



**Schar School of Policy and Government
George Mason University**

By-Laws

Final draft after the Faculty Meeting, April 24, 2015

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I. The Faculty of the School:

The Faculty comprises the Dean and all persons who have tenured, tenure-track, term, adjunct or administrative faculty appointments and a primary affiliation with the School.

II. The Governing Faculty:

A. The responsibilities of the Governing Faculty of the School are:

- i. The authorization of the award of degrees and certificates to students who have been certified by the Registrar to have fulfilled the requirements set for them,
- ii. The organization, growth and development of degrees and non-degree programs and their curricula responsive to the needs of a dynamic and changing environment,
- iii. To make recommendations on the hiring, retention, promotion and tenure of faculty,
- iv. To attend to matters of faculty welfare, professional conduct, and grievances,
- v. To make recommendations on University policy and on the appointment of the University President, the Provost and the Dean of the School,
- vi. The protection and enhancement of academic freedom for faculty and students, and
- vii. To maintain the reputation and integrity of the School.
- viii. To fulfill Faculty Duties and Responsibilities as determined in the Faculty Handbook (II: 2.10)

B. In pursuit of these responsibilities, the Governing Faculty will normally meet as a **Committee of the Whole:**

- i. **Membership:** The Dean, tenured, tenure-track and term faculty having a primary affiliation with the School. Adjunct and administrative faculty may attend as observers.
- ii. The Committee is the forum for discussion on any aspect of University or School policy and practice, and to receive and act on proposals or recommendations from the Dean, Program Faculties, Faculty Standing Committees or individual members of the faculty.
- iii. The Dean is the Chair ex-officio and is responsible for the conduct of business.
- iv. The Dean must circulate a list of members to Faculty by the first of September each academic year.

- v. The Committee will normally meet monthly each semester on dates to be announced at the beginning of each academic year.

III. The Responsibilities of the Dean:

- A. The Dean is a member of the School appointed according to procedures established in the Faculty Handbook and serves both as the principal representative of the school and its faculty as well as being a member of the University's central administration. The responsibilities of the Dean are to:
 - i. Lead, manage and develop the work of the School, as the senior administrator, in cooperation with faculty, and to delegate administrative responsibilities,
 - ii. Promote the work and profile of the School within the administrative structures of the University, as its principal representative,
 - iii. Promote the work and reputation of the School to external audiences,
 - iv. Communicate with faculty, with transparency as a guiding principle, and
 - v. Appoint and assign responsibilities to such officers or groups as are needed to achieve these purposes.

IV. The Academic Structure of the School:

The academic work of the School will be organized through **Program Faculties** and the **Curriculum Committee**:

- A. A **Program Faculty** is a group of affiliated faculty with research and teaching interests in common. Each Program Faculty has primary responsibility for coordinating multiple academic degrees or certificates as determined by the Dean in consultation with the Faculty of the School and the Provost. Each Program Faculty is led by a Director appointed by the Dean in consultation with the faculty.
 - i. **Membership:** Each tenured, tenure-track and term member of the Faculty is required to hold a primary affiliation in a single Program Faculty, and may also affiliate with other Faculties. Only tenured members of a Program Faculty to which they are primarily affiliated may participate in the first level of review for promotion and tenure.
 - ii. The responsibilities of the Program Faculty are to:
 - a. Ensure that degrees and certificate meet the requirements of a dynamic changing environment,

- b. Promote the research activity of the Program Faculty,
- c. Review and/or initiate curriculum changes, including new or amended degrees or certificates,
- d. Conduct the first level review of candidates for renewal, promotion and tenure and present recommendations thereon, and
- e. Report to the Committee of the Whole each semester.

B. The Curriculum Committee coordinates curriculum across the School.

- i. Membership: Three members appointed by the Dean, and six members elected at large from the Governing Faculty for a 3-year term. The Dean appoints the Chair of the Committee.
- ii. The responsibilities of the Curriculum Committee are to:
 - a. Coordinate all degree and certificate programs within the School,
 - b. Initiate, receive, or amend proposals for curriculum change and developments within programs,
 - c. Initiate proposals for new and/or amended degrees and certificates in consultation with Program Faculties and submit proposals to the Committee of the Whole for approval.
 - d. Report to the Committee of the Whole on minor curriculum changes, such as new courses, modifications of course description or names, changes in course numbers, etc.
- iii. For the full procedures for approving new or revised degree programs, please see the document *Developing/Modifying Degree Programs*, approved by faculty vote March 2017.

