

BYLAWS FOR THE COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

ADOPTED BY THE COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

April 17, 2019

**Mission Statement**

The Mission of the College of Science at the University of North Texas is to provide a supportive, inclusive, and collaborative environment for students, faculty, and staff, integrating a contemporary education in science with the pursuit of research at the forefront of the natural and mathematical sciences.

**Vision Statement**

The College of Science at the University of North Texas will be known for its:

- Internationally recognized excellence in scientific research and discovery;
- Top quality science education for future scientists, teachers, health professionals, and other world citizens;
- Essential role as a pillar of the university's reputation as a top tier research institution; and
- Successful promotion of scientific literacy, innovation, and economic development.

**Diversity and Inclusion Statement**

The faculty, staff, and students of the College of Science at the University of North Texas are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. We celebrate diverse backgrounds, values, and points of view, and recognize their crucial importance in achieving and sustaining excellence in research and education, in building a strong and healthy community, and in preparing students for lives in a multicultural society.

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## **Preamble**

Subject to the authorities that govern the University of North Texas, the faculty of the College of Science does hereby specify the organization of the College and the principles and procedures under which the business of the College will be conducted.

## **Article I. The Faculty**

### **A. Membership of the Faculty**

Every person holding a full-time faculty appointment, as defined by University Policy 06.002, in the College of Science, including those with a joint appointment in other university units, shall be a member of the college faculty. Voting rights are extended to

- every person holding a full-time or joint tenured or tenure-track faculty appointment in the College of Science, AND
- every person in their 4<sup>th</sup> year and beyond of continuous full-time non-tenure track faculty appointment in the College of Science.

### **B. General Responsibilities and Rights of the Faculty**

Members of the faculty in the College of Science have a variety of duties and responsibilities associated with the mission of the College, including the essential functions of teaching, research, and service. Work in these areas constitutes the faculty member's professional obligation to the College.

The faculty shall be entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of other academic duties.

The faculty shall be entitled to full freedom in the classroom to present and discuss the academic subject but should take care not to introduce controversial matters irrelevant to the subject. Further, individual faculty members shall present the subject matter of assigned courses as announced to students and as approved by the faculty in their collective responsibility for the curriculum.

The faculty shall be entitled to full freedom as citizens. When they speak or write, the faculty shall be free from institutional censorship, but the faculty's special position in the larger community carries special obligations. The faculty should, in all public utterances, be accurate, exercise the appropriate restraint imposed by reason, show appropriate respect for the opinions of others, and make every effort to indicate that they do not speak for the institution.

Faculty members shall not suffer discrimination in faculty status, in evaluations and personnel decisions, or in pay because of their race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion,

sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, political affiliation, disability, marital status, ancestry, genetic information, citizenship, or veteran status.

### C. The Faculty Assembly

The primary governing and legislative body of the College of Science shall be the Faculty Assembly. It shall be the final authority through which the faculty expresses its will on all matters of common concern. The Faculty Assembly shall have the authority to establish standing and special committees and to delegate its authority to such committees.

#### 1. Membership

All members of the faculty with voting rights shall have voting rights in the Faculty Assembly. All other members of the faculty shall enjoy all rights of membership in the Faculty Assembly except the right to vote.

#### 2. Meetings

The Faculty Assembly shall convene as a group normally once a semester at a date and time announced by the Dean. Special meetings may be called by the Dean of the College of Science and shall be called on the written request of ten percent of members of the Faculty Assembly with voting rights.

#### 3. Organization

At all meetings of the Faculty Assembly, the Dean of the College of Science or a member of the Faculty Assembly designated by the Dean of the College of Science shall preside.

The Dean of the College of Science shall appoint a secretary and a parliamentarian for the Faculty Assembly. The proceedings shall be governed by the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, and the parliamentarian shall advise the presiding officer on all matters of parliamentary procedure. The Secretary shall publish and distribute to all faculty the minutes of each meeting within fourteen days following the meeting.

#### 4. Procedure

The Faculty Council (see I.D.1) shall prepare and distribute, at least two (2) business days before a meeting, an agenda for the meeting. The agenda must include any proposal or resolution submitted on time and in writing either by the Dean of the College of Science or by any member of the faculty who carries the endorsement of ten members of the faculty with voting right.

All proposals and resolutions either initiated or substantively amended by a motion from the floor must receive a second hearing at a subsequent meeting of the Faculty Assembly before a final vote is taken.

