

**BYLAWS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**

**Spring 2013**

## **BY-LAWS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**

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**SECTION 1****21****ARTICLE I: AIMS****Section 1.**

These bylaws have the following aims: (1) to foster widespread participation among the members of the English department; (2) to ensure orderly procedures within the department; and (3) to stimulate and encourage the development of the talents of individual members of the department.

**ARTICLE II: MEMBERS****Section 1.**

- a) The Department of English consists of all full time (tenure-line or term) professors, associate professors, and assistant professors, instructors, adjunct faculty, retired professors, professors emeriti, graduate students and declared undergraduate majors or minors.
- b) Voting members of the Department shall consist of tenure-line and term faculty, and of those adjunct faculty members who have taught at least 24 credits for the department. However, only tenure-line faculty may vote on faculty personnel and salary matters concerning tenure-line faculty or prospective tenure-line faculty members.
- c) Non-voting members may attend meetings upon invitation.

**ARTICLE III: MEETINGS****Section 1.**

- a) The regular business of the department is conducted in meetings called by the chair of the department, which all tenure-line members of the department are required to attend. These meetings shall be called at least three times a semester, except during the summer session, and are presided over by the chair.
- b) Special meetings may be called by the Chair of the Department or at the written request of one-quarter of the tenure-line voting members.
- c) The department chair shall draw up an agenda and circulate it to the voting members at least three days prior to the meeting date except on urgent occasions.
- d) All meetings will be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, latest revised edition. Minutes and attendance will be kept for all meetings.
- e) A quorum at any regular faculty meeting consists of a majority of the tenure-line members of the department. A quorum at a specially called faculty meeting consists of two-thirds of the tenure-line members of the department.
- f) A secret ballot will be taken at the request of any voting member. A mail or electronic

ballot shall be taken if approved by a majority of members attending.

## **ARTICLE IV: DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION**

### **Section 1. Chair**

- a) The chair is appointed by the provost, according to procedures outlined in the Faculty Handbook.
- b) The responsibilities of the chair are:
  1. to encourage excellence in teaching, research, and service to the department, to the university, and to the community;
  2. to call and preside over department meetings;
  3. to represent the department to the college and the university and serve as a normal channel of communications on departmental matters;
  4. to perform the duties of departmental chair as specified in the faculty handbook;
  5. to determine the allocation of departmental resources; to recommend to the dean an operating budget; to dispense funds received;
  6. to make salary recommendations to the CHSS Dean, in consultation with the departmental salary committee;
  7. to determine the assignment of instructors to classes, and to approve the scheduling of classes, in consultation with the associate chair, with the undergraduate director and graduate director (and their respective committees), the director of linguistics, the director of the MFA program, and the director of composition;
  8. to appoint departmental administrators;
  9. to appoint ad hoc committees as needed to address departmental business;
  10. to supervise the work of staff personnel;
  11. to supervise the maintenance of personnel files of the faculty and take care that (except for outside evaluations at the time of tenure) no adverse report is included unless the individual is given the opportunity to respond to it in writing for inclusion in his or her file;
  12. to hear and adjudicate complaints, including student complaints about departmental faculty and/or teaching;
  13. to coordinate all segments of the English program, such as major requirements, curricular offerings, and catalogue announcements, in conjunction with the appropriate committees of the department;
  14. to coordinate the recruitment of new personnel and assure that university hiring guidelines and procedures are observed;
  15. to forward personal recommendations, as well as the recommendations of the department regarding appointments, promotions, and renewal and non-renewal of

- appointments to the dean and appropriate committees;
16. to decide, in consultation with the salary committee, who will receive reduced teaching loads for research;
  17. to review annually with each tenure-line probationary faculty member his or her teaching, scholarly activities, and other services that year, and discuss his or her progress towards reappointment, promotion, and tenure; and to see that the guidelines for junior faculty mentoring are carried out;
  18. To ensure that new full-time faculty receive a copy of the department by-laws, the university faculty handbook and, for tenure-line faculty copies, of the department mentoring and rpt guidelines;
  19. to consult yearly with department members, at a regular department meeting or meetings, about long-term hiring needs;
  20. to oversee the marketing of English department programs, courses and other initiatives.

