

Bylaws of the Department of History
University of Oklahoma – Norman
Approved by the faculty on April 6, 2012

A. PURPOSE: These Bylaws outline the University of Oklahoma Department of History's methods of governance. The rules and regulations outlined by the College of Arts and Sciences and the University of Oklahoma Faculty Handbook precede these Bylaws.

These Bylaws reflect a belief that the responsibility for effective department governance and responsible leadership rests with both the faculty and the department chairperson.

These Bylaws shall be implemented with strict adherence to academic freedom, due process and equal opportunity.

B. FACULTY: The faculty of the Department of History includes all members with full-time appointments within the History Department, including tenure-track and tenured positions at the ranks of assistant professor, associate professor and professor. This includes members who have joint appointments in other departments or colleges, but who teach at least fifty percent of their courses within the Department

The Department of History identifies as "affiliate faculty" those members of the OU faculty trained as historians or those who engage in historical research, who seek a formal connection to the History Department, dependent upon approval by the History Department faculty. These individuals hold full-time regular appointments, including tenure-track, tenured, and renewable-term appointments, in other departments at the University of Oklahoma. They are typically not voting members of the Department.

The faculty of the Department of History is entitled to all the rights and responsibilities of faculty governance outlined in the following document. Faculty members participate in departmental meetings, are eligible for departmental awards and funds, serve on departmental committees, and vote in matters of departmental governance. Regarding promotion and tenure, associate and full professors review assistant professors, and full professors review associate professors.

C. DEPARTMENT CHAIR: In accordance with section 2.8.2B of the Faculty Handbook, the Chair is the chief administrative officer of the Department, having general responsibility for employment actions and personnel evaluation; for budgets and facilities under departmental control; for curriculum development; and for promoting the academic reputation of the Department and ensuring its effective functioning. The Chair is furthermore the Department's chief representative in departmental relations with other university units and with the general public. The Chair serves at the pleasure of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences in each of these capacities and is fully responsible at all times to the voting members of the Department, representing the faculty.

1. Representation of the Department to the University Administration: For an academic Department to function harmoniously and efficiently there must be regular communication between the Department Chair and the Department. The Department Chair (or a designate) shall, as far as possible, attend all Chairs' and Directors' meetings and report back to the Department. The Department Chair shall also inform the Department of university and college directives and any other matters that affect the Department. In those cases in which a departmental position has been clearly reached, the Chair, when acting in the capacity of Chair, acts and speaks for the Department.

2. Governance of the Department:

a. Formation of Standing and Ad Hoc Committees: With the advice and consent of the elected members of Committee A, the Chair shall annually form permanent and temporary committees to assist in implementing departmental policies. Ordinarily these committees shall be appointed from members of the tenure and tenure-track faculty, with the Chair as an ex-officio, non-voting member of each. The permanent standing committees include the Graduate Studies Committee and the Undergraduate Committee. The composition, as well as any changes to the composition, of each committee shall be made public annually to the members of the faculty, with additional updates publicized as necessary.

b. Appointment of Director of Graduate Studies and Director of Undergraduate Studies: The Chair and elected members of Committee A will invite nominations from the faculty for the positions of DGS and DUS. With the support of at least one of the other members of Committee A, the Chair will then make those appointments.

c. Annual Faculty Evaluation: The Chair and the elected members of Committee A shall, as fairly and judiciously as possible, compose an annual written performance evaluation of all permanent, salaried faculty, speaking to their research program, teaching activities, and service contributions, both internal and external to the Department. The standard formula for assessment of the whole faculty will be composed in consultation with the members of Committee A and shall be subject to the approval of the majority of the voting members of the faculty. Deviations from the standard formula for individual members may be made with the approval of the Chair and Committee A. Annual in-person interviews shall be mandatory for all faculty.

d. Allocation of Budget Resources: The Chair shall determine the use of operating and travel funds and any other supplementary financial allocations. In doing so, s/he shall seek the advice and consent of the elected members of Committee A and shall provide for the opportunity at least annually to discuss these decisions in a regular general faculty

meeting, in an attempt to reach consensus regarding the use of funds across general categories. However, final decisions on budgetary matters rest with the Chair.

e. Teaching Assignments: The Chair and his designated staff shall schedule teaching assignments consistent with faculty members' areas of expertise based on the current curricular needs of the Department and the university, as well as the other research and service responsibilities requested of each faculty member. The Chair, in consultation with the elected members of Committee A, shall make every effort to accommodate exceptional circumstances.

f. Office Allotment and Facilities Maintenance: The Chair will supervise the allocation of available office space, giving special consideration to years served within rank. The Chair will also oversee the proper and regular maintenance of all facilities, including physical spaces and the department website.

g. Supervision of the Staff: The Chair shall, after discussion with the general faculty, write the annual evaluation of the departmental administrative assistants.