V. Centers:

From time to time **Centers** will be established for research and/or education and development purposes in the School with responsibilities defined by the Dean in consultation with relevant faculty, the central University administration and external agencies as appropriate. Annual reports will be made to the Committee of the Whole.

VI. Faculty Standing Committees

A. Grievance Committee:

- i. Membership: A tenured full professor from each Program Faculty and one at-large tenured full professor elected by the Faculty for a 3-year renewable term. The Committee will elect its Chair.
- ii. The responsibilities of the Committee are to investigate grievances in accordance with **Section 106B 2.11.2** of the **Faculty Handbook**.

B. Governance Committee:

- i. Membership: One faculty member from each Program Faculty and two at-large members, elected by the Faculty for a 3-year renewable term. The Committee will elect its Chair.
- ii. The responsibilities of the committee are to:
 - a. Monitor the implementation of the By-Laws with respect to the structure and organization for faculty self-governance,
 - b. Organize nomination processes and conduct elections to committees (see Article VII: B)
 - c. Adjudicate rules and procedures, and
 - d. Prepare proposals for changes in the Bylaws where needed, and publish such proposals for discussion in a timely manner.
 - e. Develop norms of procedure for the conduct of meetings.

C: Renewal, Promotion and Tenure Committee

- i. Composition:
 - a. The Renewal, Promotion and Tenure Committee will be elected for a three-year term from the tenured professors of the faculty, in accordance with Section 2.7.3.a.2 of the **Faculty Handbook**.
 - b. The Committee will be composed of three members from each Program Faculty, the majority of which shall be full professors from each Program Faculty, elected by all tenured faculty in the School.
 - c. The Dean will appoint a tenured full professor as the non-voting Chair with the responsibility for assuring that the policies and procedures of both the School and University are followed.

- ii. Process for Promotion, Tenure and Tenure-Track Appointments:
 - a. Tenured members of the Program Faculty will conduct the first level review for promotion and tenure in accordance with Section 2.7.3.a.2 of the Faculty Handbook.
 - b. The process for renewal of Tenure-Track Faculty comprises a first level review in the Program Faculty with a recommendation to the Dean.
 - c. The process for Promotion and Tenure comprises a first level review in the Program Faculty, and a second level of review by the Renewal, Promotion and Tenure Committee, with the following stipulations:
 - i. Members of the Committee may not participate in the second level review of candidates from the Program Faculty in which they have primary affiliation.
 - ii. In consideration of candidates for promotion to the rank of full professor, only faculty of that rank are eligible to participate in first and second level of review.

- iii. Process for the Reappointment and Promotion of Term Faculty:
 - a. The first level review for a multi-year reappointment and/or promotion of Term Faculty will be conducted by an ad hoc committee appointed by the Dean to be composed of at least one member from each Program Faculty to include tenured and/or term faculty at or above the rank to which an individual is being considered for reappointment.
 - b. In accordance with Section 2.3.3.1 of the Faculty Handbook, recommendations for instructional term faculty are due to the Provost usually by November 1st of the final year of the current contract. For research and clinical term faculty, this recommendation is usually due no later than 5 months prior to the last day of the contract term. Recommendations from the ad hoc committee are due to the Dean, no later than two weeks prior to these deadlines.

- iv. Renewal, Promotion and Tenure Committee Responsibilities:
 - a. The Committee is responsible for developing procedures for renewal, tenure and promotion in accordance with the timetable and the requirements of the Faculty Handbook and the Provost's Office for the conduct and timing of both levels of review subject to the approval by a majority of the tenured faculty of the Committee of the Whole.

These are to be communicated annually to the faculty and to candidates.