## **Section 2. Associate Chair**

- a) The associate chair is appointed by the chair for a one-year, renewable term, beginning on May 1.
- b) The responsibilities of the associate chair are:
  1. to act in place of the chair when necessary;
  2. to recommend to the chair which courses will be offered in consultation with the director of graduate studies, the director of linguistics, the director of the MFA program, the academic coordinator, the director of undergraduate studies, and the director of composition;
  3. to advise the chair on full-time teaching assignments and to assign courses to part-time faculty and teaching assistants in consultation with the Chair;
  4. to schedule classes in collaboration with the academic coordinator;
  5. to assist the Chair in making long and short range plans for the department and in negotiating with the dean and associate deans of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences;
  6. to serve on the advisory committee to the chair;
  7. to pass on pertinent information to the succeeding associate chair in an orderly and useful manner.

## **Section 3. Co-Chairs**

When co-chairs are appointed for the department, they will exercise joint authority over the responsibilities assigned to the chair and the associate chair in sections 1 and 2.

**Section 4. Director of English Composition**

- a) The director of English composition is appointed by the chair for a one-year, renewable term, beginning July 1.
- b) The responsibilities of the director are:
  1. to advise the chair on matters relating to the design and effective implementation of the composition program;
  2. to take part in the recruiting, interviewing, and hiring of adjunct and contract faculty and teaching assistants who will teach required composition courses;
  3. to see that adequate supervision is given to all faculty teaching these courses, with regular faculty development designed and carried out through such means as (a) workshops to discuss materials, teaching practices, and policies, (b) written documentation, and (c) development and maintenance of a circulating library of professional publications;
  4. to review syllabi and other teaching materials for these courses; and generally to encourage excellence in teaching;
  5. to have major responsibilities for hiring, training, and supervising any assistants to director of composition;
  6. to maintain composition program website;
  7. to plan and conduct pre-semester orientation in August;
  8. to serve as chair of the ad hoc committee on composition, which advises the director on program policy;
  9. to devise and administer responsible measures of writing proficiency, such as proficiency exams and portfolios, for the purpose of granting alternative credit for required composition courses, and to coordinate the reading and evaluation of such measures;
  10. to advise students concerning hours and courses needed to fulfill university composition requirements, and to make recommendations to the deans and other appropriate offices regarding the granting of transfer credit or waivers of required coursework;
  11. with the consent of the chair, to serve as liaison between the department and university offices and programs such as Writing Across the Curriculum on matters pertinent to the effective operation of the composition program, these offices including admissions, the registrar, student advising, office of disability services, the English Language Institute, information technology unit, advising offices attached to the colleges, etc.;
  12. to remain up to date on developments in composition theory, teaching practice, and program administration, towards fulfilling the above duties in a professional manner;
  13. to serve on the advisory committee to the chair;
  14. to serve on the adjunct committee;

15. to present an annual report to the chair by the end of April;
16. to pass on pertinent information to the succeeding director in an orderly and useful manner.

### **Section 5. Coordinator of 200-Level Literature Courses**

- a) The coordinator of 200-level literature courses is appointed by the chair for a one-year, renewable term, beginning May 1.
- b) The responsibilities of the Coordinator are:
  1. to serve on the chair's advisory committee;
  2. to communicate with the instructors of the 200-level courses in order to support and coordinate their teaching. Works with the undergraduate advisor and the instructor in English 610 for GTAs to compile an email list of 200s instructors before the beginning of classes each semester;
  3. to work with the academic coordinator to assure that each semester new instructors receive the departmental guidelines and materials for instructional support and development for teaching 200-level courses;
  4. to request copies of course syllabi from instructors before the beginning of each semester for review. (If a syllabus indicates a need for an immediate intervention with the instructor concerning departmental or university regulations and guidelines, to act upon it, consulting with the chair as appropriate.);
  5. to make an introductory presentation at the fall workshop for new faculty in English;
  6. to organize and moderate a half-day workshop during final exam week in December for spring semester instructors;
  7. to lead two 200-level faculty workshops each semester on some aspect of instruction that seems timely and appropriate;
  8. to maintain and update as necessary departmental guidelines and materials for instructional support and development for teaching 200-level courses;
  9. to maintain a shelf of current literature textbooks in the departmental lounge and use email to keep instructors updated. (Publishers routinely send multiple copies of new texts to the coordinator for this purpose.);
  10. to visit, on request of individual instructors, class sessions and provide guidance. (Some instructors or GTAs may ask to attend the coordinator's 200 level class.)
- c) Note: routine class visitation/evaluation is provided by the adjunct committee. The 200-level coordinator does not assign teaching schedules and does not routinely participate in the interviewing of potential instructors (but may participate to the extent the coordinator wishes).

### **Section 6. Director of Undergraduate Studies**

- a) The director of undergraduate studies is appointed by the chair for a one-year, renewable term, beginning May 1.