A quorum shall consist of thirty percent of the members of the faculty with voting rights and all issues, except amendments to these Bylaws, shall be decided by a simple majority of members present and voting. Amendments to these Bylaws shall require a two-thirds majority of all members present and voting.

#### 5. Electronic Voting

Electronic voting on proposals and resolutions may be called by the Dean of the College of Science under the following circumstances:

- it is not necessary for the vote to be anonymous; and
- the proposal or resolution in writing has been presented to the faculty for at least ten (10) business days, or the proposal or resolution in writing has been discussed in a Faculty Assembly meeting.

In case of an electronic vote, a quorum shall consist of thirty percent of the members of the faculty with voting rights. All issues, except amendments to these Bylaws, shall be decided by a simple majority of all members with voting rights who submit a vote. Amendments to these Bylaws shall require a two-thirds majority of all members with voting rights who submit a vote.

#### D. Standing Committees

There shall be standing committees of the faculty that shall have primary responsibility for representing the faculty in the conduct of the affairs of the College. Each committee shall consist of members elected by the faculty or appointed by the Dean. Eligible persons must receive at least two nominations to be placed on the ballot for elected positions on standing committees. If no person has two nominations or if only one person has two nominations, all names submitted for the position will be placed on the ballot. A regular term of membership shall be three years, and each term shall begin on the first day of the academic year (fall semester). On completion of a regular term of membership, no person may be returned to membership, either by election or appointment, for one year.

Following the initial constitution of a committee, the elected membership and the appointed membership shall each be partitioned into three sets approximating as closely as possible one-third of their complement. In each set, the members will serve the same term and, initially, terms shall be determined by lot. Members receiving less than a regular term shall be eligible to succeed themselves. Thereafter, each year those members who are completing a regular term shall be replaced. In the spring of each year, the Dean shall conduct elections and make appointments for those whose terms begin the following September.

If an elected member of a standing committee is unable to complete his/her term, for any reason, then the Dean shall appoint a replacement until a special election is held to fill the position. Temporary appointments are subject to the same restrictions on membership as

general appointments and elections. A special election will be conducted typically within one month of notification that the original member is unable to complete his/her term. The special election will follow the format of a general election for standing committees.

Generally, all departments of the College of Science (see II.A) shall be represented in each of the standing committees. There shall be at least one presiding officer for each standing committee.

It shall be the duty of all members of the standing committees to attend all regular and special meetings of the committee and to participate in committee business electronically as assigned. The membership of a member shall be declared vacant under the following circumstances:

- the member has been absent from two successive regular meetings without just cause, or
- the member has been nonresponsive to electronic committee business for a period of eight weeks.

The meetings of each committee shall be conducted in accordance with generally accepted practices for deliberative bodies of such small size. The presiding officer shall ensure that each member has the opportunity for full participation in the deliberations. All issues, after debate and discussion, shall be decided by simple majority of all members present and voting.

Committee business may be conducted electronically as seen fit by the presiding officer. Again, the presiding officer shall ensure that each member has the opportunity for full participation in the deliberations. Electronic voting may be called by the presiding officer for all issues after debate and discussion. In case of an electronic vote, all issues shall be decided by simple majority of all members who submit a vote.

When a standing committee deliberates on specific budgetary or personnel matters, its findings and recommendations shall not be published, but shall be available in the Office of the Dean.

When a standing committee addresses any matter of general policy in a meeting, the secretary of the committee shall cause the minutes to be published and distributed within ten (10) business days following each such meeting. In case of an electronic vote, the voting results shall also be published and distributed within ten (10) business days following the closing of the vote. Any action taken by the committee that is not disputed in accordance with the appeals procedure, designated below, shall be deemed to be the sense of the faculty and shall be considered approved.

If, within a reasonable period of time, called the appeals period and specified below, following the distribution of the meeting minutes or the voting results of a standing committee, a certain action by the committee is protested in writing by at least ten members of the faculty with voting rights to the Office of the Dean of the College of Science, that

action will be deemed under appeal and the issue shall subsequently be placed before the Faculty Assembly for resolution.

If the distribution date of the minutes or voting results falls within a long semester ten days before the last class day of the semester, the appeals period shall be the ten business days following the date of distribution of the minutes. Otherwise, the appeals period shall terminate on the tenth class day of the succeeding long semester.

Standing committees shall include those specified below.

