

# **Bylaws of the Department of Physics, University of Florida May 2014**

## **A. Duties of Department Officers**

### **1. Chair**

- a) The program of the Department is conducted by the department faculty under the leadership of a Chair, who is appointed by the Dean with advice from the faculty, and who has general responsibility for the activities of the Department.
- b) The Chair appoints the Associate Department Chair(s), Graduate Coordinator, and Undergraduate Coordinator.
- c) The Chair presides over faculty and departmental meetings. At least two faculty meetings are held each Fall and Spring semester.
- d) The Chair keeps members of the Department (faculty, staff, students, and others) appropriately informed of events and developments that affect the Department.
- e) The Chair is ultimately responsible for ensuring that University and College procedures are followed and that required reports are appropriately compiled and disseminated.
- f) The Chair appoints search committees and other departmental committees, with the exception of those committees specified below as being elected.
- g) In the anticipated absence of the Chair, the Chair appoints an Acting Chair for the period of the absence and disseminates this information in a timely manner to the Dean of the College, faculty, and staff.

### **2. Associate Chair**

- a) The Associate Chair is appointed by the Chair.
- b) The Associate Chair normally assumes the role of Acting Chair in the Chair's absence.
- c) The Associate Chair provides advice to the Chair concerning departmental affairs.
- d) The Associate Chair is a member of the Department Advisory Committee.
- e) The Associate Chair may serve as liaison to other department or university committees as directed by the Chair.

### **3. Graduate Coordinator**

- a) The Graduate Coordinator is appointed by the Chair.
- b) The Graduate Coordinator serves as Chair of the Graduate Student Affairs Committee.
- c) The Graduate Coordinator acts as the liaison between the Graduate School and the Department and its graduate students. The Graduate Coordinator ensures that the Department conforms to Graduate School regulations and communicates Graduate School regulations to faculty and graduate students. The Graduate Coordinator

- advises the Graduate School about matters of concern to faculty and students, suggesting any desired modifications in Graduate School procedures. The Graduate Coordinator ensures the accuracy of information published by the Department concerning the graduate program.
- d) The Graduate Coordinator advises entering graduate students of departmental and Graduate School programs, policies, and regulations and offers initial advice about courses.
  - e) The Graduate Coordinator monitors graduate student progress and consults with students about any deficiencies in academic achievement or violations of departmental or Graduate School regulations. The Graduate Coordinator annually evaluates the records of students approaching graduation to be sure that they have met department and Graduate School degree requirements.
  - f) The Graduate Coordinator oversees the process for awarding departmental graduate awards.
  - g) The Graduate Coordinator reports on graduate student matters at least annually to the faculty.

#### **4. Undergraduate Coordinator**

- a) The Undergraduate Coordinator is appointed by the Chair.
- b) The Undergraduate Coordinator represents the Department at College meetings dealing with undergraduate affairs and curriculum. The Undergraduate Coordinator ensures the accuracy of information about the undergraduate program published in the Undergraduate Catalog and appearing in the online catalog, as well as the information published by the Department.
- c) The Undergraduate Coordinator is the primary advisor for students majoring in Physics and is assisted by other faculty members appointed as undergraduate advisors. The Undergraduate Coordinator evaluates the records of senior students to determine whether Department of Physics major and minor requirements have been met.
- d) The Undergraduate Coordinator oversees the process for awarding departmental undergraduate awards.
- e) The Undergraduate Coordinator reports on undergraduate matters at least annually to the faculty.

#### **B. Faculty Voting Privileges**

1. The persons eligible to take part in faculty votes are:
  - a) All tenured and tenure-track faculty who have a tenure home in the Department of Physics.
  - b) Faculty in non-tenure-track positions (such as Assistant Scientist, Associate-In-Physics, etc.) who are paid primarily from State of Florida funds allocated to the Department and who were appointed after a search and vote in which the Department faculty as a whole participated.

- c) Exceptionally, other faculty-rank members of the Department who are granted voting privileges by action of the Department faculty as a whole. Non-tenure-track faculty who were hired by a specific research group are generally not accorded voting privileges. Voting on matters of tenure and promotion is further limited by University regulations to specific ranks of faculty.