- b) The responsibilities of the director are:
1. to chair the undergraduate curriculum and program planning committee;
  2. to advise the associate chair on the courses that should be taught, in consultation with the undergraduate curriculum and program planning committee;
  3. to coordinate the work of the faculty who direct and the faculty who teach in the undergraduate concentrations;
  4. to serve as first contact for undergraduate students with complaints about grades;
  5. to direct assessment of the undergraduate programs;
  6. to prepare copy, every year, for the undergraduate portion of the university catalog;
  7. to publicize undergraduate awards and contests, and to select recipients;
  8. to assist the department chair with marketing of department programs, courses and initiatives;
  9. to represent the English department at meetings of CHSS undergraduate directors;
  10. to serve as advisor to the Undergraduate English Society (UES).
  11. to serve on the advisory committee to the chair;
  12. to present an annual report to the chair by the end of April;
  13. to pass on pertinent information to the succeeding undergraduate director in an orderly and useful manner.

### **Section 7. Academic Coordinator**

- a) The academic coordinator is a full-time term position with a 1-1 teaching load.
- b) The responsibilities of the academic coordinator are:
1. to serve as a general advisor to new or prospective English majors, and other students; to advise transfer students and determine how their transfer credits are applied to the English major; to direct BIS majors to an appropriate project advisor; to advise English majors with prospective careers in education in respect to commonwealth requirements;
  2. to supervise undergraduate advising, insuring that advisors and advisees meet on a regular basis, and to supervise maintenance of the undergraduate files; to monitor student records and graduation applications by English majors; to authorize individual substitutions in requirements for the major;
  3. to assist the chair and the associate chair in determining which courses to offer in coming semesters, and to collaborate with the associate chair in scheduling classes;
  4. to promote the English program at orientation, recruitment, advising and academic events, etc.;
  5. to assist the department chair with marketing of department programs, courses and initiatives;

6. to keep faculty and students informed of new developments in the undergraduate programs and to publicize the programs to the general public;
7. to serve on the advisory committee to the chair;
8. To present an annual report to the chair by the end of April;
9. to pass on pertinent information to the succeeding academic director in an orderly and useful manner.

### **Section 8. Coordinator of the Honors Program**

- a) The honors coordinator is appointed by the chair for a one-year, renewable term beginning May 1.
- b) The responsibilities of the honors coordinator are:
  1. to solicit, review, and admit students for honors work, and to review their progress as needed;
  2. to consult with the associate chair concerning assignment of faculty and topics to designated honors courses;
  3. to consult with the undergraduate committee regarding the criteria and design of the honors program;
  4. to promote the honors program;
  5. to pass on pertinent information to the succeeding honors coordinator in an orderly and useful manner.

### **Section 9. Director of Graduate Studies in English**

- a) The director of graduate studies is appointed by the chair for a one-year, renewable term, beginning May 1.
- b) The responsibilities of the director of graduate Studies are:
  1. to chair the graduate curriculum and program planning committee;
  2. to advise the associate chair on the courses that should be taught, attempting to do so within the context of the established two-year course rotation, and with input from the graduate curriculum and program planning committee;
  3. to manage administrative details of the graduate programs, including admissions applications, thesis proposals, graduation degree applications, GTA policies, renewal of contracts and management of GTA waiver money; graduate contests and awards; new graduate courses, programs, and degree proposals; and to update and publicize the two-year course rotation;
  4. To meet with the graduate curriculum and program planning committee and, when necessary, with other appropriate faculty to coordinate fellowships and awards;
  5. to supervise graduate advising; to schedule and attend advising orientations for new students; to encourage advisors and advisees to meet on a regular basis; to advise students unsure about hours and courses needed to fulfill university graduate

- requirements; to adjudicate as necessary special cases concerning program requirements and the time allotted to finish, making appropriate recommendations to the associate dean of graduate Studies;
6. to prepare copy for the graduate portion of the University catalog;
  7. to keep faculty and students informed of new developments in the graduate programs, and to publicize the programs to the general public, including attending such events as university open houses;
  8. to sit as the department's representative at the graduate coordinator's meetings;
  9. to serve as the first point of contact for graduate student complaints about grades;
  10. to appoint (or act as) the advisor to the Graduate English Student Association (GESA) and to urge GESA to hold receptions for new and graduating students;
  11. to hold yearly advising sessions for undergraduate and graduate students planning careers in teaching;
  12. to assist the department chair with marketing of department programs, courses and initiatives.
  13. to serve on the advisory committee to the chair;
  14. to present an annual report to the chair by the end of April;
  15. to pass on pertinent information to the succeeding director in an orderly and useful manner.

