

Mathematics Department Bylaws

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1 Preliminaries

1.1 Definitions

1. The *University* is the University of South Carolina, Columbia campus.
2. The *College* is the College of Arts and Sciences at the University.
3. The *Dean* is the Dean of the College.
4. The *Department* is the Mathematics Department at the University.
5. The *Faculty* are the faculty of the University with a full or joint appointment in the Department.
6. The *Graduate Faculty* are members of the Faculty that are also members of the graduate faculty of the University.
7. The *Tenure-Track/Tenured Faculty* (TTF) are members of the Faculty that are tenure-track or tenured.

8. The *Professional Track Faculty* (PTF) are members of the Faculty that are neither tenure-track nor tenured.

1.2 Amendment and Review of Bylaws

Amending these bylaws requires a vote with 2/3 of all Faculty approving. A proposed amendment must be brought to a vote if there is a petition by at least 5 Faculty members. The Bylaws Committee will be formed at least once every five years to review the bylaws. *Due to the novelty of the Bylaws, the Bylaws Committee should be formed every year until this sentence is removed by the amendment process.*

1.3 Scope

The rules set forth in these Bylaws may be superseded by other rules determined by the Faculty Senate, College, or University, or by State and Federal laws.

2 Officers of the Department

2.1 Department Chair

The Department Chair is the chief administrative officer of the Department. The Department Chair is appointed by the Dean. The term of appointment is usually for three years. In the final semester of the Chair's term, the Chair is reviewed for reappointment following procedures established by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The major responsibilities of the Department Chair include:

1. Representing the Department in its relationships with students, the College, the University, outside agencies, alumni, and the general public.
2. Handling the administrative affairs of the Department, including managing the Department's budget and hiring and supervising staff. This includes ensuring staff, committee chairs, and Department officers acknowledge receipt of requests from Faculty and that these requests are handled in a timely manner.
3. In the Spring semester, evaluating each TTF, whose line is in the department, in fulfilling professional obligations during the previous calendar year (January 1 through December 31) in accord with the faculty member's assignment of responsibilities.
4. Providing leadership concerning the Department's goals, directions, policies, procedures, personnel issues, hiring, promotions, teaching mission, educational outreach mission, research agenda, and other matters concerning the welfare of the Department, and bringing to the attention of the Executive Committee and the Faculty any matters that should be acted on by the Committee and/or Faculty.
5. Making recommendations to the Dean concerning hiring of Faculty.
6. Appointing all other Officers of the Department.

7. Forming committees and appointing their members.
8. Scheduling and chairing Faculty meetings.
9. Maintaining a central repository for important Department documents.

2.2 Assistant Chair

The Assistant Chair is a tenured faculty member appointed by the Department Chair. The term of appointment is usually three years. The Assistant Chair is reviewed annually by the Chair.

The major responsibilities of the Assistant Chair include:

1. Scheduling classes for all academic terms, making teaching assignments for scheduled classes, and monitoring and advising the Department Chair about enrollment and course grade trends.
2. Leading curriculum development in multi-section courses.
3. Assisting the Department Chair in resolving disputes involving PTF instructors.
4. Annual performance evaluation of PTF.
5. Additional tasks as may be assigned by the Department Chair.
6. Representing the Department in the Department Chair's absence.

2.3 Undergraduate Program Director

The Undergraduate Program Director is a tenured faculty member appointed by the Department Chair. The term of appointment is usually three years. The Undergraduate Program Director is reviewed annually by the Chair.

The major responsibilities of the Undergraduate Program Director include:

1. Advising the Department regarding all aspects of the undergraduate program.
2. Communicating important information about the undergraduate program to the Department.
3. Supervising the maintenance of student records for undergraduate mathematics majors.
4. Chairing the Undergraduate Program Committee.
5. Overseeing the Department's undergraduate major and minor programs.
6. Representing the Department's undergraduate programs on campus.
7. Assisting the Department Chair in resolving disputes involving undergraduate students.

8. Coordinating with other units, colleges, and campuses on matters relating to the mathematics curriculum.
9. Providing recommendations about undergraduate awards and scholarships, promoting undergraduate research, and providing career advice for undergraduates.

2.4 Graduate Program Director

The Graduate Program Director is a tenured faculty member appointed by the Department Chair. The term of appointment is usually three years. The Graduate Program Director is reviewed annually by the Chair.

