

Bylaws Index

Preamble

Article I **Name**

Article II **Purpose**
Unit mission, goals, and objectives

Article III **Members**

Article IV **Officers/Chairs/Directors/or Equivalent**
Unit administrators

Article V **Evaluation of Members' Performance**
Annual Review / Promotion and Tenure / Merit

Article VI **Meetings of the Unit as Whole**
process, and voting protocols

Article VII **Advisory Groups**
Identification of / parameters for

Article VIII **Committees**
Standing and Ad hoc – function / formation /

Article IX **Ratification, Distribution, and Amendment of Bylaws**
How bylaws are reviewed and amended

Appendices

Bylaws Outline

Preamble – Statement of the principles at work in the text, such as the democratic regulation of the unit and a clear articulation of the members' rights and responsibilities. ¹

Article I – Name

Article II – Purpose

- A. Unit Mission Statement / Goals and Objectives
- B. Authority of Unit/Department as a Whole ²
- C. Authority of University Policies and College Bylaws Supersedes that of the Unit/Department

Article III – Members

- A. Academic Ranks (as defined in the University's Promotion and Tenure policies, Section III)
- B. Others / Non-academically Ranked such as Academic Professionals (as defined by the Departments, School, unit, and others)
- C. Member Rights and Responsibilities (pertaining to unit governance, for example:)
 1. Voting
 2. Adhering to unit code of conduct
 3. Attending meetings
 4. Participating on committees
- D. Voting
 1. Who votes, on what issues ³
 2. Majority rule percentage
 3. Procedure for conducting open and/or confidential voting

Article IV – Officers/Chairs/Directors/or Equivalent

- A. Number of, Titles of, and Reporting Structure (distinguish between or among)
- B. Responsibilities
 1. Reference position descriptions for comprehensive list of responsibilities
 2. Acknowledge external responsibilities (for example: to Office of the Dean, Office of Academic Affairs, Human Resources, and others)
- C. Eligibility for Office
- D. Officer Selection and Timeline (in keeping with the [Faculty Governance Guide, Article III, section 4](#))
- E. Officers' Term of Service
 1. Length and limitations (consistent with the [Faculty Governance Guide, Article III, section 4](#) as appropriate)
 2. Absences and vacancies
 - a. Interim appointments
 - b. Procedures for electing acting/interim officers
- F. Procedures for Performance Review/Evaluation of Officers
- G. Reasons for, and Process of, Removal from Office (for example: extended absence, malfeasance, inability to perform)

Article V – Evaluation of Members' Performance

- A. Academic Ranks
 - 1. Performance reviews
 - 2. Guidelines for Promotion and/or Tenure (Include criteria and process here or reference a separate document.)
 - a. Tenure-track faculty (See also: CBA, Article 14)
 - b. Post-tenure faculty review (See also: CBA, Article 16.2)
 - c. Non-tenure-track faculty (See also: CBA, Article 18.4)
 - 3. Merit increases
- B. Others / Non-academically Ranked ([Process and procedures defined by PSU Human Resources](#)) (See also: CBA, Article 17.8)

Article VI – Meetings of Unit as a Whole

- A. Frequency of ⁴
- B. Attendance Expectations, Accessibility, and Necessary Accommodations
- C. Presiding Officer(s)
- D. Agenda (who creates, who distributes, and when)
- E. Rules of Procedure -- strategy for ensuring meetings are inclusive, equitable, and efficient (for example: [Robert's Rules of Order](#))
- F. Voting Methodology (for example: show of hands, written or electronic ballot)
- G. Quorum⁵
- H. Minutes
- I. Special Meetings
 - 1. Who can call, notice requirements, and when
 - 2. Whether meetings are open or closed and circumstances under which meetings may be closed ([Oregon Public Meetings Law](#))
 - 3. Standing rules if needed

Article VII – Advisory Groups

- A. Purpose
- B. Standing and/or Ad Hoc Groups
- C. Members Selection Process
- D. Terms of Service

Article VIII – Committees

- A. Standing (for example: academic or operational committees)
 - 1. Title(s)
 - 2. Purpose (scope)
 - 3. Committee membership
 - a. Eligibility
 - b. Terms of service
 - c. Student member(s)
 - 4. Committee formation
 - a. Elected (for example: Promotion and Tenure Committee)
 - b. Appointed (for example: Planning, Student Scholarship, Advisory committees)
 - c. Members ex officio
 - d. Committee Chair selection
 - e. Vacancies
 - 5. Procedural operations (for example: quorum, voting, minutes)
 - 6. Responsibilities (for example: reporting recommendations and decisions)

- B. Special and/or Ad Hoc -- (one-time or recurring issues; for example: Search committees)
 - 1. Title(s)
 - 2. Purpose (scope)
 - 3. Committee membership
 - 4. Committee formation
 - 5. Procedural operations (for example: quorum, voting, minutes)
 - 6. Responsibilities (for example: reporting recommendations and decisions)

Article IX – Ratification, Distribution, and Amendment of Bylaws

- A. Procedure for Ratification and Approval of Bylaws
 - 1. Members (as defined in Article III.D.1)
 - 2. Approval according to Portland State University Office of Academic Affairs -- [Proposing Revisions to Departmental Governance](#)
- B. Bylaws effective date is on or following the Office of Academic Affairs approval date
- C. Distribution of Bylaws⁶
- D. Procedure for Review and Amendment of Bylaws
- E. Frequency of Review

Appendices – Affiliated materials that provide additional information and strengthen the content and usability of the Bylaws. For example: unit forms, ballots, timelines, and calendars.

Examples and References

¹ (Preamble) -- Example from the Portland State University Philosophy Department:
The keynote of the new Departmental organization resides in our mutual desire to engage in a cooperative effort to fulfill our obligations as the Philosophy Department of Portland State University. The members of the Department pledge to approach these tasks in a fraternal and democratic spirit. We endeavor to establish mutually non-exploitative, open relationships in the conduct of our collective business. The procedures to be formulated for conducting Departmental business will adhere to the need for checks and balances in decision-making. We recognize the will of the informed majority as important in our deliberations while we are dedicated to defend the privileges of those holding minority opinions.

² (Article II.B) -- See the [Portland State University Faculty Governance Guide, Article III.2](#):
Faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter, and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life that relate to the education process.

³ (Article III.C) -- Example from the School of Community Health:
Tenured/tenured-track [...] faculty shall have voting rights in all School matters. Non-tenure track faculty shall have voting rights in all School matters unrelated to promotion and tenure decisions. Joint appointment, affiliated and adjunct faculty shall not have voting rights related to School business.

⁴ (Article IV.A) -- For units with members on nine-month contracts, consideration might be given to governance during the summer months. Example from the School of Theater and Film:
School decisions shall be held in abeyance from June 15 to September 15 of the year.

⁵ (Article VI.G) -- Example from the School of Community Health:
A quorum shall be defined as follows: (a) for personnel related issues, two thirds of the School faculty eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum, and (b) for non-personnel related issues a quorum shall be a simple majority of the eligible voting faculty.

⁶ (Article IX.B) -- Bylaws document must be readily accessible to all department/unit members. Example from the Department of Communications:
A current copy of the governance document [...] shall be maintained in the department office at all times.

The workgroup consisting of members: Barbara Glackin, Julie Haun, Sue Taylor, were tasked with creating a template, adaptable for individual units/departments, to provide consistency in bylaws content across the University. Our work was guided by Joyce Stephens' Bylaws: Writing, Amending, Revising (2000), existing Portland State University department and unit bylaws, and those of other universities.