#### **Section 10. Director of Linguistics**

- a) The director of linguistics is appointed by the chair for a one-year, renewable term, beginning May 1.
- b) The responsibilities of the director are:
  1. to consult with the linguistics faculty to set the curriculum of the linguistics programs; and to advise the associate chair on what linguistics courses should be taught and who should teach them;
  2. to advise the graduate director on admissions to the linguistics programs, and to advise current and prospective graduate students in linguistics;
  3. to assist the department chair with marketing of department programs, courses and initiatives;
  4. to serve on the advisory committee to the chair;
  5. to present an annual report to the chair by the end of April;
  6. to pass on pertinent information to the succeeding Director in an orderly and useful manner.

#### **Section 11. Director of the MFA Program**

- a) The director of MFA program is appointed by the chair for a one-year, renewable term, beginning July 1.

- b) The responsibilities of the director are:
1. to coordinate the work of the MFA committees in fiction, nonfiction, and poetry;
  2. to serve as a member of the graduate curriculum and program planning committee;
  3. to consult with the fiction, nonfiction, and poetry committees and to advise the associate chair on what writing courses should be taught and who should teach them;
  4. to consult with the chair of the undergraduate curriculum committee and the director of graduate studies to coordinate new course and degree proposals and writing program planning;
  5. to meet with prospective graduate students in writing and to interview applicants when necessary;
  6. to consult with the fiction, nonfiction, and poetry faculty and the graduate admissions office on criteria and procedures for the admission of students to the graduate writing programs and to coordinate the screening of applicants;
  7. to inform the CHSS Associate Dean of Academic Programs of each candidate's progress through degree requirements;
  8. to coordinate all administrative details of the writing program, to coordinate the approval of the MFA exam reading lists and to coordinate and administer the MFA exam each fall and spring semester; to plan conferences, festivals, and readings; to initiate grant applications, and to administer fellowships, prizes, and awards;
  9. to disseminate information of interest to writers and writing students and to foster a sense of community within the program and through such organizations as Phoebe and The Writer's Club;
  10. to make sure that students, faculty, and the general public are kept well-informed about the department's writing programs and to represent the program to such outside organizations as the Associated Writing Programs;
  11. to assist the department chair with marketing of department programs, courses and initiatives.
  12. to serve on the advisory committee to the chair;
  13. to present an annual report to the chair by the end of April;
  14. to pass on pertinent information to the succeeding director in an orderly and useful manner.

### **Section 12. Office-assignment Coordinator**

- a) The office-assignment coordinator is appointed by the chair for a one-year, renewable term, beginning May 1.
- b) The responsibilities of the Coordinator are:
1. to maintain with the office administrator the established seniority list by which office assignments are made;
  2. to offer, in accordance with the established list, available offices to new faculty and to

faculty who have been promoted;

3. to assign offices to contract faculty, adjunct faculty and graduate teaching assistants in that order of priority, and to work to improve the office situation for these faculty;
4. to determine, with the chair or associate chair, the programmatic use of office space;
5. to pass on pertinent information to the succeeding coordinator in an orderly and useful manner.

#### **Section 14. Chair of the Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee**

- a) The chair of the RPT committee is elected by the RPT committee during the Spring semester for a two-year term.
- b) The responsibilities of the chair are:
  1. to set dates for RPT meetings and to chair them;
  2. to select, in consultation with the department chair, the ad-hoc subcommittees; to inform the candidates of their subcommittees; and to enable them to strike one member from the subcommittee, if they so desire;
  3. to answer candidates' questions about RPT procedures and to assist them as they prepare their files;
  4. to make sure that candidates' RPT files are available for review by members of the RPT Committee;
  5. to call candidates with the results of their votes;
  6. to work with the subcommittee chairpersons to write a letter for each candidate that expresses the judgments of the RPT committee as a whole.

#### **Section 15. Chair of the Full Professors' Promotion Committee**

- a) The chair of the full professors' promotion committee is elected by the full professors during the Spring semester for a three-year term.
- b) The responsibilities of the chair are:
  1. to assist the department chair in identifying potential candidates for promotion from associate professor to full professor;
  2. to call meetings of the committee and to chair them;
  3. to select, in consultation with the department chair, the ad-hoc subcommittees; to inform the candidates of their sub-committees; and to enable them to strike one member from the sub-committee, if they so desire;
  4. to answer candidates' questions about promotion procedures and to assist them as they prepare their files;
  5. to make sure that candidates' promotion files are available for review by members of the full professors committee;
  6. to call candidates with the results of their votes;

7. to work with the sub-committee chairpersons to write a letter for each candidate that expresses the judgments of the full professors committee as a whole.

