with the Writing Program Director and University Writing Center Director, the Writing Committee assists in management of the Writing Program. This work includes, but is not limited to, assisting with annual assessment and any resulting curricular revisions; assisting with reviewing and revising program policies and procedures; assisting in running the annual writing contest and helping to facilitate online publication of *Western Voices*; assisting with mentoring graduate teaching assistants; and assisting in other matters as determined by the Directors or Chair.

6.9.1: Writing Committee Membership

The Writing Committee is composed of seven members:

- Three at-large Unit B faculty members elected by the department;
- One at-large Unit A faculty member elected by the department;
- One graduate student teaching assistant, elected on a semester basis by the English Graduate Organization;
- Director of Writing (*ex officio*, voting);
- Director of Writing Center (*ex officio*, voting).

Section 7. Area Groups

All faculty with scholarly or professional interest in any given area serve together as area groups. Area groups, with the exception of Graduate Faculty and Associate Faculty, are open to all faculty members regardless of unit, rank, and/or teaching and administrative assignments. Faculty are encouraged to participate in all area groups in which they have scholarly or professional interest. These groups work with Coordinating Committee and the Chair, as well as pertinent standing committees and related area groups, regarding matters pertaining to their academic areas, such as assessment, hosting events, scheduling, student recruitment, and curriculum revision. Standing committees are strongly encouraged to consult with area groups regarding relevant matters of concern.

Area groups will meet at the beginning of each academic year to elect one member to act as Convener, except in English Education and Graduate Faculty where the coordinator and the director, respectively, will serve as the Convener. This first meeting may be called by the Chair of the department or the Convener from the previous academic year. Subsequent meetings of area groups will be called by the elected Convener and may be called by the Chair or standing committees.

Area groups should meet at least once a semester. Whenever possible, area groups are encouraged to establish regular meetings times at the beginning of the semester so that meeting dates may be added to the department calendar. The agenda for each meeting of an area group should be circulated, via email, to the department as a whole at least three days in advance of the meeting. Meetings that are called with little notice should be announced to the department as a whole as soon as possible. Minutes for area group meetings should be emailed to the secretary to be posted in the S drive.

Included in area groups are two groups—Graduate Faculty and Associate Faculty—whose membership is restricted to faculty with the appropriate designation. Meetings for these groups will be called by the Graduate Director (for Graduate Faculty) and the Associate Faculty Executive Committee (for Associate Faculty). Designated faculty and the Chair will be notified of these meetings. As with all other area groups, minutes for these meetings should be emailed to the secretary to be posted in the S drive.

Coordinating Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that area groups follow the procedures outlined above, keeping in mind that the goal of such coordination is to ensure transparency and collaboration among all members of the department.

The following area groups are established:

1. Associate Faculty
2. Composition
3. Creative Writing
4. English Education
5. Film
6. Graduate Faculty
7. Literature
8. Professional Writing

Faculty with other areas of scholarly or professional interest are expressly permitted to collaborate regarding those areas and to bring matters of business to the Meeting of the Whole, even if recognized area groups are not formally established. Area groups are encouraged to collaborate with each other.

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