
**BYLAWS
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
Texas A&M University**

Approved at the College Faculty Meeting October 18, 1985
Amended April 9, 1987, Amended October, 1994, Amended May, 1997, Amended April, 2004
AMENDED December, 2018

PREAMBLE

The faculty of the College of Liberal Arts of Texas A&M University establish these Bylaws to define our responsibilities for College governance and to create a structure through which we may meet these responsibilities including student representation when appropriate; with the rules and regulations of the Board of Regents of the University; and with the laws of the State of Texas.

The Liberal Arts Faculty is responsible for the advancement, refinement and dissemination of knowledge in the humanities, social sciences, and fine arts. The Faculty has instituted the Liberal Arts Council to enable us to carry out these responsibilities.

Section I – GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Section I(A) – Office of the Dean

The Dean is the administrative head of the College of Liberal Arts and is appointed by the Board of Regents after recommendations are made by the President and Chancellor, in accordance with University Rule #12.99.99.M5, “Faculty Participation in the Selection, Evaluation, and Retention of Deans.” The Dean is responsible to the Provost of Texas A&M for all matters relating to the College of Liberal Arts.

Section I(B) – Definition of “Faculty”

“Faculty” includes all faculty members in the College who hold tenure, occupy a tenure-track position, or occupy an Academic Professional Track (APT) appointment in the College and whose appointment is at least 50% FTE (Full Time Equivalent).

Section I(C) – Liberal Arts Council (LAC)

1. Function:

- a) The Liberal Arts Council (LAC) shall serve as a deliberative and advisory body to help formulate policies and programs for the improvement and development of the College of Liberal Arts of Texas A&M University.

Section I(C)(1), cont'd

- b) The LAC shall advise the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts on matters of significant interest and importance to the Faculty of the College. It shall make recommendations to the Dean on policies and procedures pertinent to fulfilling the mission of the College of Liberal Arts within the University. It shall make such policy recommendations whenever:
 - 1. The Dean asks it to,
 - 2. On petition by one-third or more of the Council members, or
 - 3. On petition by five percent or more of the faculty of the College.

- 2. Membership:** The LAC shall be composed of faculty representatives, student representatives, a staff representative, and the Dean of the College.
 - a) The terms of faculty representatives shall be for three years, with the terms staggered so that approximately one-third of the representatives shall be newly elected each year. No representative may serve more than two terms in succession, and Department Heads shall not be eligible to serve on the LAC.

 - b) The faculty representatives shall include:
 - 1. one elected from each department in the College,
 - 2. two elected from Interdisciplinary Critical Studies (ICS), or its equivalent, should the name change, and
 - 3. six at-large representatives.

 - c) Among the faculty representatives there shall be at least three who are on Academic Professional Track (APT) appointments. After representatives from the departments and ICS are elected, if there are fewer than three APT faculty elected as representatives, then the Dean shall appoint enough APT members into the at-large positions as to bring the total to three. Elections of the remaining at-large representatives shall then be conducted.

 - c) The student representatives shall be one graduate student and one undergraduate student, serving terms of one academic year, selected by the Liberal Arts Student Council (or its equivalent, should the name be changed) from among its membership.

 - d) The staff representative shall be one staff member selected by the Liberal Arts Life Enhancement Committee (or its equivalent, should the name be changed).

- 3. Officers:** The LAC shall have three officers: the Dean, a Chair Pro Tem, and a Secretary.
 - a) The Dean shall chair meetings of the LAC and may vote only to break a tie vote of the Council.

 - b) The Chair Pro Tem shall chair the Council in the absence of the Dean.

Section I(C)(3), cont'd

- c) The Secretary shall record the minutes of the Council, distribute them to all members of the LAC, and post them to a public location on the College website.
- d) Both the Chair Pro Tem and the Secretary shall serve terms of one year. They shall be elected from among the faculty representatives at the first meeting of the Council during the Fall semester.