### **Section 16. Unfilled Appointments**

The chair(s), with the approval of the advisory committee, may elect not to fill an administrative position in any given year if conditions warrant.

## **ARTICLE V: ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION OF COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1. General Rules on Committees**

- a) All tenure-line serve on at least one standing committee. In addition, all tenured faculty are expected to participate in the work of the RPT Committee, and, if elected, the salary committee.
- b) All department committee meetings, with the exception of salary, salary appeals, grievance, RPT, and advisory committees, shall be open to all department faculty members.
- c) Election of committee members shall be held no later than May 15. The pool of candidates will include all of the coming year's tenure-line faculty.
- d) Nominations for membership on committees shall come either from the coordinator of committee nominations or from the floor.

### **Section 2. Coordinator of Committee Nominations**

- a) Membership. One department member to be elected for one year by the entire department. The election shall be held by May 15.
- b) Functions.
  1. to inform all department members of vacancies on committees as those vacancies occur, and before the specified elections in May;
  2. to solicit nominations, including self-nominations, for all committee vacancies, and gain the consent to run of all those nominees not self-nominated. Soliciting of nominations shall not be done by asking people to join certain committees but by reminding them of their responsibility to serve;
  3. to prepare a slate of nominees, including all nominations received, for department distribution a week before the elections meeting;
  4. to assist in the election process;
  5. to serve as the third member of the grievance committee.

**Section 3. Advisory Committee to the Chair**

## a) Membership.

1. The tenure-line members of the department will elect two members from among their members.
2. The director of graduate studies, the director of undergraduate studies, the director of English composition, the director of the MFA program, the director of linguistics, the 200-level literature coordinator and the academic coordinator will be ex officio members of the advisory committee to the chair.
3. Exclusive of its elected members, the advisory committee membership will include faculty from each of the English department's six areas of study: creative writing, folklore studies, film and media studies, literature, linguistics and writing and rhetoric. If such a faculty member already serves on the committee in another capacity (e.g. director of undergraduate studies), then that person will also represent his or her area. If an area is not so represented, then the faculty in that area may choose a representative and forward his or her name to the chair for appointment to the committee.

## b) Functions.

1. The Advisory committee will advise the chair when the chair thinks she/he needs advice or when the committee thinks the chair needs advice. Some areas in which advice might be given are faculty appointments, the allocation of departmental funds, the administration of the various programs of the department, and the supervision of the office staff and the marketing of department courses, programs or other initiatives. Any faculty member should present to the relevant member of the advisory committee any problem or recommendation involving departmental policy.
2. At the beginning of each semester the advisory committee will circulate to all department members and staff a letter soliciting matters that should be considered by the advisory committee. Department members may submit items for consideration at any time.

**Section 4. Graduate Curriculum and Program Planning Committee**

a) Membership. The graduate director and four faculty members, including a linguist and the director of the MFA Program. Members shall serve two-year terms.

## b) Functions.

1. to maintain a two-year program of graduate course offerings;
2. to review courses descriptions and to recommend appropriate changes to our department;
3. to recommend to the department for approval new graduate course offerings for inclusion in the catalog;

4. to evaluate all graduate programs, recommend changes in existing programs, and recommend new programs. For this purpose, the committee should keep informed about curricular developments at other institutions and about the special interests and needs of the George Mason University students and community;
5. to supervise admissions; to recommend appropriate changes in criteria for admissions to department graduate programs; and to review requirements for graduate degrees and certificates offered by the department;
6. to consider, along with other appropriate departments, the possibility of new doctoral programs in the humanities.

### **Section 5. MFA Fiction, Nonfiction, and Poetry Committees**

- a) Membership. These committees comprise the fiction, nonfiction and poetry writing staff for the MFA Program, respectively. Each committee shall have a chair who will coordinate with the director of the MFA Program.
- b) Functions.
  1. to administer activities connected with the graduate creative writing program in the respective genres;
  2. to review graduate applications, the administration of graduate school fellowships, the composing and grading of MFA exams, the administration of the visiting writers program, the Mary Roberts Rinehart fund, and other special programs pertaining to the MFA degree.

