

**SUNY Buffalo State**  
**By-Laws of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration**  
**Adopted February 9, 2021**

**PREAMBLE**

These By-Laws constitute rules and procedures for governing the Department of Political Science and Public Administration. These By-Laws have been adopted in accordance with the By-Laws of the College and with the Policies of the Board of Trustees, State University of New York. In accord with the SUNY Board of Trustees, SUNY Buffalo State, or the School of Arts and Science policies and procedures, all departmental decisions are understood to be advisory. Should a conflict be found, the policies and procedures of the aforementioned bodies will take precedence.

- The Department of Political Science and Public Administration establishes these By-Laws in order to provide for the democratic governance and transparent administration of the department in its official business (PM)
- It is the policy of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration to provide an employment and educational environment free from invidious discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital or veteran's status

**ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP**

Members of the department are those individuals that have been hired by the department including, full-time tenured and non-tenured faculty, part- and full-time lecturers, adjunct faculty members, and the department's full-time administrative staff, as well as students who are engaged in our department's course offerings and curricular activities.

**ARTICLE II. VOTING PROCEDURE**

A. General Department Matters: in matters that require the department to vote on administrative decisions and/or actions, excluding personnel decisions, the following individuals have voting rights: <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> While associated faculty are expected to teach at least one course for the department, they do not have voting rights on administrative decisions and/or actions.

1. full-time tenure-track faculty,
2. full-time lecturers, and
3. former full-time tenure-track faculty or full-time lecturers that maintain a contracted teaching load of half-time or more.

B. Personnel Matters: The voting members of the department on personnel matters shall include only members of the faculty granted a full-time tenured academic appointment by the college.

C. Absentee voting: Absentee voting shall be allowed only in the form of a formal written communication that is delivered to the presiding chair/or officer of the department at least one week prior to the meeting in which voting is expected to occur.

- The department member who expects to be absent shall request an absentee ballot for any presented motion at least three business days before the scheduled meeting. Once said ballot is received, the completed ballot must be submitted to the presiding chair/or officer of the department one business day prior to the meeting; if the presented motion is amended, voting on said motion must be delayed until the next monthly meeting to allow the absentee member to reconsider their vote.
- If a completed absentee ballot is received, the vote contained therein shall be shared with the department members after an official vote has taken place by all.
- Absentee ballots are discouraged and to be only used in exceptional, unavoidable cases.
- Those department members with voting rights on sabbatical leave may utilize the absentee voting procedure while department members with voting rights on leave of absence may not.

D. A quorum for decisions at any general department or committee meeting shall consist of a majority of the voting members eligible being present, or granted absentee voting rights, or by a clearly designated proxy exclusive of a voting member on leave.

E. A secret ballot shall be held at the request of any voting member. These ballots shall be counted during the meeting by the presiding officer and at least one witness.

### **ARTICLE III. MEETINGS, QUORUM, MINUTES, AGENDA**

#### **A. Regular Meetings**

1. Regular meetings of the department shall be held monthly during the regular academic year with additional meetings as needed. Preliminary schedules should

be arranged by the beginning of each semester to accommodate faculty commitments.

2. An agenda for all regular meetings shall be prepared and distributed electronically by the department chairperson a minimum of two business days in advance of the scheduled meeting. Any member of the department may submit an item for the agenda by informing the department chairperson a minimum of three business days before the scheduled meeting. All agenda for the regular meetings shall make provision for items of new business.

3. Since the department chairperson is the main liaison with the college community and its administration, s/he shall report on all business that affects the operation of the department and its members at these regular meetings.

4. A chairperson pro-tem shall be elected by voting members of the department to conduct department business and department meetings in her/his absence for a day or more. The chairperson pro-tem shall be briefed by the department chairperson on the particulars and shall report back to the department chairperson on her/his return.

5. Minutes of the regular and special department meetings shall be recorded and distributed to the faculty by the department administrative assistant or other person designated by the faculty.