3. Selection of the Chair: Unless the general faculty recommends an external search by a two-thirds majority vote, with the concurrence of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Chair shall be a tenured member of the Department, preferably at the rank of full professor, but the voting members of the faculty may also, when appropriate, elect to accept nominations of advanced associate professors.

a. Term: The Chair is to be appointed to one four-year term, renewable for a maximum of three terms. At the time of the Chair's reappointment, the faculty will convey its recommendation to the Dean.

b. Nominations: Three semesters prior to the expiration of the Chair's appointment, qualified candidates may either self-nominate, or be nominated by other members of the Department. The Department shall accept nominations early in the term and vote on its recommendations before the end of that term. The Chair's term shall commence at the expiration of the of the previous Chair's term.

c. Forum: Prior to the faculty's vote on its recommendations, the Department will provide an opportunity for the exchange of ideas between the nominees and the faculty.

d. Vote: The preferred candidate will be selected by a simple majority of the faculty using a secret ballot. The process shall be administered by the

elected members of Committee A, which will forward the Department's recommendation to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

e. Interim Chair: Should the office of Chair suddenly become vacant, the Department shall nominate a replacement no later than four weeks after the vacancy occurs. In the interim, one of the elected members of Committee A shall be selected by the voting members of the faculty to serve as Acting Chair.

D. COMMITTEE A: The Department of History maintains a permanent governing committee known as Committee A. The Committee is composed of the Chair and two tenured professors at the rank of associate or full professor. The two faculty members serve staggered two-year terms, so the department holds elections for a new Committee A member each spring. The Chair shall call for nominations to elect members to Committee A during, or prior to, the final faculty meeting of the academic year, and the Department will then conduct a series of votes until a nominee is elected. Committee A fulfills a number of functions:

1. Faculty Representatives: In the first instance, the elected members of Committee A act as representatives of faculty interests in the shaping of departmental policy. The elected members advise the Chair on such policies and participate in their formulation. The Chair is encouraged therefore to meet with them on a regular basis in order to keep them apprised of any pressing issues. It is expected that the Chair will consult with the elected members of Committee A when addressing potentially divisive or troublesome issues so that any final decisions or resolutions carry the imprimatur of the department's executive. Committee A's elected members shall report to the faculty at regular department meetings on issues of general concern.

2. Administrative Role: Committee A performs a number of administrative tasks for the Department.

a. Faculty Awards: At the beginning of each academic year, Committee A chooses candidates for faculty awards. The elected members' role is anticipated as one of advice and consent. It is expected that the list of nominees will emerge as a matter of consensus among all three members of the Committee.

b. Committee Membership: Committee A will also decide jointly on the make-up of departmental committees, both standing and ad hoc.

c. Faculty Evaluation: Committee A participates in the annual faculty evaluation process, conducting interviews with faculty, helping to compose the final evaluations, and helping to award merit raises. The elected members of the Committee will also assist the Chair in writing the annual "progress toward tenure" reports for junior faculty, as well as third

year reviews. In this capacity, they will be expected to conduct classroom visits of the faculty concerned and report their findings. The elected members of the Committee will also solicit the opinions of the department members for the annual evaluation of the department chair, and will be responsible for writing that evaluation.

d. Recruitment: Committee A members will also be directly involved in the hiring process for new faculty and will be expected to participate in interviews with all candidates.

e. Tenure and Promotion: While Committee A members are not involved in the preparation of tenure and promotion files, members are required to write a separate letter either supporting or dissenting from the department's final decision in these cases.

f. Budget: Though the elected members of Committee A are not generally involved in budgetary matters, it is expected that they will assist the Chair in deciding on the necessary adjustments in the event that unexpected and significant changes occur in the departmental budget.

E. GRADUATE COMMITTEE: The Graduate Committee will consist of the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and two faculty members representing a spectrum of fields and ranks and appointed by the department Chair with the advice of Committee A. The DGS and committee members will normally serve a 3-year term, renewable once with the consent of the DGS, the department Chair, and the elected members of Committee A. A majority of the voting members of the department may elect to extend the tenure of the DGS for a succeeding term. After an initial phase-in period, terms will be staggered to insure continuity.