The major responsibilities of the Graduate Program Director include:

1. Advising the Department regarding all aspects of the graduate program.
2. Communicating important information about the graduate program to the Department.
3. Supervising the maintenance of student records for graduate students.
4. Chairing the Graduate Advisory Council.
5. Overseeing the Department's graduate programs.
6. Representing the Department's graduate programs on campus.
7. Assisting the Department Chair in resolving disputes involving the Department's graduate students and graduate instructors.
8. Arranging the Qualifying and Comprehensive Examinations for the Department's master and doctoral programs.
9. Supervising the recruitment and admission process of graduate students.
10. Deciding on awarding of teaching and research assistantships.
11. Making teaching assignments for the Department's graduate teaching assistants.
12. Supervising the Department's program for mentoring graduate teaching assistants.

2.5 Department Secretary

The Department Secretary is a tenured faculty member appointed by the Department Chair. The term of appointment is one year. No faculty member may serve as Department Secretary more than once every five years. The Department Secretary is *not* a member of the Executive Committee.

The responsibilities of the Department Secretary are:

1. Writing the minutes for faculty meetings.

2. Tracking nominations for elected positions.
3. Reporting the results of votes.
4. Compiling committee reports and sharing them with Faculty at the end of the Spring semester.
5. Finding replacements or helpers to carry out their duties if they are unable.

3 Committee Operations

Most departmental business happens through committees. The internal procedures of committees are decided by the committee members themselves. Committees are encouraged to maintain handbooks, internal bylaws, and other documents as appropriate.

3.1 Formation

Unless there are specific requirements outlined in these bylaws or by the University, most committees are formed before the first day of classes in the Fall semester by appointment of the Department Chair. If a committee has elected members, then elections should be held before the end of classes in the previous year. Any committee formation, dissolution, or membership changes must be promptly announced to all Faculty.

3.2 Membership Changes

The Department Chair may choose to remove an appointed member from a committee. An elected member may be removed from a committee by departmental vote. A member may choose to resign from a committee.

If the member is elected, then the position must be filled at the next faculty meeting. In this case, the remaining committee members may request a Special Faculty Meeting to replace the missing member.

If member was not elected, but the committee no longer meets requirements for its composition, then the Department Chair must find a replacement member.

If the committee does not have a defined composition, then the committee may request that the Department Chair replace the missing member. However, there is no requirement that the member be replaced if the remaining members of the committee do not request this.

Any change to committee composition must be promptly announced to all Faculty.

3.3 Charge

Every committee must have a written charge outlining its responsibilities and powers. For some committees, the charge is described in these bylaws or by the University. For other committees, the charge is determined by the Department Chair at the time the committee is formed.

3.4 Committee Chair

Every committee must have a chair. If the chair is not determined in advance, then the first order of business for the committee must be to elect a chair. If the chair resigns or leaves the committee, then a new chair must be elected before any new business.

The chair of the committee has the following responsibilities:

- Scheduling and running meetings of the committee.
- Assigning tasks to committee members.
- Communicating committee activities to the Department.
- Maintaining or creating handbooks, internal rules, and other records.
- Sending the committee report to the Department Secretary.

3.5 Committee Report

At the end of the Spring semester or when a committee is dissolved, every committee chair will produce a report that is collected by the Department Secretary. The committee report is written by the chair of the committee and covers the time period since the formation of the committee or since the previous committee report. The report must be shared with the committee before being shared with the entire Department. The committee report is used to communicate activities to the rest of the Department, to help inform the Department Chair in allocating service responsibilities, and to help with continuity between academic years.

The report should typically be only be about a paragraph in length. It must contain the period of time being reported, the membership of the committee, activities undertaken by the committee, and notable contributions by individual committee members. It may also contain unusual challenges, recommendations for the future, or other information the committee deems important to share.

4 Standard Committees

The committees listed here are not an exclusive list of all committees in the department. Being listed here only indicates that it is necessitated by the bylaws. If a committee is not listed here, then this does not imply the committee is less important for the functioning of the Department.

4.1 Executive Committee

4.1.1 Composition

The Executive Committee consists of 7 members. There are 4 officers on the committee: the Department Chair, the Assistant Chair, the Graduate Director, and the Undergraduate Director. There is 1 member-at-large, which is an elected position with a fixed term of 2 years. The 2 remaining members are appointed by the Department Chair and consist of

1 TTF member and 1 PTF member. The Department Chair is the chair of the Executive Committee.

4.1.2 Charge

This Executive Committee advises the Department Chair on the fiscal, academic, and personnel affairs of the Department.

4.2 The Faculty Advisory Council (FAC)

4.2.1 Composition

This committee consists of 5 members. Members are elected with fixed terms of 2 years. 3 members must be tenured and 1 member must be PTF.