4. Council Meetings: The LAC may hold both regular and special meetings.

- a) The LAC shall hold regular meetings monthly, with the exception of the months of June, July, and August, and when the Dean has no business to bring to it and there has been no call for a meeting under subsection I(B)(4)(b) of these bylaws. The meetings shall occur at a time designated by the LAC at the beginning of each academic year.
- b) Special meetings of the LAC may be called by: the Dean, the Steering Committee (see Section II[A]), petition by one-third or more of the Council members, or petition by ten percent or more of the faculty of the College.
- c) The Steering Committee of the LAC (see section II[A]) shall prepare an agenda for all regular meetings of the Council. Any Council member may place any item on the agenda, as long as the Steering Committee receives the item in writing before the agenda is published. The agenda shall be distributed to each Council member at least five class days before a regular meeting.
- d) Petitions for special meetings must be prepared in writing, specify an agenda, and be delivered to a member of the Steering Committee. Upon determining that a petition meets the requirements above, the Steering Committee shall schedule a special meeting.
- e) The Steering Committee shall provide written notice of, and the agenda for, special meetings to the members of the Council at least forty-eight hours in advance.
- f) At a special meeting, the Council may consider only those items which appear on the advance written agenda required by the preceding paragraph.
- g) All Council meetings shall be open to Liberal Arts faculty, but may be closed to others by a four-fifths vote of the Council.
- h) Any Council member who is unable to attend a Council meeting may appoint an enfranchised faculty member as proxy to vote on the member's behalf, provided that written notice of appointment is given to the Steering Committee one class day before the meeting. Proxy appointments shall normally be for one meeting only, although faculty on leave may appoint a proxy for the semester or academic year in question.

Section I(C)(4), cont'd

- i) The agenda and minutes of LAC meetings shall be distributed to all Liberal Arts faculty, and posted on the College web site.

Section I(D) – Faculty Meetings: The Liberal Arts Faculty shall meet as a whole at least once each academic year to receive reports from the Dean and from the Liberal Arts Council on matters that may be of concern to the College.

Section I(E) – Elections: All faculty-wide elections held under these Bylaws shall be conducted by the Elections Committee (see Section II[B]) and shall employ a secret ballot to ensure anonymity.

- i) All faculty members as defined in Section I(B) are eligible to vote and to hold office.
- ii) Regular primary and runoff elections for the Liberal Arts Council and all departmentally elected Policy Committees should be held in the spring semester of each year, so that the positions are filled at the beginning of the fall semester.
- iii) Nominations of eligible faculty members for both departmental and at-large positions shall be solicited from the faculty and self-nominations shall be encouraged.
- iv) Representatives on the Liberal Arts Council shall be elected by a majority of those voting.
- v) If a position on the Liberal Arts Council becomes vacant, then the Steering Committee, in consultation with any appropriate unit, shall decide whether and how a special election shall be held to fill the position for the remainder of the term.

SECTION II – COMMITTEES

The committees described in subsections (A) through (J) of this section shall be standing committees. These committees may establish standing rules with the advice and consent of the Liberal Arts Council. All standing committees shall maintain and post meeting agendas and minutes.

Section II(A) – Steering Committee of the Liberal Arts Council

1. **Membership:** The Steering Committee shall consist of the Dean, the Chair Pro Tem of the Council, the Secretary of the Council, and one member of the Council elected at-large from and by the Council. The Steering Committee shall be chaired by the Chair Pro Tem of the Council, and the Dean shall vote only to break a tie.

Section II(A), cont'd

- 2. Responsibilities:** The Steering Committee shall set the agenda for Council Meetings (see Section I[C][4][c]), and its members other than the Dean shall serve as the Elections Committee (see Section II[B]).

Section II(B) – Elections Committee

- 1. Membership:** The Elections Committee shall consist of the Chair Pro Tem and the Secretary of the Liberal Arts Council, and the at-large member of the Steering Committee.
- 2. Responsibilities:** The Elections Committee shall conduct elections of the College and the Liberal Arts Council, including elections of members of the Council, of Council officers, of the at-large member of the Steering Committee, and such other elections or votes on questions as are needed.

Section II(C) – Climate and Inclusion Committee

- 1. Membership:** The Climate and Inclusion Committee (or its equivalent, should the name be changed) shall consist of at least one faculty representative elected from and by each department, at least one student selected by the Liberal Arts Student Council (or its equivalent, should the name be changed) from among its membership, at least one Liberal Arts staff member, at least one graduate student, and the Associate Dean whose portfolio includes climate and inclusion. Among the faculty representatives there shall be at least one who is a faculty member or affiliate faculty member of ICS. After representatives from the departments are elected, if there are no ICS faculty or affiliate faculty members elected as representatives, then the Dean shall appoint one. Members shall serve staggered, two-year terms.
- 2. Responsibilities:** The Climate and Inclusion Committee shall advise the Dean on improving the College's ability to provide a climate representing inclusive excellence, increasing and integrating diversity across multiple dimensions of the College, and ensuring equitable opportunities for all students, staff, and faculty. This Committee is the appropriate forum to hold all discussions related to issues of diversity, equity, climate, and inclusion.

