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# Department of Philosophy & Religion Bylaws

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This document articulates the policies and procedures adopted by the Department of Philosophy and Religion, housed within the College of Arts and Sciences at Appalachian State University. The operations of the department are guided by the Appalachian State University *Faculty Handbook* and shall not contravene policies and procedures therein. Additionally, the operations of the department are guided by policies promulgated by the UNC System, Academic Affairs, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Academic Policies and Procedures Committee.

## **Mission Statement**

The Department of Philosophy and Religion provides distinctive academic programs in which students critically and creatively examine the beliefs, values, practices, and institutions that shape human lives. The department guides students in becoming reflective and resilient individuals who contribute to their communities in constructive and meaningful ways. It achieves this mission through excellence in teaching, research, and service; a variety of pedagogical approaches and research methods; collegial and collaborative relationships; and an abiding commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and sustainability. In its curriculum and campus engagements, it recognizes a plurality of the world's many philosophical and religious perspectives.

## **I. Structure**

The Department of Philosophy and Religion is housed within the College of Arts & Sciences at Appalachian State University. Although the department provides majors and minors in both Philosophy and in Religious Studies, the department functions administratively as a single unit.

## **II. Committees**

On all committees for which the *Faculty Handbook* does not specify election procedures for a Chair or a Coordinator, there shall be a limit of two consecutive years of service in

the committee's Chair or Coordinator role. Faculty shall be eligible to serve as Chair or Coordinator of the committee again after a one-year break in service.

On all committees consisting of both Philosophy & Religious Studies faculty, at least one faculty member from each of Philosophy and Religious Studies shall serve.

#### A. Standing Committees

##### 1. Curriculum Committees

- a. Philosophy and Religious Studies shall maintain separate Curriculum Committees to conduct work directly related to the courses offered and the Programs of Study for each discipline.
- b. All tenured and tenure-track faculty shall serve on the Curriculum Committee of their discipline. Other faculty—excluding part-time faculty teaching less than six hours per semester, emeriti faculty, and adjunct faculty—have the right to serve on the Curriculum Committee of their discipline.
- c. Philosophy and Religious Studies shall each elect or the Department Chair shall appoint a Chair to each of the Curriculum Committees.
- d. Curriculum Committee Chairs shall:
  - i. coordinate scheduling and agendas of the committees' meetings, lead the committees' meetings, and record minutes of the committees' meetings;
  - ii. ensure the committee develops proposals, as necessary, for the addition, modification, and deletion of courses and Programs of Study;
  - iii. work with faculty to ensure the completion of all proposal forms and work with the Department Chair to guide each proposal through the established channels;
  - iv. work with the Department Chair to ensure appropriate updates to Four Year Guides and General Education check sheets;
  - v. work with faculty and the Department Chair to ensure completion of General Education renewals.
- e. Curriculum Committees shall respond, as needed, to changes in General Education and other University curricular initiatives.
- f. The Department Chair can charge the Curriculum Committees with specific tasks related to the curriculum.

##### 2. Departmental Personnel Committee (DPC)

- a. The DPC shall be elected from among eligible members every year according to the procedures outlined by the *Faculty Handbook*. Tenured faculty shall serve three-year staggered terms and untenured faculty shall

serve one-year terms. Alternates at both levels shall serve one-year terms.

- b. The DPC assumes responsibility for certain departmental personnel matters as designated in the *Faculty Handbook*. These include, but are not limited to:
    - i. reviewing the credentials of all applicants for new or vacant non-tenure eligible positions including special faculty appointments, interviewing selected candidates, and making recommendations to the Chair of a qualified person or persons to fill the position.
    - ii. conducting peer teaching reviews of all non-tenure eligible and special faculty and making recommendations to the Chair regarding appointments, reappointments and promotions. That schedule of teaching reviews shall happen in accordance with the *Faculty Handbook*.
  - c. The DPC shall function according to all processes specified in the *Faculty Handbook*.
3. Promotion and Tenure Committee (PTC)
- a. The PTC shall consist of all tenured faculty members, excluding the Department Chair and any persons who must be recused in accordance with the *Faculty Handbook*.
  - b. The PTC shall make recommendations regarding contract renewal for tenure-track faculty, Emeritus status, graduate faculty status for tenure-track and tenured faculty, the granting of permanent tenure, and promotion to tenure-track or tenured ranks, either when a request for tenure is made by a faculty member, or at the automatic intervals specified in the *Faculty Handbook*.
  - c. The PTC shall function according to the processes specified in the *Faculty Handbook*.
4. Post-Tenure Review (PTR) Committee
- a. The PTR Committee shall be elected following the guidelines in the *Faculty Handbook*.
  - b. The PTR Committee exists to evaluate, in accordance with the procedures outlined in the *Faculty Handbook*, tenured faculty members on the designated schedule and communicate its determinations to the Department Chair.
  - c. The PTR Committee shall function according to the processes specified in the *Faculty Handbook*.