1. The Faculty Council

The function of the Faculty Council shall be

- a. to meet annually with the Dean to discuss matters related to the budget and/or budgetary policy prior to the College's budget presentation,
- b. to prepare the agenda for all meetings of the Faculty Assembly,
- c. to draft, review, revise, and communicate procedures and policies by which the College shall conduct its business,
- d. to advise the Dean on any matter not specifically delegated to some other committee,
- e. to appoint ad hoc faculty committees and receive reports from them as necessary,
- f. to ensure that adequate appeals procedures and policies are available to all faculty at appropriate levels regarding decisions related to tenure, promotion, salary, and dismissals,
- g. to review regularly, and when appropriate, propose College ByLaw amendments,
- h. to implement and evaluate the College junior faculty mentoring program,
- i. to hold focus group meetings to discuss general morale and concerns of the faculty and report findings to the Dean, and
- j. to ensure equitable procedures in assessing faculty merit and salary recommendations on the departmental level.

The membership of the committee shall consist of three elected members of the faculty and two members of the faculty appointed by the Dean. Faculty members with voting rights are eligible to serve on this committee. Departmental chairs are not eligible for membership on the Faculty Council. The Dean or a person designated by the Dean shall be non-voting chair of the committee.

## 2. The Personnel Affairs Committee

The function of the Personnel Affairs Committee shall be

- a. to formulate policy for the College regarding the appointment, promotion, granting of tenure, and termination of faculty of the College,
- b. to review and approve departmental criteria and procedures for evaluation of faculty performance for purposes of promotion, tenure, and progress in rank, and
- c. to make recommendations to the Dean on promotion, tenure and progress in rank cases presented to the College by its departments.

The membership of the committee shall consist of three elected members of the faculty and two members of the faculty appointed by the Dean. The Dean, assistant deans, associate deans, and department chairs shall not be eligible for election or appointment to this committee. Only full-time faculty members holding the academic rank of full professor are eligible for membership on the committee. Each year the committee shall select a chair from among its members in their second or third year of service. The Dean may attend and participate in advocate presentations made as part of deliberations for promotion, tenure, and progress in rank cases.

## 3. The Curriculum Committee

The undergraduate function of this committee shall be

- a. to receive and act on all proposals for undergraduate curricular change from all units of the College,
- b. to review and initiate changes in undergraduate degree programs and academic standards of the College,
- c. to establish procedures, by which changes in the undergraduate curriculum may be processed in an orderly and expeditious way,
- d. to ensure the integrity of the degree programs by periodically conducting a review and evaluation, in depth, of the core requirements in the degree programs of the College. Such core curriculum reviews shall be initiated in years that are multiples of five, and
- e. to review curricular proposals from other schools and colleges of the University that might affect existing programs in the College of Science.

The graduate function of this committee shall be

- a. to receive and act on all proposals for graduate curricular change from all units of the College,
- b. to review and initiate changes in the graduate degree programs and academic standards of the College, and
- c. to review curricular proposals from other schools and colleges of the University that might affect existing graduate programs in the College of Science.

The membership of the committee shall consist of three elected members of the faculty and two members of the faculty appointed by the Dean. Faculty members with voting rights are eligible to serve on this committee. The Dean or a person designated by the Dean shall be non-voting chair of the committee.

E. Faculty Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure

The faculty has a responsibility to make informed recommendations to the University administration on faculty matters including appointment, reappointment, modified service, promotion, the granting of tenure, and dismissal.

1. Procedures

The procedures of the College of Science shall in no way conflict with or supersede the procedures of the University.

- a. Determinations in matters of faculty status shall originate in department personnel affairs committees (PAC). The primary responsibility of the faculty for such matters is based upon the fact that its judgment is central to general educational policy. Furthermore, scholars in a particular field or activity have the chief competence for judging the work of their colleagues.
- b. Chairs of departments shall transmit the Department PAC recommendations along with their own recommendations to the College of Science Office of the Dean and the College Personnel Affairs Committee (PAC).
- c. The College PAC shall review all department PAC and chair recommendations to determine their adherence to stated College and University standards and to ensure a fair and equitable administration of faculty status policies throughout the College. The College PAC shall transmit the department PAC and chair recommendations, along with their own recommendations, to the Dean.
- d. The Dean shall review all Department PAC, chair, and College PAC recommendations and transmit the recommendations, along with his or her own recommendations, to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. If the recommendations of the Dean differ from those of the department, then all concerned individuals shall be so informed.

## 2. Primacy of Merit

The College of Science shall continually seek excellence in teaching, research, and service, and shall reward faculty members on the basis of merit. The definition of excellence and an understanding of merit must arise primarily from the faculty in continual discussion with the Dean and scholars of acknowledged competence outside the University.

