Bylaws

The University of Pennsylvania Department of Psychology Bylaws

(Adopted October 30, 2002)

(Revised and adopted **–** October 17, 2017)

**Preamble**

These Bylaws are supplements to the existing [University](http://www.upenn.edu/assoc-provost/handbook) and [School of Arts and Sciences](http://www.sas.upenn.edu/deans-office/facult) policies and procedures. These bylaws should be reconsidered and updated by the standing faculty every five years. Robert's Rules of Order will be followed on procedures that are not covered herein or by University or School policies and procedures.

1. **Governance**

*A. Department Chair*

The term of the Department Chair is 5 years. The Department Chair (“Chair”) is chosen from among the full Professors. The selection of a Chair is carried out by an *ad hoc* committee appointed by the outgoing Chair. Typically the outgoing Chair serves on the selection committee along with other members of the Department not eligible to be Chair (e.g., Emeritus Professors, Professors soon to be Emeritus, Associate Professors). The selection committee solicits opinions about who should be the next Chair by distributing a ballot to the members of the standing faculty. The ballot consists of the names of all full-time full professors except the outgoing Chair and Professors who will have left the Department before the end of the 5-year term. All other Professors' names *must* appear on the ballot. On these ballots standing faculty indicate their degree of opposition or support for each Professor and also their degree of opposition or support for an effort to seek an outside Chair. The ballots are signed. If preference for an outside Chair is indicated, the committee so informs the Dean. If the selection committee instead has identified a suitable candidate, the committee approaches the candidate to determine whether he or she is willing to begin discussions with the Dean about accepting the Chair. Once a candidate is found who is willing to pursue the issue with the Dean, the candidate's status is announced to the Department faculty. The selection process typically takes place at least 6 months prior to the expected time of appointment.

*B. Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS)*

The Chair nominates the Director of Undergraduate Studies to the Dean. The DUS administers the undergraduate program. By School rules, the term of the Undergraduate Chair is 3 years, and is renewable.

*C. Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)*

The Chair nominates the Director of Graduate Studies. The appointment of the DGS must be approved by the Graduate Group. A simple majority of voting Graduate Group members carries the question. By School rules, the term of the graduate Chair is 3 years, and is renewable.

1. **Committees**
2. *Advisory Council*

The Chair appoints three faculty members to the Advisory Council. The Chair attempts to represent the variety of subdisciplines of Psychology on the Council, and at least one of the appointees must be an Assistant Professor. This group meets with the Chair several times throughout the year to discuss matters of importance to the department. The usual term for an Advisory Council member is two years. The members of the Advisory Council provide faculty members in their areas with information and they provide the Chair with assistance and advice. In addition to the three faculty members appointed by the Chair, the DUS and DGS serve ex-officio on this committee.

1. *Undergraduate Education Committee*

The Chair appoints five faculty members to the Undergraduate Education Committee which is responsible for matters relating to undergraduate education in the Department. The DUS serves as the Committee Chair. The Undergraduate Education Committee shall meet at least once per semester.

1. *Graduate Executive/Admissions Committee*

The Chair appoints five faculty members to the Graduate Executive/Admissions Committee, which is responsible for graduate admissions.. The DGS serves as the Committee Chair. The Graduate Executive/Admissions Committee is responsible for all matters pertaining to graduate admissions and other matters pertaining to graduate students that is not within the purview of the Graduate Group. Appointments to the Graduate Executive/Admissions Committee should reflect the disciplinary dispersion of the Department.

*D Mentoring Committees*

The Chair will appoint, for each Assistant Professor, a committee of three members of the faculty at the Associate level or higher, one of which is designated as Chair, in consultation with the Assistant Professor. This committee is to advise the Assistant Professor and, to that end, must meet at least once during the academic year. The chair of the Mentoring Committee is to provide a report of that meeting to the Chair no later than May 1st.

*E. Ad hoc Committees*

The Chair may, at her/his discretion, form and dissolve *ad hoc* committees and appoint members of the faculty to serve on them. These committees can be assembled for any purpose, including searching for candidates for faculty positions approved by the College as well as promotion committees.