### **1. Section 6. Undergraduate Curriculum and Program Planning Committee**

- a) Membership. The director of undergraduate Studies and four faculty members who will serve two-year terms.
- b) Functions.
  1. to develop and maintain a two-year program of upper-division undergraduate course offerings;
  2. to review course descriptions and to recommend appropriate changes to the department;
  3. to recommend to the department for approval new undergraduate course offerings for inclusion in the catalog;
  4. to evaluate annually all undergraduate programs, recommend changes in existing programs, and recommend new programs. For this purpose, the committee should keep informed about curricular developments at other institutions and about the special needs and interests of the George Mason students and community;
  5. to recommend appropriate changes in requirements for undergraduate degrees and certificates offered by the department; to coordinate such changes with the CHSS Dean's office;

6. to supervise the curriculum of the honors program.

### **Section 7. Adjunct Faculty Committee**

#### a) Membership.

1. Three tenure or tenure-line faculty.
2. Ex officio: the director of composition, the associate director of composition and the department associate chair.
3. As a general practice, meetings of the adjunct faculty committee, with the exception of meetings concerned with personnel evaluation, will be open to all adjunct faculty.

#### b) Functions.

1. To be performed only by ex officio members of the committee:
  - i. to assist the department chair in soliciting, reading, sorting and evaluating letters of application and dossiers of candidates for part-time employment in the department;
  - ii. to interview and to make preliminary judgments about candidates for part-time possibilities and to present candidates, as necessary, to the department and university administrators;
  - iii. to request that adjunct faculty present to the committee materials attesting to the quality of their teaching and to devise procedures whereby the committee might improve its methods of interviewing and evaluating adjunct faculty;
  - iv. to advise the regular members of the adjunct committee on standards for evaluation, including teaching peer reviews;
  - v. to work with office staff to maintain records on the evaluation of adjunct faculty;
  - vi. to determine procedures whereby adjunct faculty of proven excellence need not be re-evaluated each semester, thus insuring some continuity of employment of teachers of demonstrated merit, and to determine which adjunct faculty will be offered these extended employment agreements.
  - vii. to maintain, modify, and distribute a faculty handbook for adjunct faculty;
  - viii. to aid adjunct faculty as they work for the department by hearing grievances, remedying such difficulties with administrative processes as they arise;
  - viii. to assist the Chair in enhancing the professional status of part-time teachers by considering matters such as salary and status.
2. To be performed by the regular tenure or tenure-line members of the committee:
  - i. to evaluate as necessary the teaching performance of adjunct faculty in the department.
  - ii. The procedure of evaluating will include: evaluating adjunct faculty statements, teaching reports, and classroom materials. All classroom visits will be conducted by a tenure-line member of the department. Regular members of the adjunct

faculty have primary responsibility for classroom visits, but may call on other tenure-line faculty to assist if the number of evaluations is sizable.

### **Section 8. Term Faculty Committee.**

- a) Membership. Four members, two of whom will be associate or full term professors, two of whom will be on tenure-line appointments, and at least one of whom will be tenured. Term faculty elect the term members; tenure-line faculty elect the tenure-line members.
- b) Functions
  1. to hold each semester a meeting for all term faculty. The chair of the term faculty committee will solicit agenda items from the term faculty, develop an agenda from that call and from the committee's own suggestions, and chair the meeting;
  2. to address, as needed, issues particularly affecting the term faculty, and to represent those issues to the chair of the department;
  3. to solicit and review applications for conversion of yearly term contracts to multiyear contracts. The committee will follow the department guidelines for term contract conversion. The number of these multiyear contracts is limited by the university bylaws. The department chair is responsible for assessing the number of conversions possible, if any, in a given year;
  4. to initiate and conduct the preliminary promotion process for term faculty, as set out in the document English Department Guidelines For Term Faculty promotion. Duties of the term committee to include tracking eligibility of term faculty for promotion, conducting a preliminary review of eligible term faculty to determine the faculty member's readiness for promotion, and to serve as the RPT subcommittee for yearly promotion cases. For tenured faculty, service on term promotion subcommittees will count as service on an RPT subcommittee. Depending on the number of promotion cases, the chair in consultation with the term committee may appoint additional members of the tenured faculty to serve on term promotion subcommittees.
- c) Term salary evaluation will continue to be the responsibility of the Salary Committee.