## F. Faculty Grievance

In the event that a faculty member disputes the actions or decisions of any committee, chair, or the Dean, the following procedures shall apply. Such appealable actions or decisions shall not include administrative actions, workload, or decisions on appointment, retention, or removal of persons to, in, or from administrative offices held at the pleasure of the administrative officer or committee. If a department decides not to renew a lecturer of any rank at the end of a contract period, this action will be subject to review by the Dean, but is not an appealable action or decision.

### 1. Grievance Procedure

An appeal to the Faculty Council from a faculty member must come within fifteen (15) business days of when the appellant is first informed of the decision being appealed.

- a. If the alleged grievance occurred in a department, the aggrieved party shall exhaust all department grievance procedures available before appealing on the College level.
- b. If the aggrieved party is dissatisfied with decisions regarding salary, peer evaluation, promotion, non-renewal of contract which are not based on academic freedom, constitutional rights violations or procedural errors, or other matters concerning fairness on the department level, or if the alleged grievance on these matters occurred at the college level, the aggrieved party may appeal in writing to the Faculty Council. The Faculty Council shall review the grievance to ensure that College and University policies have been met, including timeliness, whether an appealable action is being grieved and whether the grievance substantially involves a previously adjudicated appeal. If policies have been met, there shall then be constituted a five-person ad hoc grievance committee chosen from faculty members in the College of Science. The Faculty Council and the aggrieved party shall each appoint two tenured faculty members to the committee. The persons chosen must not have been directly involved in the proceedings or issues leading to the appeal. Those four members shall, by majority vote, appoint a tenured member of the College faculty, with the same restrictions that govern the selection of the original four appointees, to serve as the fifth member and chair of the committee. Following its final selection, the committee shall normally meet within five (5) business days to hear arguments and normally within ten (10) business days render its findings to the Dean and aggrieved party. The Dean shall then accept, modify, or reject the ad hoc committee's findings. If the

aggrieved party is dissatisfied with the ad hoc committee's decision or the Dean's ruling, he or she may appeal to the University Grievance Committee.

Renewal of term appointments (temporary or probationary) is entirely at the option of the university; however, if a faculty member alleges that the non-renewal of his or her term appointment (temporary or probationary), was based primarily on his or her exercise of academic freedom or constitutional rights or that the action did not follow established procedures, the aggrieved party, after an adverse departmental decision and failed departmental appeal, may continue to seek a favorable redress from the College PAC and the Dean. If the decision on the College level is unfavorable, the aggrieved party shall use the grievance procedures as outlined above with an ad hoc committee constituted in the same way as the committee hearing appeals on issues of salary, peer evaluation, promotion, or other matters concerning fairness. The burden of proof is on the appellant. If the ad hoc committee's decision is unfavorable or if the Dean's recommendation remains unfavorable to the appellant, he or she has all rights to due process.

A faculty member may also appeal non-renewal of a term appointment (temporary or probationary) on the basis of inadequate consideration and on substantive issues. Inadequate consideration would involve such questions as: Was the decision conscientiously arrived at? Was all available evidence bearing on the relevant performance of the candidate sought out and considered? Was there adequate deliberation by the department over the import of the evidence in light of the relevant standards? Under substantive matters, the committee would make judgments on the merits of the appellant's record.

In cases of nontenured faculty being dismissed during a contract period or tenured faculty being dismissed, the aggrieved party, after an unsuccessful departmental appeal, may appeal directly to the University Grievance Committee.

## **Article II. Administrative Organization of the College**

### **A. Academic Divisions**

The College of Science consists of the following departments and interdisciplinary programs:

- Department of Biological Sciences
- Department of Chemistry
- Department of Mathematics
- Department of Physics
- Advanced Environmental Research Institute (interdisciplinary program)
- BioDiscovery Institute (interdisciplinary program)
- Teach North Texas (interdisciplinary program)

Interdisciplinary Program of Analytics and Computational Science (interdisciplinary program)

The departments and the interdisciplinary program, as established by the Board of Regents, shall be considered the basic organizational units of the College. Proposals to add, abolish or split departments or interdisciplinary programs shall, after initial consultation of all the members of the groups directly concerned, and the Faculty Council, be referred by the Dean to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for consideration and recommendation.