**3. Voting Procedures**

*A. Voting*

The voting members of the Psychology Department include all standing faculty. A quorum is required for all votes. A quorum is defined as one-half of those who are both 1) eligible to vote and 2) not on leave. Part-time standing faculty and faculty on leave are permitted to attend and to vote during meetings for which they are eligible, but they are not considered in the calculation of the quorum. The Chair may, at his or her discretion, prohibit a faculty member from voting if there is cause, such as insufficient attendance at relevant meetings at which the question was discussed. Unless otherwise indicated (see Section 3.B.), a simple majority of those present at a meeting at the time of the vote carries questions: a motion carries if there are more “yes” votes than “no” votes and abstentions. Matters voted on by the faculty may not be brought up again in the same academic year except on a motion to reconsider. All votes are by secret ballot.

*B. Personnel decisions*

The following rules apply to votes surrounding personnel decisions:

* As an exception to the voting rule in 3.A, votes for initial appointment to Assistant Professor require 75% of those present and voting to carry the question.
* No vote related to a personnel decision can be taken without a written report, circulated to the faculty in advance of the meeting.
* A “straw” (non-binding) vote *must* be taken before the final (binding) vote for personnel decisions. The results of this straw vote must be announced before the final vote.
* The following indicates who is eligible to vote for different levels of appointments and promotions:

Eligible voters for new faculty appointments are all standing faculty who hold ranks equal to or above the rank at which the new faculty member is to be appointed.

Eligible voters for the reappointment of Assistant Professors are all tenured standing faculty.

Eligible voters for promotion or appointment to the rank of Associate Professor with Tenure are all tenured standing faculty.

Eligible voters for promotion or appointment to the rank of Full Professor are all Full Professors in the standing faculty.

The Chair may invite people otherwise not entitled to attend meetings pertaining to personnel decisions to do so, e.g., cases in which a non-standing faculty member serves on a committee relevant to the personnel decision. The Chair may, at his or her discretion, ask such a person to leave the Department’s deliberations at any time.

When the Department is considering the appointment to tenured ranks of someone outside the Department, the candidate's dossier will be distributed to all standing faculty members regardless of rank, and a discussion of the candidate's suitability for the position will include all members of the department. Those not eligible to vote on the candidate are excused from the meeting before the vote is taken.

*C. Procedures for Searches*

In the spring semester, the Chair, having consulted with whomever he or she wishes, formulates a recommendation for searches to be carried out during the following Academic Year. The Chair convenes a meeting of the standing faculty, at which proposed searches are voted on.

The Chair will appoint committees to carry out faculty searches. The committee will include members of the standing faculty, but may also include others at the Chair's discretion. The policy of the School of Arts & Sciences states that any search for a candidate from outside the University at the level of full professor should include at least one member from a department other than Psychology. The search committee recommends to the Chair that a reasonable number of candidates be invited to campus for talks, but it is the Chair who decides how many and which candidates will actually receive invitations. Once the visits are completed, the search committee develops a hiring recommendation to be voted on by the Department.

Search committees who are searching for senior candidates will inform the Chair when a candidate has emerged about whom there is sufficient enthusiasm to warrant the solicitation of outside letters. The Chair will bring the issue to the Department and standing faculty of all ranks will vote on the solicitation of letters. The Chair seeks permission from the candidate before soliciting letters.

*D. Promotion to Professor*

Each year, the Chair examines the CVs of all Associate Professors who have been in rank for 6 years or more. If the Chair believes that a reasonable case can be made for promotion to Professor, the Chair appoints an ad hoc committee to consider further the possibility of promotion. The Chair should take into consideration in such matters: the opinions of relevant colleagues, competitive offers, and issues of equity. The Chair will, normally, bring to the professors all and only positive recommendations from the ad hoc committee.

An Associate Professor may request that the Chair appoint such a committee if he or she believes that a reasonable case for promotion can be made. Except in exceptional circumstances the Chair will, then, appoint such a committee.

1. Calendar

Reappointment committees are generally expected to have their reports prepared by November 1. Committees considering promotions to Professor as generally expected to have their reports ready by December 1. Tenure committees are usually expected to have their reports ready by the beginning of the spring semester.