## B. Other Committees

1. Search Committees
  - a. Search committees shall comprise members of the faculty from the departmental discipline/field representing the area of the search: i.e. Philosophy position searches shall be conducted by a Search Committee made up of the Philosophy faculty; Religious Studies position searches shall be conducted by a Search Committee made up of the Religious Studies faculty; joint position searches shall be conducted by a Search Committee appointed by the Chair with representatives from both disciplines;
  - b. The Department Chair, in consultation with the faculty from the appropriate discipline/field, shall determine the composition of search committees and appoint a Chair.
  - c. Search committees shall consist of an uneven number of faculty.
  - d. Search committees report directly to the Department Chair;
  - e. Search committees operate according to the guidelines in the *Faculty Handbook*.
2. Department Chair Search Committees

Searches for the Department Chair shall proceed in accord with the process outlined in the *Faculty Handbook*.
3. Scholarship Committee

When money is available to fund scholarships, the departmental faculty shall meet to determine how to award that funding in accord with its existing criteria.
4. Other committees and task forces shall be established as necessary by the Department Chair. New coordinators and/or committees may also be proposed by any tenured or tenure-track faculty member and established by a majority vote.

## III. Coordinators, Liaisons, and Faculty Senate Representation

For all Coordinator or Liaison positions for which the *Faculty Handbook* does not specify term lengths and term limits, there shall be a limit of two consecutive two-year terms of service in the Coordinator or Liaison role. Faculty shall be eligible to serve as Coordinator or Liaison again after a two-year break in service.

1. Assessment Coordinators
  - A. While all faculty share the responsibility for program assessment, Philosophy and Religious Studies shall each elect or the Department Chair shall appoint Assessment Coordinators to manage work directly related to assessment for the major and the minor.
  - B. The Assessment Coordinators shall ensure that the program faculty:

- i. develop and implement procedures for program assessment as directed by the College and University.
    - ii. carry out the on-going work of assessment as outlined by department protocols.
    - iii. periodically evaluate the utility of the assessment procedures and make changes as appropriate.
  - C. The Department Chair may charge the faculty with specific tasks related to assessment.
2. Faculty Senate representation from the department shall be determined by the procedure outlined in the *Faculty Handbook*.
3. Honors Coordinator
  - A. The Department offers courses for students seeking University Honors as well as for students who want to earn departmental Honors.
  - B. The Department shall elect or appoint a Coordinator who serves as the link between the department and the University Honors Program and works with students seeking departmental Honors.
  - C. The Honors Coordinator, in consultation with the Department Chair, shall develop a regular schedule of course offerings and/or "cut-outs" of seats in existing courses, with an Honors designation.
  - D. The Honors Coordinator shall work with students to ensure their successful completion of departmental Honors requirements and the submission of the thesis.
  - E. The Honors Coordinator may be charged with other Honors-related work by the Department Chair.
4. Internship Coordinator
  - A. While all tenured and tenure-track faculty share the responsibility for assisting students in developing internships for credit, the department shall elect or appoint an Internship Coordinator.
  - B. These coordinators assist the internship process:
    - i. by undergoing training regarding the legal issues and data entry for generating internship contracts;
    - ii. by keeping informed of decisions by the Internship Council;
    - iii. by assisting faculty who will serve as internship supervisors with the forms and procedures, and then generating contracts for them, and
    - iv. by promoting internship opportunities.
5. Marketing Coordinator

A Marketing Coordinator may be elected by the department faculty or appointed by the Department Chair to develop strategies for marketing the department to audiences internal to and external to the university via the department website, social media, print materials, etc. The Marketing Coordinator will implement

these strategies in collaboration with the Department Chair, faculty, staff, and the College of Arts and Sciences' Director of Marketing, Communication, and Engagement.

#### **IV. Meetings**

1. All department meetings shall be noticed by their Chairs one week prior unless extraordinary circumstances apply.
2. General department meetings shall normally take place during the fall and spring semesters on the first Wednesday of each month at 12:00 p.m. The Chair may determine that an alternative date is necessary or appropriate.
3. Additional faculty or other committee meetings may be held in the MWF noon time frame, or at a time mutually agreed upon by the committee members.
4. Voting-eligible faculty are defined by the *Faculty Handbook*.
5. Meetings shall be conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order*.

#### **V. Revision of Bylaws**

Departmental bylaws shall be adopted by a majority vote and may be amended by a majority vote. Ordinarily, bylaws shall be reviewed and subject to amendment annually.