### **Section 9. Search Committees**

- a) Membership.
  1. The chair will appoint a committee for each full-time, tenure-line search, with the majority of the committee to include the department faculty in the relevant field and the committee chair, except under unusual circumstances, a tenured faculty member in that field. The department chair will fill out the committee with faculty from outside the area, and ensure that the same faculty do not repeatedly serve on search committees. A search committee generally has 4 to 6 members.
  2. Search committees are not standing committees.
- b) Functions.
  1. to carry out appointments procedures in compliance with university requirements;
  2. to solicit, read, sort, and evaluate letters of application and dossiers of candidates for

- tenure-line positions in the department;
3. to interview and entertain candidates on campus and to present candidates to department and university administrators. All faculty will be afforded the opportunity to interview candidates;
  4. to organize receptions for candidates. Part-time student staff may be able assist, but search committee members have the final responsibility for the reception;
  5. to elicit from the department individual opinions about candidates and to lead the discussion of candidates at department meetings. If only one candidate is considered for a position, a meeting will be held to discuss that person's candidacy if at least 25% of the faculty members returning responses on that candidate request such a meeting. If more than one candidate is considered, a meeting will be held to discuss their candidacies. In either case, if more than 1/3 of those voting on the candidates regard a candidate as unacceptable under any circumstances, no offer will be extended to that person. The committee will report back to the department its own assessment of the candidates' strengths and weaknesses and the results of any votes or assessments made by department members concerning the candidates and will forward any ballots or response sheets from department members to the chair. Search committee and department votes on candidates are advisory to the chair; however, when there is general agreement on choice or ranking of candidates between the search committee and department, the chair will follow that choice or ranking. When multiple searches are pursued, the search committee for each search will assume the responsibilities for that search as outlined above;
  6. to screen, select and recommend to the chair candidates to whom term appointments will be given.

#### **Section 10. Intellectual Life Committee**

- a) Membership: four faculty members who will serve two-year terms
- b) Functions.
  1. to collect dues to pay for gifts, flowers, charitable contributions and so forth.
  2. to enrich the intellectual life of the department by
    - a. soliciting suggestions for visiting speakers and helping to arrange these visits, or by arranging presentations by current department faculty, to which students and alumni might also be invited.
    - b. soliciting suggestions for reading groups and brown bags, and providing logistical or other kinds of support for these groups, as required;
    - c. facilitating intra-department collaboration;
    - d. facilitating collaboration outside the department and/or university, including securing resources for department events from external sources, and locating potential external events of interest to the department;
  3. to organize 2 to 3 parties a year, at least one of which will be for faculty exclusively. The others might be open to students and/or alumni, and organized in concert with the

outreach committee.

### **Section 11. Outreach Committee**

- a) Membership: four faculty members who will serve two-year terms
- b) Functions.
  - 1. to develop outreach events and initiatives involving English department faculty, alumni and students.
  - 2. to work with and support work the English Department alumni committee in the development of outreach initiatives;
  - 3. to work with and support the work of the chair and his advisory committee and/or marketing team to initiate, coordinate and facilitate marketing efforts for department programs and courses among current Mason students and high school students.

### **Section 12. Committees on Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure (RPT)**

- a) Membership.
  - 1. Every tenured member of the department is required to participate in the reappointment, promotion, and tenure process and to attend all RPT meetings;
  - 2. promotion committee membership: All tenured department members above the rank of the individual involved;
  - 3. reappointment and tenure committee membership: all tenured faculty.
- b) Function. To make recommendations concerning reappointment, promotion, and tenure.
- c) Procedures.
  - 1. Candidates for renewal or for promotion and tenure assemble materials to be examined by members of the department's RPT committee. Candidates for promotion to full professor prepare material for the committee of full professors. In both cases, these materials include a vita, a summary of teaching, scholarship, and service, teaching materials (syllabi, course evaluations, reports from faculty who have visited the candidate's classes, and other teaching materials), and copies of published materials, materials circulating, and papers presented at professional meetings. (A document informing candidates of the procedures concerning promotion and tenure is given by the department chair to new faculty members in their first semester at George Mason.)
  - 2. In cases for promotion and tenure or for promotion to Full Professor, the chair of the Department solicits letters from persons outside the University in the candidates' area(s) of expertise. For up to 40% of these letters, the list of persons from whom to solicit letters is made up by the department chair and the candidate in consultation. The candidates waive their rights to see the letters.
  - 3. All materials are made available to members of the RPT committee (in cases of promotion to full professor, to members of the committee of full professors), each of whom is responsible for reading and evaluating them. In addition, an ad hoc sub-

committee of five faculty members is assigned to each case. These (five) members are selected by the RPT chair in consultation with the department chair. In cases of promotion to full professor, a sub-committee has three to five members. The RPT chair informs the candidate of the prospective membership of the subcommittee and the candidate may strike one member from the sub-committee before the names have been made public. The procedure of consultative selection is followed to fill a vacancy. The sub-committee writes a detailed report that provides a frank and honest assessment of the candidate's record in each of the three areas of performance: teaching, scholarship, and service.