### **C. Faculty Meetings**

1. Faculty meetings in the Department of Physics are called by the Department Chair. Attendance at faculty meeting is expected of all faculty members except those on leave or excused due to other professional responsibilities. Exceptions apply to those meetings involving promotion and tenure, where restrictions are imposed.
2. The Department Chair calls at least two general faculty meetings per semester. Upon the receipt of a request for a faculty meeting signed by at least one-third of the voting faculty, the Chair calls the appropriate meeting to be held within ten days. Such a request must state a specific purpose for the meeting.
3. Notice of a faculty meeting is given, whenever possible, at least three working days prior to the meeting. The announcement includes an agenda listing all action items.
4. Meetings proceed along the lines recommended by Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, except when otherwise specified by these bylaws.
5. A simple majority vote carries any motion. Proxy votes are not allowed. The quorum for voting on any motion at a faculty meeting is 50 per cent of the faculty eligible to vote.
6. A member of the faculty is designated the recorder of the minutes. The purpose of the minutes is to provide an accurate and permanent record of action taken at faculty meetings. The minutes do not include details of confidential remarks such as tenure and promotion discussions. Within ten days following each faculty meeting, a copy of the minutes is distributed to each faculty member eligible to attend the meeting, and anyone detecting an error should make it known to the minutes recorder. If no objection is voiced within three days following the distribution, the minutes are considered approved and are placed on file. If an objection is raised that cannot be resolved satisfactorily by personal discussion, it is considered at the next faculty meeting.

### **D. Department Committees**

The Department has several standing committees. Unless noted otherwise below, the Department Chair appoints the members of each committee and selects a committee chair. In addition the Chair may create ad hoc committees as required to address specific issues.

#### **1. Department Advisory Committee**

- a) The Department Advisory Committee (DAC) is intended to facilitate shared governance within the department and gives advice to the Department Chair. It

- augments the periodic meetings of the faculty as a whole, may serve as an initial forum for the discussion of issues, and enables deliberation about matters concerning individual faculty members that it is inappropriate to discuss at a faculty meeting. It meets early in each Fall and Spring semester, and other times as required.
- b) The Associate Chair, Undergraduate Coordinator and Graduate Coordinator are all appointed members of the DAC.
  - c) There are six elected faculty members of the DAC. Three new members are voted onto the committee every academic year to serve a term of two years. The election takes place by secret ballot according to the following procedure:
    - i. The names of all voting members of the faculty are placed on a first ballot, with the exception of the Department Chair and the continuing and outgoing members of the DAC. The names on the ballot are divided into three groups of roughly equal size such that faculty of related research interests are placed in the same group. All voting faculty may then vote for two people in each of the three groups. The votes are tabulated and the top two (or in the case of a tie, more than two as necessary) from each group are selected for a second round of voting. At this point the candidates' availability to serve if selected is confirmed, and unavailable candidates are replaced by the available candidates with the next-highest vote counts in the first round. In the second round, voting faculty are invited to vote for one person from each group. The winners of this vote are elected members of the DAC. Should there be a tie in this second round of voting, results from the first round will be used as a tie-breaker.
    - ii. Faculty may resign from the DAC for a variety of reasons (such as an off-campus sabbatical or retirement) at any time. If a resignation takes place in the middle of the academic year, the faculty member from the same group who obtained the next-highest vote count on the second DAC ballot described above is asked to serve the remainder of the term. If a resignation happens when a DAC ballot is due, the procedure is adjusted as necessary to ensure full representation for each of the three groups.
  - d) At the first meeting of a re-formed DAC, the elected members of the committee elects a committee chair, who serves for one year, from the pool of elected members.
  - e) The Department Chair is expected to consult regularly with the DAC. In addition, the DAC has the authority to convene itself, and may or may not invite the Chair to these meetings.
  - f) Consistent with University regulations, faculty members may appeal a judgment of the Department Chair. In such cases the faculty member presents his or her views to the elected members of the DAC, along with supporting documents. The elected members of the DAC then make a written recommendation to the Chair, with copy to the appellant. They may choose to also send a copy of the recommendation to the Dean of the College.

