

# Principles and Recommendations for Departmental Governance in the College of Science *Adopted September 22, 2018*

## Principles of departmental leadership

The head is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the dean. The dean may solicit input from the department, taking into consideration the current circumstances and previous traditions, but departmental bylaws or votes are not binding on the dean when appointing a department head.

The head is the representative of the department to all outside entities, including the College, the University, professional societies, alumni, friends, and donors. Conversely, the head is responsible for communicating College and University policy and priorities to the department.

The head also has the responsibility to manage all aspects of the department's mission, to allocate resources (funds, space, personnel), to set workloads (including research, teaching, and service), and to review faculty and staff performance.

Associate heads should serve at the pleasure of the head, with approval from the dean of the College.

An effective head will consult with faculty and staff, both informally and formally through the committee structure, faculty meetings, and faculty votes. Nevertheless, final responsibility for many decisions lies with the head. An effective head will communicate important decisions and the thinking that went into them.

## Recommendations for departmental bylaws

The level of detail in bylaws varies widely across the College. This is reasonable given that the departments differ widely in their size, diversity, and missions. Bylaws should be adapted to local circumstances and balance transparency with flexibility and efficiency.

If department bylaws define the role of the head, they should reflect both aspects of the head's responsibilities: the outward facing (e.g., representing the department) and the inward facing (e.g., managing the department's people and resources).

Bylaws should define who may attend faculty meetings and who has voting rights on which kinds of issues (distinguishing, say, research from curriculum). These policies are at the discretion of the department and should be detailed in departmental bylaws.

It is recommended that voting be restricted to faculty with at least .50 FTE appointments. For example, emeriti and faculty on unpaid leave should not have votes.

Policy about committee formation varies widely across the College. Some departments have mostly appointed committees, and others have a mix of elected and appointed committees.

Faculty should be aware that most committee votes are advisory to the head. One important exception is that votes of departmental standing committees on promotion and tenure are part of the dossier forwarded to the College. The committee's recommendation serves as an input to the head, but is also an independent part of the record.

It is recommended that departments agree on and document standards of professional behavior, consistent with the College of Science commitment to a positive and inclusive work environment where all individuals – faculty, staff, and students – are welcomed, respected, and have their opinions valued.