4.2.2 Charge

The Faculty Advisory Council serves as a liaison between the Executive Committee and the Department. It provides a platform where faculty members can share their feedback or concerns, anonymously if desired. The FAC will proactively address internal matters to maintain a harmonious department environment. Additionally, the Executive Committee may request that the FAC facilitate the collection of confidential opinions from the Department on specific issues. While not all concerns will be directly managed by the FAC, they should assist in identifying the appropriate body to address each issue.

4.3 Graduate Advisory Council (GAC)

4.3.1 Composition

The Graduate Director is the chair of this committee. The remaining members of this committee are appointed. The members of this committee must be TTF and should be representative of the active research areas of the Department.

4.3.2 Charge

This committee advises the Graduate Director on matters involving the Department's graduate program. In particular, this includes evaluating applicants for the program and making recommendations for Departmental and University graduate awards and fellowships.

4.4 The Undergraduate Program Committee

4.4.1 Composition

The Undergraduate Director is the chair of this committee. This remaining members of this committee are appointed.

4.4.2 Charge

This committee advises the Undergraduate Director on matters involving the Department's undergraduate program. In particular, this includes making recommendations for Departmental and University undergraduate awards and fellowships.

4.5 The Committee of Tenured Faculty

4.5.1 Composition

This committee consists of all Tenured Faculty. The chair is elected by tenured faculty with a fixed term of 1 year.

4.5.2 Charge

The committee chair oversees the annual review and the third-year review of Assistant Professors, and the committee approves the review results. The committee chair also oversees the applications for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor and the Committee votes on the recommendations for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor based on the guidelines of the Department and University Tenure and Promotion Manual.

4.6 The Committee of Full Professors

4.6.1 Composition

This committee consists of all Tenured Full Professors. The chair is elected by Tenured Full Professors with a fixed term of 1 year.

4.6.2 Charge

The committee chair oversees the annual review of Associate Professors, and the committee approves the review results. The committee chair also oversees the applications for Promotion to Full Professor and the committee votes on the recommendations for Promotion to Full Professor based on the guidelines of the Department and University Tenure and Promotion Manual.

4.7 The Post-Tenure Review (PTR) Committee

4.7.1 Composition

This committee consists of 5 TTF members. Members are elected with a fixed term of 2 years.

4.7.2 Charge

This committee oversees the post-tenure review of all tenured faculty members.

4.8 Professional Track Faculty (PTF) Committee

4.8.1 Composition

This committee consists of 3 PTF members and the Assistant Chair. In addition, the committee may be augmented by one tenure-track faculty member appointed by the Department Chair. Members are elected with a fixed term of 3 years. PTF members cannot serve consecutive terms. The chair of the committee must be PTF.

The following exceptional rules apply from 2024–2028. The first seat will have an initial 2-year term, followed by a 2-year term, and then a continuing 3-year term. The second seat will have an initial 2-year term, followed by a continuing 3-year term. The third seat will have a 3-year term from the beginning.

4.8.2 Charge

The PTF Committee will advise the Department Chair on matters relating to professional track faculty. The PTF Committee will maintain services record for each PTF, coordinate peer review of PTF teaching, consult regarding official annual reviews of PTF, and develop, revise, and recommend appointment, reappointment, and promotion criteria for PTF.

4.9 Hiring Committees

4.9.1 Formation

Hiring Committees are formed on an *ad hoc* basis by the Department Chair as necessary. There may be multiple Hiring Committees operating independently and simultaneously.

4.9.2 Composition

Members are appointed by the Department Chair. If the position has research responsibilities, then all members must be TTF. If the position is PTF, then there must be at least one PTF on the committee.

4.9.3 Charge

This committee oversees the hiring process of Faculty.

4.9.4 TTF Hiring

The committee and the Department Chair must involve all TTF on all hires that may lead to tenure. The hiring committee should share as many materials as possible with TTF that do not conflict with legal requirements or College or University regulations. Short lists for online and in-person interviews must be shared with TTF at least two days before any applicants are contacted. Anonymized comments must be solicited and collected from TTF. There must be a TTF vote on the acceptability of each candidate and their relative ranking. The results of the vote and the anonymized comments must be shared with the Dean before any offers are made.

If there are Faculty members that are close collaborators of one of the applicants, then in any Faculty meeting discussing these candidates there must be a discussion period where these Faculty are not present.