- b. The Committee will keep under review the criteria used in judgments of Research, Teaching and Service in matters of promotion and tenure in accordance with standards in the Faculty Handbook.
- c. For full RPT procedures, see the document *Renewal, Promotion, and Tenure, and Promotion to Full Professor: Policies and Procedures*, approved by faculty vote December 2016.
- v. Transition Arrangements:

~~Candidates who apply for promotion or tenure in fiscal 2015, 2016, and 2017 will be reviewed and voted upon according to the procedures in the School legacy units in which they were originally hired, unless the faculty member chooses to be reviewed and voted upon by the procedures adopted by the School.~~

The proposed amendment now specifies that tenure track faculty who signed a contract prior to August 25, 2014 and are candidates for third-year renewal, for tenure or for both tenure and promotion can be reviewed and voted upon by the legacy units in which they were originally hired or according to the procedures adopted by the School – at the discretion of the candidate. And candidates for promotion to full professor in fiscal years through 2017-2018 may likewise chooses to be reviewed by their legacy unit or by the procedures adopted by the School. (Approved by oral vote at the meeting of the Schar School Faculty on May 9, 2016.)

D. Community Life Committee:

- i. Membership: One member of each Program Faculty elected by the Faculty for a 3-year renewable term with two invited members of the Administrative staff of the School, nominated by the Dean. The Committee will elect its Chair.
- ii. The responsibilities of the Committee are to organize events, in liaison with the Dean, to promote the wellbeing of the School as a community.

VII. Other Administrative Matters

A. Faculty Meetings.

- i. Most meetings of the Faculty will be meetings of the Committee of the Whole. Such meetings are normally held monthly each semester on dates announced by the Dean at the beginning of each academic year (II: B). The Dean will circulate the agenda for meetings not less than seven business days in advance of the meeting.
- ii. Special meetings may be called to transact specified business only. Such meetings must be announced in writing or via e-mail ten business days in advance. Special meetings may be called by the Dean or upon the written request of five members of the faculty, as defined in Article II.
- iii. Members of the Faculty are expected to attend Faculty Meetings. The quorum of the Committee of the Whole will be one-half of the number of those members not on approved leave.

B. Election Procedures:

- i. The process is the responsibility of the Governance Committee. Elections are normally held in the first full week of April for beginning office in the following academic year. All terms of elected office are 3-year renewable.
- ii. Nominations must indicate the willingness of the nominee to serve, and may include self-nominations. Elections are conducted by secret ballot, either by email or hard copy, and addressed to a named administrative officer. The Chair of the Governance Committee is responsible for ensuring that elections are held in a timely and proper manner and for reporting the results to the Committee of the Whole at its last meeting of the academic year.

C. Hiring Procedures:

The procedures for hiring new tenured or tenure track faculty are as follows:

- i. Faculty hiring priorities will be developed by the Dean in consultation with Program Faculty Directors and normally presented to the Committee of the Whole for discussion in the spring of each year.

- ii. After that presentation, the Dean, in consultation with the Program Faculty Directors, will determine the rank and focus of all searches and appoint the chairs and members of search committees. Search committees will have representation from multiple Program Faculties.
- iii. All faculty members in the School will be invited to attend seminars by any job candidate in the School and to offer advice to the search committee.
- iv. Candidates for tenure-track positions must receive a majority vote by faculty members of the Program Faculty in which the candidate would have a primary affiliation in order to be offered a position. The Program Faculty Director and the Dean must also concur before an offer is made.
- v. Candidates for associate professorships with tenure and for full professor must be recommended by the search committee, and approved through the tenure procedures in VI: C. Non-tenure track appointments are made by the Dean in consultation with Program Faculty Directors.

D. Revisions to the By-Laws

- i. All proposals to review the By-Laws for purposes of revision, amendment or addition, will be considered first by the Governance Committee and then considered by the Committee of the Whole, where changes must be approved. The By-Laws must undergo a comprehensive review in the 2017-2018 academic year.

E. Implementation of these By-Laws:

- i. Following approval of these By-Laws, the By-Laws Committee will act as a pro-tem Governance Committee for the holding of elections to offices in terms of the Election Procedures described in section VII: C. Elections in FY 2015 will be for 1, 2, or 3 year terms, as appropriate to the specific committee.
- ii. Article VI: C is operative only until the last day of the Fall Semester 2015, pending the revision of processes and procedures for Promotion and Tenure to ensure that the rules are appropriate for the varied expertise of present and future faculty.