Section II(D) -- Dean's Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion (DAC-TP)

- 1. Membership:** The DAC-TP shall consist of six full professors with equal representation from the humanities and social science departments within the College. Members shall be appointed by the Dean, with names presented to department heads and the Liberal Arts Council for endorsement. Members shall serve staggered, three-year terms.

Section II(D), cont'd

- 2. Responsibilities:** The DAC-TP makes recommendations to the Dean on all cases of tenure and promotion and on mid-term review cases. DAC-TP members do not represent their departments; rather, they represent the College as a whole. The committee's charge is to conduct a thorough and impartial evaluation of all cases that it considers, applying the general standards for tenure or promotion that are outlined in the College of Liberal Arts' "Procedures for Review, Tenure and Promotion." DAC-TP members are recused on cases from their own departments and must leave the room while the case is being discussed. Individuals associated in accordance with the System policy on nepotism (33.03) with the faculty being considered for renewal, tenure and promotion, or promotion to full professor may not participate in either departmental or college-level discussions or votes on a case that is covered by the System policy. In accordance with university recommendations, the Dean shall not attend the meetings of the DAC-TP. While the Associate Dean responsible for faculty matters shall not attend either, she or he shall be available for consultation in his or her office at the same time as the DAC-TP is meeting.

Section II(E) – Dean's Advisory Committee on Promotion of Academic Professional Track Faculty (DAC-PAPT)

- 1. Membership:** The DAC-PAPT shall consist of four APT faculty, with a minimum of two academic professional track faculty at the rank of professor (to the extent possible, based on the number of Instructional Professors in the College). In the event there are too few Instructional Professors to serve without undue burden to Committee members, one tenured faculty member at the rank of professor shall be appointed by the Dean, with names presented to department heads and the Liberal Arts Council for endorsement. Members of the DAC-PAPT shall serve staggered, three-year terms.
- 2. Responsibilities:** The DAC-PAPT makes recommendations to the Dean on all cases of promotion of faculty on the Academic Professional Track. DAC-PAPT members do not represent their departments; rather, they represent the College as a whole. The committee's charge is to conduct a thorough and impartial evaluation of all cases that it considers, applying the general standards for promotion outlined in the College of Liberal Arts' "Faculty Academic Professional Track Guidelines." DAC-PAPT members are recused on cases from their own departments and must leave the room while the case is being discussed. Individuals associated in accordance with the System policy on nepotism (33.03) with the faculty being considered for promotion may not participate in either departmental or college-level discussions or votes on a case that is covered by the System policy. In accordance with university recommendations, the Dean shall not attend the meetings of the DAC-PAPT. While the Associate Dean responsible for faculty matters shall not attend either, she or he shall be available for consultation in his or her office at the same time as the DAC-PAPT is meeting.

Section II(F) – Endowed Appointments Advisory Committee

- 1. Membership:** The Endowed Appointments Advisory Committee shall consist of six faculty appointed by the Dean. Of the six, three shall be current holders of endowed faculty positions, two shall be department heads, and one shall hold the rank of professor. The terms of appointment shall be for three years, with members rotating off on a staggered basis. The Dean shall select one member to serve as chair.
- 2. Responsibilities:** The committee shall (a) advise the Dean regarding appointments to chairs, professorships, and fellowships, and (b) conduct periodic reviews of the performance of persons holding endowed positions.

Section II(G) – Executive Council

- 1. Membership:** The Executive Council shall consist of the Dean, the Associate and Assistant Deans in the College, the Department Heads, and the Directors of Centers, Institutes and Interdisciplinary Critical Studies.
- 3. Responsibilities:** The Executive Council shall function as a deliberative body for the Dean to discuss policy, planning, and College initiatives.