4. The subcommittee report will be made available to be signed out to all members of the RPT committee five days in advance of the meeting in which the candidate is discussed to ensure a careful reading of it. The report is strictly confidential and copies are destroyed following the vote on the candidate.
5. The RPT meeting held in the fall at which candidates are considered for reappointment, promotion, and tenure shall not include voting, except for in cases involving term promotion. RPT members will have one week from the end of the RPT meeting to cast their votes for each candidate. No RPT committee member may vote who has not attended the meeting. The department chair participates in the meeting but does not vote. Each faculty member will receive a blank ballot at the meeting to return to the RPT chair within a week sealed in an envelope signed by the voter. Ballots will offer the option of "yes," and "no," and will also include a space for comments. Comments are strongly encouraged, and required when members vote "no." The Chair of the RPT Committee calls each candidate with the results. All discussions at RPT meetings are confidential.
6. The chair of the RPT committee (in cases of promotion to full professor, The chair of the committee of full professors) works together with the subcommittee chair to write a letter for each candidate, that expresses the judgment of the RPT committee as a whole. This letter, along with that written by the department chair, is included when the candidate's file is forwarded to the CHSS Dean and the CHSS promotion and tenure committee.
7. When co-chairs are appointed for the department, each new tenure-line faculty member will be assigned to one of the co-chairs; that individual will serve as the chair for that faculty member in all discussions regarding promotion and tenure throughout the probationary period. Neither co-chair votes at the RPT meeting, and they will jointly write the recommendation from the chair.

### **Section 13. Salary Committee**

- a) Membership. Eight tenured members of the faculty elected for two-year terms. [The Department Chair participates in Salary Committee discussions, but does not vote.] Terms will be staggered so that four are elected each year. When elected, a faculty member is required to serve on the salary committee and participate fully in its activities. After serving two years on the salary committee and one year on the salary appeals Committee, a faculty member is not eligible for re-election to the salary committee for six years. When co-chairs are appointed for the department, both will attend meetings of

the salary committee. In discussion concerning a particular faculty member, only one co-chair will participate actively.

b) Functions.

1. to assist the chair in an annual review of all tenure-line and full-time faculty members;
2. to recommend salary raises to the chair;
3. to discuss at a department meeting each year how salary raises for that year are determined;
4. to recommend faculty members for reassignment to research.
5. the deliberations of the salary committee are confidential.

#### **Section 14. Salary Appeals Committee**

a) Membership. The four members who rotated off the salary committee the preceding academic year.

b) Function and Procedures

1. to respond to all appeals of recommendations of the salary committee that are made to the department chair by the deadline for that year;
2. to determine if the procedures of the salary committee were followed in a fair and equitable way in determining salary raises and to make an alternative recommendation to the department chair if the appeals committee so determines.
3. the deliberations of the salary appeals committee are confidential.
4. the appellant may appear in person before the appeals committee if he or she presents a written request by the deadline for submission of materials. The appeals committee may also request the presence of the appellant at any time in the process.

#### **Section 15. Grievance Committee**

a) Membership. The two elected members of the advisory committee to the chair and the coordinator of committees. In the case of grievances where participation of an elected member of the advisory committee would be inappropriate, as determined by the department chair, a third person will be appointed by the other two committee members in consultation with the department chair to ensure an equitable resolution of the grievance.

b) Functions.

1. to consider grievances or potential grievances about faculty course assignments, faculty schedules, and the use of department facilities and resources, but not salaries.
2. to make recommendations for redress of grievances to the chair, or, for a grievance against the chair, to the CHSS Dean.

## **ARTICLE VI: PROCEDURE FOR AMENDING THE BY-**

## **LAWS**

### **Section 1.**

- a) A copy of the proposed amendment endorsed by at least 25% of the tenure-line members of the department is submitted to the department chair.
- b) The chair calls a meeting of the department and distributes copies of the proposed amendment at least three days before the meeting.
- c) The amendment is fully discussed and, if necessary, amended at the meeting; if approved by the majority at the meeting, it will be submitted as a ballot to all voting members of the Department. A copy of the minutes will accompany the ballot.
- d) The voting will be completed before the next regularly scheduled meeting. Two weeks should be allowed for voting when possible, with at least one week for voting required. The amendment passes by receiving two-thirds of the total votes on the amendment and with over 50% of the tenure-line faculty having voted. In votes proposing changes in the bylaws, a department staff member will remind at least twice eligible faculty to vote within the voting period.
- e) Bylaws (or amendments thereto) must be in accordance with the university faculty handbook and other university policies.