The Graduate Committee's core decisions as enumerated below require the approval of the entire Committee as expressed by majority vote:

1. Admissions: Changes in admission policies require a vote of the Committee. Decisions on which candidates to admit likewise require a vote of the Committee.

2. Funding: Decisions on which graduate students will receive funding in the upcoming year require a vote of the Committee. It is understood that this category encompasses both in-coming students and those students who have already matriculated, and it is further understood that the entire Committee will decide on which students will receive supplemental funding and awards (including but not limited to Hudson and Hoving Fellowships).

3. Assigning TAs/RAs: The DGS will create a list of the graduate students and their assignments. That list will be discussed with the Committee, which must vote to approve it.

4. Curriculum: In consultation with the Committee, the DGS will schedule graduate seminars.

5. Evaluation: In consultation with the Committee and students' major advisors, the DGS monitors the academic progress of the graduate students.

F. UNDERGRADUATE COMMITTEE: The Undergraduate Committee shall consist of the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) and four faculty members selected from a spectrum of fields and ranks by the Chair of the department, in consultation with Committee A. Each member shall serve for a three-year term. The DUS may not serve more than two terms consecutively, but a third term may be served if accorded by a majority vote of the departmental faculty. Members of the Committee should include the Department's Assessment committee chair and the Phi Alpha Theta sponsor. After an initial phase-in period, terms will be staggered, to insure continuity.

1. Duties. The Committee seeks to improve the quality of the history major and the general undergraduate history curriculum. The Undergraduate Committee has the following responsibilities:

- a. To review the Department's undergraduate course offerings;
- b. To coordinate the course requirements for the major, with members of the committee assigned to the Sleuth, Colloquium, and Capstone course offerings, respectively; and to provide oversight ensuring that courses required for the major are being taught according to the guidelines established by the department faculty;
- c. To introduce updates to the undergraduate catalog and monitor the curriculum in general; and recommend any such changes to the department faculty;
- d. To maintain contact with history majors by helping with outreach activities.

2. Director of Undergraduate Studies: The DUS encourages the recruitment and retention of undergraduate history majors and minors through the following responsibilities:

- a. To report on the undergraduate program to the Chair and the History faculty, as well as convene regular meetings of the Undergraduate Committee, and lead the Committee in the functions assigned to it;
- b. To help develop proposals for changes to the curriculum and the major;
- c. To oversee departmental advising, including training faculty advisors and the graduate assistant advisor;
- d. To act as liaison with the OU admissions office, CAS advising office, and the University College advising staff; and attend CASACAA meetings;
- e. To coordinate all aspects of student outreach, including responding to inquiries by potential undergraduate majors, and supervising faculty attendance at university recruitment events for undergraduates such as the Majors/Minors fair;

- f. To sign for grade and student schedule changes; and determine course equivalencies for e.g., transfer students and study abroad;
- g. To review all courses being offered each semester; and ensure that the departmental website's list of courses is up to date;
- h. To work with the Chair to address student complaints.

G. DEPARTMENT MEETINGS: The Chair of the Department is responsible for determining the time and frequency of faculty meetings, as stipulated by the Faculty Handbook. The Chair should solicit agenda items from the entire department in advance of each meeting.

Meetings should be conducted in the spirit of generally established rules of order. Under normal circumstances the Chair of the department presides. If, however, the Chair wishes to participate in debate for or against a formal motion under consideration, the Chair must call on another member to preside until the matter is resolved or deferred.

Attendance at department meetings is restricted to members of the Department as defined herein, and others specifically invited. Minutes will be kept by a designated member of the faculty and distributed to the faculty of the entire Department one week after the meeting.

Matters of business should include, as a matter of normal procedure, reports from the standing committees of the Department, the elected members of Committee A, as well as *ad hoc* committees whenever appropriate.

H. DEPARTMENTAL SEARCHES: The Department sets its hiring priorities by vote of the full department. The Chair negotiates these priorities, as necessary, with the College and the University.

1. Search Committees: Tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to serve on search committees. The Chair, with the advice and consent of the elected members of Committee A, appoints the members and chairs of search committees, taking into account rank and field. The chair of a search committee should be a tenured faculty member and preferably a person whose own research expertise provides insight into the specialization sought.

2. Procedures: The members of the Search Committee will write a job description, which must then be approved at a meeting of the department faculty. In addition, the Search Committee will oversee the hiring process in accordance with College and university bylaws, policies, and procedures and will make available to the Department the dossiers of the candidates. After a full review of qualified applicants, the Search Committee will recommend a short list to the faculty, which will then vote by secret ballot to select the candidates.