## **2. Salary Review Committee**

- a) The Salary Review Committee (SRC) advises the Department Chair on matters concerning salaries in the Department.

- b) There are six elected faculty members of the SRC. The election procedure is the same as that for the DAC, and is detailed in Section D.1.c.
- c) The Department Chair may appoint further members to SRC, but the elected members are always in the majority. The Department Chair may request one of the members of the SRC to chair its meetings.
- d) No member of the SRC may take part in any committee action concerning his/her own salary. In the event that a committee member has a conflict of interest, as judged by the member, or by a majority of the SRC, or by the Department Chair, then the member temporarily stands down from the SRC. If the member is an elected member of the committee, he or she is temporarily replaced by a faculty member without conflict of interest selected from the same voting group on the basis of votes cast in the most recent SRC election. The Chair may select a temporary replacement for any appointed member of the SRC who has a conflict of interest.
- e) The SRC is consulted by the Chair in all matters concerning distribution of merit raises, Salary Pay Plan for Professors (SPP) or similar programs, and salary equity reviews. In its deliberations, the SRC has access to annual activities reports, Chair's letters of evaluation, peer evaluation of teaching, and teaching evaluation summaries.
- f) The SRC merit pay recommendations are based on the departmental criteria for annual evaluation of faculty laid out in Appendix I.

### **3. Technical Operations Committee**

- a) The Technical Operations Committee (TOC) sets general policy concerning the operation of the support facilities for experimental research, and the manner of their use by members of the department.
- b) The responsibility of this committee is to make sure that these facilities provide services of the variety and quality required by the various experimental groups.
- c) The TOC liaises with the supervisors of the various facilities. These supervisors may be asked to attend meetings as required.

### **4. Space and Safety Committee**

- a) The Space and Safety Committee (SSC) supervises allocation and maintenance of the space assigned to the members of the Department of Physics.
- b) The Department Chair consults with the SSC on any negotiations with other departments or University entities concerning the allocation of space to the Department of Physics.
- c) The SSC liaises with the Department's technical staff and Physical Plant concerning building-related safety issues.

### **5. Computer Committee**

- a) The Computer Committee oversees departmental computer policies, including the purchase of departmental servers, printers and other hardware.
- b) The Computer Committee is chaired by a tenured or tenure-track faculty member, and includes the Director of Computing.

## **6. Graduate Students' Affairs Committee**

- a) The Graduate Student Affairs Committee (GSAC) oversees the graduate program inside the Department of Physics.
- b) The GSAC is chaired by the Graduate Coordinator. The committee comprises several faculty members together with a student representative who is elected by the graduate students. The student representative takes part in those discussions that involve policies, but not those that involve individual students.
- c) The GSAC administers and interprets the Department's policies on graduate students. This includes ensuring that students perform satisfactorily in the graduate core courses and take their preliminary oral examinations in a timely manner. The GSAC advises the Department Chair on matters concerning the financial support of graduate students.
- d) The GSAC also oversees the graduate curriculum. This includes arranging for proper course sequencing, studying and making recommendations concerning new courses, and coordinating textbook adoption with the aid of the assigned instructors.

## **7. Preliminary Exam Committee**

- a) The Preliminary Exam Committee is responsible for setting and grading the Department's graduate preliminary examination, and issuing a recommendation to the faculty as to whether each candidate passes or fails the exam. The final decision concerning all passes and fails is made by vote at a faculty meeting.
- b) Complete rules governing the administration of the preliminary exam are posted on the Department's website as part of the graduate student information.

## **8. Graduate Recruitment and Admissions Committee**

- a) The Graduate Recruitment and Admissions Committee (GRAC) makes recommendations to the Department Chair on the selection and initial support of the incoming class of graduate students.
- b) The GRAC handles the Department's publications informing potential applicants about the graduate program and admissions procedures.

## **9. Advisory Committee on Teaching**

- a) The Advisory Committee on Teaching (ACT) advises the Department Chair on the teaching assignments given to faculty.
- b) Every Spring, the ACT polls faculty members as to their teaching preferences, and produces a plan of assignments for the following academic year.
- c) The membership of the ACT includes both the Undergraduate Coordinator and the Graduate Coordinator.