Section II(H) – Graduate Instruction Committee (GIC)

- 1. Membership:** The GIC shall consist of the Graduate Advisors from each department in the College, two graduate students selected collectively by the department and ICS representatives to the GIC, and the Associate Dean whose portfolio includes graduate instruction, who shall function as chair. Among the faculty representatives there shall be at least one who is a faculty member or affiliate faculty member of ICS. After representatives from the departments are elected, if there are no ICS faculty or affiliate faculty members elected as representatives, then the Dean shall appoint one.
- 2. Responsibilities:** The GIC shall provide advice and recommendations on matters relating to curriculum and instruction at the graduate level.

Section II(I) – Research Advisory Committee

- 1. Membership:** The Research Advisory Committee shall consist of one faculty representative from each department, the Associate Dean for Research, and two undergraduate students selected by the Liberal Arts Student Council (or its equivalent, should the name be changed) from among its membership. Among the faculty representatives there shall be at least one who is a faculty member or affiliate faculty member of ICS. After representatives from the departments are selected, if there are no ICS faculty or affiliate faculty representatives, then the Dean shall appoint one. Members shall serve staggered, two-year terms.

Section II(I), cont'd

- 2. Responsibilities:** The Research Advisory Committee shall advise the Associate Dean for Research on programs supporting faculty research and professional development and shall be responsible for the review and evaluation of applications to those programs.

Section II(J) – Undergraduate Instruction Committee (UIC)

- 1. Membership:** There shall be one faculty representative elected from and by each department, two undergraduate students selected by the Liberal Arts Student Council (or its equivalent, should the name be changed) from among its membership, and the Associate Dean whose portfolio includes undergraduate instruction, who shall function as chair. Among the faculty representatives there shall be at least one who is a faculty member or affiliate faculty member of ICS. After representatives from the departments are elected, if there are no ICS faculty or affiliate faculty members elected as representatives, then the Dean shall appoint one.
- 2. Responsibilities:** The UIC shall provide advice and recommendations on matters relating to curriculum and instruction at the undergraduate level.

Section II(K) – Discharge of items from Standing Committees: Items may be discharged from Standing Committees after 90 days by a majority vote of the Liberal Arts Council. If a discharge vote is successful, then the item shall be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Liberal Arts Council for debate and a vote.

Section II(L) – Ad Hoc Committees: Ad hoc committees shall be established by the Dean, in consultation with the Liberal Arts Council, to assist in the administration of the College or to advise the Dean on matters affecting the College. No ad hoc committee shall be created to perform tasks assigned to standing committees or to the Liberal Arts Council.

SECTION III – PROCEDURAL ARTICLES

Section III(A) – Bylaws Interpretations: The Steering Committee shall issue such advisory opinions regarding the interpretation of these Bylaws as are necessary to the orderly and expeditious conduct of College business. Challenges to such opinions may be made in the Liberal Arts Council and shall be decided by a majority vote of the Council.

Section III(B) – Severability: Should any part of these Bylaws be found inconsistent with or in violation of any higher rule, regulation, or law, the offending part of these Bylaws shall be without force or effect. Such a finding shall not invalidate any other part of these Bylaws.

Section III(C) – Bylaws Amendments: Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed either by the Liberal Arts Council or by faculty petition, and ratified by vote of the College faculty.

1. Proposals for amendments initiated through the Liberal Arts Council shall be submitted to the Steering Committee for inclusion on the agenda of an upcoming regular meeting. The proposed amendment must be endorsed by a two-thirds vote of the Council members present and voting in order to be submitted to the College faculty for ratification.
2. Proposals for amendments initiated through faculty petition must be signed by 20 percent of the faculty of the College who are eligible to vote in college elections (see section I[E][i]) and submitted to the Steering Committee.
3. The faculty shall vote upon proposals for amendments that have been successfully initiated under the foregoing two clauses. This vote shall be conducted only during the academic year, and it shall be conducted under the following conditions:
 - a) Copies of the proposed amendment shall be distributed to the faculty at least three weeks prior to the closing of the vote on ratification.
 - b) To be adopted, a proposed amendment must be approved by two-thirds of the faculty voting.

Section III(D) – Parliamentary Authority: The deliberations and actions of the Liberal Arts Council and the standing committees shall be governed by the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*. The Steering Committee (Section II[A]) shall serve as parliamentarian for purposes of determining conformance with the parliamentary authority.