3. Campus Visits: All members of the Department are expected to attend candidates' presentations of their research. After all candidates have visited but

before making a recommendation to the Department, the Search Committee will invite all members of the Department to provide feedback on the candidates.

4. Recommendation: The Search Committee will present a written recommendation of ranked candidates to the tenured and tenure-track faculty, who will vote by secret ballot for each candidate separately. To receive the Department's formal recommendation for appointment, a candidate must receive a majority rather than a plurality of votes. Those candidates who receive formal recommendations will thereafter be ranked, by secret ballot. The Chair will forward the recommendation of the final ranked candidates to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and will act for the Department in negotiating the terms of the offer.

5. Searches for endowed chairs: In the case of endowed chair positions, the application materials for all candidates will be made available to the faculty. As with other searches, the Search Committee will invite all members of the Department to share their views on the candidates. At the completion of the interview and visitation process, the faculty will make a formal recommendation to the Dean and the Search Committee expressing the will of the Department. The Department reserves the right to grant or withhold tenure to faculty hired into endowed positions. In cases where promotion in rank is considered, the tenured faculty will vote as stipulated by the promotion guidelines. All tenured faculty members will vote in cases for promotion to associate professor; full professors will vote for those under consideration for full professor.

I. TENURE AND PROMOTION: To be awarded tenure in the Department of History at the University of Oklahoma is an honor. It merits rigorous and fair examination of faculty performance. The History Department follows the procedures and policies for tenure and promotion outlined in the Faculty Handbook and specified in the Department of History's "Guidelines for Recommending Tenure, and for Recommending Promotion," appended to these Bylaws as Appendix 1.

1. TENURE. Annual evaluation by the Chair and the elected members of Committee A through the progress to tenure letter is required for all tenure-track faculty, in accordance with Faculty Handbook 3.7.3, Section I. The Chair will make the Department's tenure policies known to all tenure-track faculty throughout the probationary period. The candidate's annual evaluation and progress to tenure letter in the third year of the tenure-track appointment constitute the department's pre-tenure review. This review will assess the faculty member's cumulative accomplishments in teaching, research, and service at the University of Oklahoma. The review will frankly assess the candidate's chances of securing tenure at the current pace of scholarship, teaching, and service. The Department recommends the following procedures guide each candidate's tenure review:

- a. **Tenure Committee.** The Chair appoints each candidate's Tenure Committee. The candidate may request the inclusion of one member and may request the exclusion of one person on the faculty. The Tenure Committee should be formed no later than the last week in March in the semester preceding the tenure vote. The Tenure Committee is responsible for overseeing the creation of the candidate's tenure file and contacting the candidate's external referees for letters of recommendation.
- b. **Evaluations.** The candidate will prepare a list of at least three potential referees. The chair of the committee will prepare another list of ten potential referees to be contacted for letters of evaluation. The tenure committee should be formed by the last week of March and the letters to prospective referees should be sent out no later than the last week of April. These lists should be completed by the last week of March in the semester preceding the tenure vote and letters to the prospective referees should go out no later than the last week of April
- c. **Tenure File.** The tenure file should be sent out by June 1.
- d. **Access to Tenure File.** The Chair will make the complete tenure file available to all voting faculty at least two weeks prior to the tenure vote.
- e. **Scheduling Tenure Vote.** The Chair will make every effort to schedule this meeting to suit the schedules of all voting faculty well in advance of the University deadlines. All voting faculty will receive at least two week's notice of the tenure vote meeting.
- f. **Tenure Vote.** The candidate for tenure will not attend the tenure vote meeting, but will be available to the faculty for further questions if necessary. Only tenured faculty members are eligible to vote on cases granting tenure to candidates at the assistant rank. Following discussion, members will vote by secret ballot. The History Department follows the guidelines established in the Faculty Handbook, Section 3.7.5, Procedures for the Tenure Decision.

2. PROMOTION: Annual evaluation by the Chair and the elected members of Committee A is required for all tenured faculty, in accordance with the Faculty Handbook 3.11.1. This evaluation is used to determine both salary adjustments and promotion. The Chair will make the Department's tenure and promotion policies known to all tenured faculty during the annual evaluation. The timeline for forming Promotion Committees should follow the best practices outlined above for Tenure Committees.

J. AMENDMENT PROCEDURES: A motion to amend this governance document should be submitted by a member of the Department at least two weeks before consideration. The motion to amend requires a simple majority vote of those present and voting in a department meeting.