## **10. Undergraduate Affairs Committee**

- a) The Undergraduate Affairs Committee (UAC) oversees the undergraduate degree program.

- b) The UAC is chaired by the Undergraduate Coordinator.
- c) The UAC is responsible for arranging for proper course sequencing, studying and making recommendations concerning new courses, and coordinating textbook adoption with the aid of the assigned instructors.
- d) The UAC is also responsible for communicating to students the Department requirements for undergraduate programs, including degree requirements.

#### **11. Peer Evaluation of Teaching Committee**

- a) The Peer Evaluation of Teaching Committee (PETC) acts for the Department Chair in evaluating the teaching performance of faculty in the Department.
- b) The PETC comprises tenured faculty.
- c) At the beginning of the Fall and Spring semesters, the PETC works with the Department Chair to compile a list of faculty whose teaching are to be peer-evaluated during the semester. This compilation takes into consideration the tenure status of each faculty member, the period of time since the last peer evaluation, and the likelihood that the faculty member will be a candidate for a promotion or award in the near future. The list also includes any faculty member who specifically requests a peer evaluation.
- d) Each evaluation normally includes observation by two members of the PETC, who visit classes taught by the teacher. The teacher may suggest appropriate or preferred dates and times for these visits. The PETC notifies the teacher of the planned visitation dates and times, in accordance with university rules and guidelines.
- e) Following the classroom visits, the PETC members produce a written report summarizing their observations and giving their assessment of other aspects of the teacher's performance related to the course. These aspects may include (but are not limited to) the syllabus, website, textbook, assignments, office hours, and availability.
- f) The PETC provides its report to the faculty member within two weeks of the final classroom visit. The faculty member then has seven days to review and discuss the report and, if desired, prepare a written reply. The written report and any reply are delivered to the Chair, who adds these documents to the faculty member's evaluation file.
- g) Notwithstanding paragraphs a), c), and d) above, if the Chair has information that generates immediate concern about the conduct of a class, the Chair or members of the PETC may visit and observe the class at any time. A written report of the visit is generated as in paragraphs e) and f) above.

#### **E. Annual Performance Evaluations**

The criteria for annual evaluation of faculty are included as Appendix I to this document so that they may be published separately when appropriate. The rules for amending these criteria are the same as for any other of the bylaws.

## **F. Sustained Performance Evaluations**

1. Tenured faculty receive from the Department Chair a sustained performance evaluation (SPE) once every seven years following the award of tenure or the most recent promotion. Within each of the three categories of assigned duties (teaching, research, service), the SPE states whether the faculty member's performance is "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory."
2. In preparing this SPE, the Chair reviews the faculty member's annual evaluations over the evaluation period and assesses performance within each of the three main categories of assigned duties. If in any category the faculty member has received annual evaluations of "satisfactory" or better during four or more of the preceding six years, including one or both of the previous two years, the chair rates that faculty member as "satisfactory" in that category.
3. If in any category the faculty member does not meet the above requirement for a rating of "satisfactory", then the Chair communicates with the Department Advisory Committee (DAC) in order to determine an appropriate rating for the faculty member's performance in that category. The Department Chair provides the DAC with access to annual evaluations and activities reports as needed to review performance and provide input to the Chair's determination.
4. Upon determining the faculty members' evaluation, the Department Chair provides a copy to the faculty member, who has the opportunity to attach a response.

## **G. Criteria for Tenure and Promotion**

The criteria for Tenure and Promotion are included as Appendix II to this document so that they may be published separately when appropriate. The rules for amending these criteria are the same as for any other of the by-laws.

## **H. Faculty Searches**

1. The Chair appoints search committees to conduct search and screening procedures to fill all new state-funded positions as authorized by the College Dean. Search committees for "soft-money" funded faculty positions will be appointed by the Chair based on recommendations by the research group(s) through which the position will be funded.
2. Search procedures will in all cases follow the relevant University and College guidelines.