4.10 Bylaws Committee

4.10.1 Formation

The Bylaws Committee is formed if it has been 5 or more years since the previous Bylaws Committee was dissolved. In addition, the Bylaws Committee can be formed by Department Chair or a majority vote by the Department.

4.10.2 Composition

This committee consists of 5 members, one of which must be a PTF. Members are elected with a fixed term of 1 year.

4.10.3 Charge

The Bylaws Committee reviews the Bylaws, identifies potential and existing issues, seeks input from the Faculty, and suggests changes to the Bylaws.

5 Faculty Meetings

The primary purpose of faculty meetings is for discussion and voting on issues that are relevant to, or must be decided by, a substantial portion of the Faculty. If an announcement or exposition does not require Faculty input, or is of specialized interest, then it is more appropriate to use another forum.

5.1 Calling meetings

The Department Chair is responsible for calling faculty meetings. There will be at least one faculty meeting in each Fall and Spring semester. The Department Chair should also call additional meetings when deemed necessary. In addition, the Department Chair will call a meeting if petitioned by at least 5 Faculty members. Faculty meetings should be announced at least one week in advance.

5.1.1 Special Meetings

In the event of important and urgent matters requiring Faculty input, the Department Chair may call a Special Faculty Meeting that does not strictly follow the rules outlined in the bylaws. In this case, the Department Chair must explicitly announce to the Faculty why each rule of the bylaws is suspended. The urgent matters must be announced to the Faculty when the meeting is called and must be the first items on the agenda.

5.2 Agenda

The Department Chair is responsible for setting the agenda of the meeting. A preliminary agenda for the faculty meeting should be emailed to all Faculty members at least one week in advance of the meeting.

Items may be placed on the agenda by the Department Chair, the chair of any committee, faculty action at a previous faculty meeting, or by petition of at least 5 Faculty members.

The agenda should be respectful of people's time. Items involving non-Faculty guests should be first. If an item does not require all Faculty, then it should be last on the agenda and unconcerned faculty should be permitted to leave. Items requiring an in-person vote should be prioritized before items that do not. If it is known in advance that a specific question will require a vote at the meeting, then the question should be announced on the agenda.

If there are committee appointments that require election, the agenda should contain a call for nominations. Nominations are sent to and collected by the Department Secretary. Nominees must agree to serve before being added to the ballot; however, note that "willing and responsible service" is required for most Faculty. Nominees are announced at least two days in advance of the meeting. If there are no nominees or extant options are voted "unacceptable," then additional nominations can be made at the meeting.

5.3 Procedures

Faculty meetings should be scheduled at a time that is convenient for as many faculty members as possible. Faculty meetings are limited to 90 minutes. If there remains business to be addressed after 90 minutes, then the meeting will be adjourned and another faculty meeting can be scheduled.

Every Faculty member is expected to attend all faculty meetings they are reasonably able to attend. However, it is acknowledged that this is not possible for everyone. Faculty meetings should be primarily in person, but should have a hybrid option for those unable to attend in person.

The Department Chair runs the meeting. Rules for voting are described in §6.

5.4 Minutes

The Department Secretary records and shares minutes of the faculty meeting. The minutes of a faculty meeting should be shared with the Faculty within a week of the meeting. If urgent action by Faculty is required, such as an out-of-meeting vote, then the Department Secretary will share with the Faculty partial minutes including relevant portions of the meeting as soon as possible.

The specific tallies of all votes should be recorded in the minutes, provided they are not of a sensitive nature. The secretary should ensure that the minutes do not contain any information that should not be shared with the general public. Minutes should be sufficiently detailed so that Faculty not in attendance can use them to make informed decisions about matters affecting them.

6 Voting and Elections

In this section, procedures for departmental votes are described. While the rules allow for complex votes, they should not be relied upon as a substitute for discussion. These rules are only required for Faculty Meetings and not for committee meetings. Procedures required by higher administrative bodies supersede those described here. Changing the voting procedure for a particular vote first requires a vote with 2/3 of all Faculty present approving.

6.1 Standing

All Faculty have standing to vote on all matters with the following exceptions. PTF do *not* have standing for:

- hiring of TTF and research personnel,
- evaluation of TTF and research personnel,
- tenure and promotion of TTF,
- matters exclusively affecting TTF, and
- matters related to the research mission of the department.

Non-tenured Faculty do *not* have standing for:

- evaluation of TTF,
- tenure and promotion of TTF.

Faculty that are not Full Professors do *not* have standing for:

- promotion of tenured faculty.

Faculty that are not part of the Graduate Faculty do *not* have standing for:

- matters involving graduate education.