Within the regulations of the University, the departments shall recommend to the College the establishment of courses and academic programs, the policies of admissions to these programs, and the requirements for degrees, diplomas, and certificates. Through the standing committees of the College, the faculty and the Dean will consider these recommendations from the departments for recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

B. The Dean

The Dean of the College of Science is the chief administrative officer of the College and shall be responsible for the orderly and efficient academic operation of the College. The Dean shares responsibility for the definition and attainment of College goals consistent with the mission of the University, for administrative action, and for operating the communication system which links the academic components of the College. He or she represents the College to its various constituencies. As chief administrative officer of the College, the Dean has a special obligation to innovate and initiate.

The Dean shall be responsible for communications to the faculty on matters affecting the College as a unit of the University and for carrying out policies adopted by the faculty within its policy responsibility. The Dean shall recommend to the faculty procedures for implementing policies and present proposed policies to the faculty for its consideration. The Dean shall receive and transmit expressions of faculty concern on policies or actions not directly within the area of faculty responsibility. The Dean may create special committees or, with the consent of the Faculty Assembly, standing committees for assisting in the conduct of college business.

C. Department Chairs

Chairs shall be appointed by the Dean upon consultation with the appropriate department committee and faculty.

Chairs shall be responsible for advancing the teaching, research, and service mission of the department in concert with the Dean and working within the guidelines of Article III. Although the chairs, as a group, shall not have a specific role in College governance, they shall meet with the Dean on a regular basis. Chairs shall serve terms of four years, with

quadrennial review and the possibility of reappointment with the mutual agreement of the Dean, the department, and the chair.

### **Article III. Departments**

#### **A. Minimum Standards of Organization and Procedure**

1. Each department shall have bylaws that have been approved by the faculty of that department, the Faculty Council, and by the Dean of the College of Science.
2. The provisions of such bylaws shall in no way conflict with or supersede the procedures of the College and the University.
3. Details as to the structure and procedures of the department may vary, but the department bylaws must have its objective the creation of an atmosphere that is receptive to individual opinion and that encourages the free exchange of views, and that encourages maximum participation of all full-time faculty in the decision-making process.

#### **B. Faculty Meetings**

1. Each department shall hold a regular faculty meeting at least once per long semester, and may meet more often as necessary.
2. All adoptions of policy, or changes of policy, must be accomplished in a formal vote of the faculty with voting rights. Such a vote may take place in a faculty meeting or electronically. In either case, faculty are entitled to
  - a. presentation of proposals or resolutions in writing,
  - b. opportunity to express opinions to the other department faculty, and
  - c. an advanced notice of at least two (2) business days before a faculty meeting or a discussion period of at least five (5) business days before an electronic vote, unless this right is waived by a procedure specified in the department charter.
3. The authority of the department faculty shall extend to any matter of concern to the department.

#### **C. Division within Departments**

1. A department may create one or more subordinate divisions within the department as it deems appropriate, with the concurrence of the Dean of the College of Science. The relationships of divisions to departments will be determined by agreement of the

affected faculty. Divisions within a department are not to be regarded as autonomous academic units, but as units within the department.

2. The internal organization of a division shall be determined by the divisional membership with the approval of the departmental faculty and the Dean of the College of Science. Divisions shall be fairly represented on the executive committee and other policy-making committees of the department.

#### D. Students

1. Each department should, when appropriate, encourage the establishment of undergraduate and graduate honor societies appropriate to the discipline. Faculty support should include assisting in establishing such societies, willingness to sponsor chapters, and advising students as to the proper administration and functioning of such organizations.
2. Graduate students should be made to feel a part of the community of scholars in the department's discipline, and of the College of Science, by having department and college-level councils of graduate students.
3. With regard to graduate students who hold appointments as Teaching Fellows or Teaching Assistants, departments should accept as their responsibility the orientation of the students to their teaching role, and the department should provide not only supervision but also counsel and support, through a special seminar for such students.
4. Teaching fellows and assistants should be provided with clear job descriptions, and departments and faculty should not require duties beyond the limits of such job descriptions.
5. Departments should provide for student membership on appropriate department committees.
6. Each department should establish a system of student advising designed to give students maximum assistance in planning their overall degree plan and their schedule for each semester.

#### E. Scholarship and Interdisciplinary Activities

1. Each department should encourage and promote the free exchange of knowledge among the department faculty, and with colleagues throughout the University and beyond. Adequate support should be provided for the research and publication of the department faculty. Departments are urged to sponsor and actively support such events as lectures, forums, debates, colloquia, and other gatherings designed for the dissemination of knowledge.

2. Departments should actively participate in and seek out new opportunities for interdisciplinary activities within the University community that promote the exchange and acquisition of knowledge for faculty and students alike.