## **I. Selection of the Department Chair**

1. The following procedure for selecting a Department Chair comes into force when the Dean of the College requests the Department to make an internal Chair search.
2. A Search Committee is elected by the voting faculty. The ballot follows the lines of the DAC elections, with the exception that two members plus one alternate are selected in

just one round of balloting. Alternates may participate in all committee meetings, but do not vote unless they become members as described below. At its first meeting, the committee elects a Search Committee chair from among its members. The committee may then vote to add up to two members for diversity reasons. The Dean may choose to appoint an external member and a Dean's liaison. Once constituted, the Search Committee receives its charge from the Dean.

3. The Search Committee conducts a first poll of faculty and, separately, of staff, to evaluate which tenured faculty members have substantial support. The Search Committee identifies a list of faculty members (possibly including members of the Search Committee) who have substantial support. Each faculty member on the list is invited to meet with the Search Committee (including alternates), and discusses his/her availability for the position of Chair. At the end of this process, viable candidates for Chair are selected. Any viable candidates who are members on the Search Committee or alternates immediately step down from the committee. The Search Committee is then re-formed to comprise as many of the original members as possible, together with alternates to maintain broad representation from across the Department.
4. The Search Committee then conducts a poll of the voting faculty (as specified in the by-laws). This second poll can allow for negative as well as positive votes. The committee also organizes interviews of the candidates. After the interviews are complete, the committee presents its findings to the faculty as a whole, and then to the Dean.

#### **J. Amendment of the Bylaws**

These bylaws may be amended by a faculty vote. In the case of a voice vote, a proposed amendment is circulated one week in advance of the vote. In the case of a written ballot, the deadline for casting ballots is at least one week after the circulation of the proposed amendment and the announcement of voting. The amendment is approved if it is voted for by two-thirds or more of the faculty eligible to vote.

## Appendix I

### Criteria for Annual Evaluation of Faculty

The annual evaluation is based on the faculty member's departmental work assignment and record of performance in the categories of research, teaching, and service including university governance. Exceptions may be made for faculty on leave. Within each category of assigned work, faculty are given a performance rating of "good" (the most meritorious), "satisfactory", or "unsatisfactory" (the least meritorious).

#### A. Research

1. The Physics faculty recognize that performance in the category of research may be evident through a wide variety of scholarly activities and accomplishments, and that both the quality and quantity of activity deserve consideration. Following are examples of activities that may be considered, ranked in approximate order of decreasing merit:
  - a) Original research publications in peer-reviewed journals
  - b) Research grant or fellowship funding received
  - c) Other original research reports and publications
  - d) Prizes, fellowships, and other professional recognition
  - e) Invited presentations at major national and international meetings
  - f) Original scholarly books, monographs, and textbooks written or edited
  - g) Patents, disclosures, and inventions
  - h) Grant applications submitted
  - i) Reviews, book reviews, commentaries, and research news and summaries
  - j) Book chapters
  - k) Other invited seminars, colloquia and conference presentations
  - l) Refereed talks, abstracts, and posters at meetings
  - m) Contributed abstracts, posters, and presentations at meetings
  - n) Other non-peer-reviewed publications
  - o) Research in progress.
2. The highest performance rating is given to those faculty who engage in a greater quantity and quality of scholarly activities that rank highly on the list above. A lower performance rating is given to those faculty who are engaged in fewer scholarly activities, especially when those activities do not rank highly on this list. When evaluating coauthored publications and other collaborative efforts, consideration is given to the weight of the faculty member's contribution and role in the work. Performance ratings take into account reasonable expectations for the research productivity of faculty of different rank and tenure status. They also recognize that some meritorious scholarly projects may require a lengthy period of effort before they produce publishable results.

## **B. Teaching**

1. The Physics faculty also recognize that productivity in teaching can take many forms. Following are examples of teaching activities that are considered in the evaluation, ranked approximately in order of decreasing merit:
  - a) Classroom or online teaching at the graduate or undergraduate level
  - b) Mentorship of graduate research
  - c) Teaching or training grant or fellowship funding received
  - d) Prizes, awards and other recognition for teaching
  - e) Development of new courses
  - f) Development of new teaching methodology and materials such as textbooks, laboratory manuals and other resources
  - g) Revision and improvement of existing courses and laboratories
  - h) Mentorship of undergraduate research
  - i) Membership on graduate committees
  - j) Informal teaching, such as occurs in student journal clubs, training sessions, and meet-the-faculty presentations
  - k) Other academic advising, mentorship, training, and consultation activities.
2. The highest performance rating is given to those faculty whose teaching record indicates greater success in activities that rank highly on the preceding list. A lower performance rating is given to those faculty with less evidence of success, especially if their success is limited to activities that rank lower on the list. Evaluation of classroom teaching takes into consideration the results of student evaluations and peer evaluations when available, the history of teaching evaluations in that course (or similar courses), the level of experience of the teacher, and any documented circumstances that make the assignment exceptional.