All voters with standing have equal votes, with the exception that the Department Chair breaks ties. For secret ballots, all voters with standing should be counted together and not segregated by rank or any other factor.

6.2 In-meeting voting

At least 50% of TTF must be present for an in-meeting vote to be considered binding.

For logistical reasons, votes in a faculty meeting cannot have an expectation of secrecy. In-meeting votes should not be used for major decisions unless there are externally imposed or intrinsic time constraints. If a faculty member is unable to attend the meeting, but anticipates an in-meeting vote, then they can communicate written instructions to the Department Secretary in advance.

If there are more than two options being considered, then there is a series of separate votes where, after each vote, the option receiving the least votes is removed (which may be “all options unacceptable”). Voters may vote for any number of options including all or none. When constructing a ranking, the department will hold a distinct series of votes for each rank — starting with the top rank, then the second rank, and so forth — with each series adhering to the elimination procedure described above.

The voting procedure is run by the Department Chair and votes are counted by the Department Secretary. If the meeting is hybrid, at each stage a call for votes is posted by the Department Chair on chat. First, in-person votes are recorded by a show of hands. Second, online votes posted in the chat after the call for votes are recorded. Third, online votes communicated via audio are recorded. If an online participant does not respond within one minute, then their vote is recorded as an abstention. Fourth, the secretary should share the written instructions of any absent faculty members, announce their interpretation of these instructions in this case, and record their votes. Before announcing the result, the Department Secretary should verify that all those voting have standing to vote, those who have standing have had the opportunity to vote, and voters have not voted for any option more than once. Any ties are broken by the Department Chair.

The tallies for each vote should be recorded in the minutes. The choices of individual voters are not secret, but records of their choices should not be retained after each vote.

6.3 Out-of-meeting voting

Out-of-meeting votes have an expectation of secrecy. The Administrative Assistant to the Chair will send an email with ballots to all faculty with standing. Ballots can be sent to the Administrative Assistant by email or in person. The Administrative Assistant must promptly acknowledge receipt of ballots. After the deadline, the Administrative Assistant should send a list of those who voted and an anonymized list of ballots to the Department Secretary. The Department Secretary will determine the result, add the result to the minutes, and communicate the result to the Department.

Each voter will rank the options for each ballot question. Additionally, options can be labelled “unacceptable” independently of whether they are ranked. Any option with a majority of “unacceptable” votes is removed from consideration. The number of unacceptable votes for each option is recorded regardless of the result. The result is determined by Single Transferable Vote with Droop Quota and Fractional Transfer (see Appendix). Any ties are broken by the Department Chair.

Appendix: Single Transferable Vote

We explain in pseudo-code how to count votes via Single Transferable Vote with Droop Quota and Fractional Transfer. In the case that only one option needs to be selected, this method is equivalent to Instant Runoff Voting. In the case that there are only two options total, this method is equivalent to a majority vote. Another description with more exposition can be found here:

https://fairvote.org/archives/multi_winner_rcv_example/

We are given a set A of n options and want to determine a subset B of k selections. We are also given a set X of ballots, where each ballot in X has an associated ranking consisting of a finite sequence of elements from A with no repetitions.

- (0) Initialize $B = \emptyset$.
- (1) Initialize the weighting function $w : X \rightarrow \mathbb{Q}$ as $w(x) = 1$ for all $x \in X$.
- (2) Remove from X all ballots whose associated ranking has length 0.
- (3) Set $N = \sum_{x \in X} w(x)$.
- (4) Set $T(a) = \sum_{x \in X(a)} w(x)$ where $X(a)$ is the subset of X where a is the first choice.
- (5) Compute the Droop Quota $Q = \frac{N}{k+1}$.
- (6) Let $S = \{a \in A \mid T(a) > Q\}$ be the set of selected options.
- (7) If S is empty, then proceed as follows:
 - (a) Determine $a \in A$ such that $T(a)$ is minimal. (Ties broken by Department Chair.)
 - (b) Remove a from every ballot.
 - (c) Go back to Step 2.
- (8) If $S \neq \emptyset$, then proceed as follows.
 - (a) Add all elements of S to B and remove them from A .
 - (b) Subtract $|S|$ from k . If $k = 0$, then we are done.
 - (c) If a selected option $a \in S$ was the first choice on ballot $x \in X$, then we apply Fractional Transfer and recompute the ballot's weight as
$$w(x) = \frac{T(a) - Q}{T(a)}.$$
 - (d) Remove selected options $a \in S$ from every ballot's ranking.
 - (e) Go back to Step 2.