## **C. Service**

1. In the category of service the evaluation takes into consideration the quality and quantity of a faculty member's service and leadership in the department, the university, and the profession, in relation to the individual's assigned duties. Because the category of service can include such a wide range of compensated and uncompensated activities, the evaluation recognizes that an individual's record of service may include contributions that go beyond his/her formally assigned duties. Following are examples of service that may be considered, in approximate rank order of decreasing merit:
  - a) Service as department graduate coordinator, undergraduate coordinator, or associate chair
  - b) Leadership in professional societies or national organizations
  - c) Service as chair of a department standing committee
  - d) Service as chair of other department, college or university committees
  - e) Membership on government boards or commissions
  - f) Committee membership or other significant service at the department, college or university level
  - g) Membership on editorial boards

- h) Service on agency or foundation review panels
  - i) Reviewing for professional journals and funding agencies
  - j) Other service to professional societies or national organizations
  - k) Outreach and other service to primary or secondary schools
  - l) Supervision of staff
  - m) Attendance and participation at faculty meetings
  - n) Other occasional service to the department or university.
2. The highest performance rating is given to those faculty whose service record indicates greater accomplishment in activities that rank highly on the preceding list. A lower performance rating is given to those faculty with less evidence of accomplishment, especially if that success is limited to activities that rank lower on the list. It is understood that service assignments and expectations are more modest for junior faculty than for senior faculty.

## **Appendix II**

### **Criteria for Tenure and Promotion**

#### **A. General Policy**

The purpose of the award of tenure is to retain outstanding scholars with a demonstrated track record of excellence in research, teaching, and service and the promise of future productivity, and to provide increased academic freedom in which to work.

Tenure-track faculty members and tenured faculty who are eligible for promotion are evaluated annually by a variety of methods (Department Chair, ad hoc review committee, faculty mentor) and the evaluated faculty member is informed in writing of the outcome by the Department Chair. Promotion of faculty with titles of Assistant/Associate Scientist or Assistant/Associate in Physics follow the general principles of tenure-track faculty. In all cases, assessment is made only on those duties specified in the faculty member's semester assignment reports.

#### **B. Research and Scholarly Activities**

For the award of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of Associate Professor, there must be evidence of excellence in scholarship at the national and international level, with the candidate ranking in the upper echelon of their research specialty for their level of experience. The evaluation of the research, in particular its originality and international standing, is by external peer review of publications and other scholarly activities. The reviewers are asked to compare the candidate's performance with those of the best in the relevant field for all institutions (public and private).

For promotion to the rank of Professor, there must be a clearly established national and international reputation for having made recognized major contributions to the field (e.g., important discoveries, seminal works, and major treatises). Evidence of a sustained level of high-quality work is especially important. Evaluation of the level of activity is by external peer review conducted by leading international experts in the candidate's field.

#### **C. Teaching**

For the award of tenure and/or promotion there should be evidence of a sustained level of high-quality teaching and a commitment to the instructional mission of the University. The level of achievement is assessed by consideration of (1) student evaluations, (2) interviews with students, (3) classroom or teaching laboratory visits, and (4) review of syllabi and other class material. These will be summarized by the reports of the Peer Evaluation of Teaching Committee.

#### **D. Service**

Service contributions to both the Department and to the community (University, State, national organizations, etc.) are expected for the award of tenure and/or promotion. Evidence of contributions beyond the normal obligations expected of faculty members (regular service on typically two committees per year) is taken into consideration in the overall evaluation, but it is not required for recommendation for the award of tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor. Evidence of a commitment to service to the profession is expected for promotion to Professor.