- The minutes of department meetings should be reviewed at subsequent department meetings and accepted by majority vote of these eligible department members.
- In the event of an executive session of a regular or special department meeting, the office of the secretary shall be filled by a voting member of the department.

6. Executive Session - the Department may conduct an executive session to address matters requiring confidentiality. Such sessions must be approved by a majority vote of eligible department members, and the vote of approval must be taken in an open meeting pursuant to a motion identifying the general subjects to be considered. Subjects appropriate for an executive session include sensitive personnel matters and the preparation, grading, or administration of examinations.

7. Agendas and approved meeting minutes will be archived electronically by the department's administrative assistant and made available to department members for review.

## **B. Special Meetings**

1. A special department meeting may be called by the chairperson at the request of any voting member. All members shall be notified of this meeting within a reasonable time based upon the objective circumstances.

- If urgency is required of the special meeting which prevents the fulfillment of absentee voting procedures, no absentee voting will be allowed.
- Special department meetings are discouraged and to be only used in exceptional, unavoidable cases.

2. Special meetings shall not supersede or be construed as substitute for regularly scheduled meetings

## **C. Quorum**

Quorum is defined as the combination of the Chair of the meeting plus the presence of a simple majority of the department members eligible to vote. No question may be decided unless there is a quorum. If quorum is not satisfied for fifteen minutes, the meeting may be canceled.

## **ARTICLE IV. DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES**

Committee chairs will be elected at the May department meeting and will assume their responsibilities starting September 1st. Committee chairs will serve for two years.

### **A. Personnel**

#### ***Membership***

The Personnel Committee of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration shall be composed of all tenured, tenure-track faculty members, full-time lecturers of the department, and affiliated faculty. However, only tenured faculty in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration shall be eligible to vote in tenure, promotion, and/or renewal cases.

A Chairperson of the Personnel Committee shall not be the same person as the Department Chairperson and must be tenured. The Personnel Committee Chair shall be elected during a September meeting of the Department and shall serve for two years.

#### ***Responsibilities***

1. The Personnel Committee shall determine all matters pertaining to the promotions, reappointment, tenure, and new Political Science and Public Administration full-time

faculty appointments. If the Department Chairperson submits a recommendation to the Administration that is different than that of a majority of the Personnel Committee, he/she will be asked to explain their reasons for his/her alternative recommendation.

2. All Personnel Committee decisions shall be made by a majority vote.
3. The committee shall establish guidelines/deadlines for dossiers for continuing appointment and promotion, and deadlines for Personnel Committee and Department Chair to review the dossier and provide feedback to candidates in adequate time to make revisions, as well as deadline dates for Committee and Chair letters.
4. The Chair of the Personnel Committee, in collaboration with the Department Chair, is responsible for reviewing and updating junior faculty's memorandums of understanding when needed.
5. The Chair of the Personnel Committee is responsible for advising junior faculty through the tenure process by suggesting individuals participate in various professional development training, scholarship, and creative activities, and/or methods for improving instruction.
6. Applications for promotions to Full Professor shall be reviewed by a special committee called the "Full Professor Promotion Committee", that is comprised of a minimum of four people. These four individuals will consist of the Personnel Committee Chairperson and all individuals that hold the rank of Full Professor in the Department. If the Department Chairperson is a Full Professor, they must be excluded from this special committee. If the department does not have enough individuals within the Department to meet the quota of four individuals, the candidate applying for promotion to Full Professor may recommend other Full Professors within the School of Arts and Sciences that work at SUNY Buffalo State until the quota is met. If Full Professors outside of the Department must be identified to evaluate a candidate applying for promotion to Full Professor, the Committee Chairperson is responsible for reaching out to and requesting their participation on this special committee, in addition to establishing guidelines/deadlines for dossiers for promotion, deadlines to review the candidate's dossier and provide feedback in adequate time to make revisions, as well as deadline dates for Committee and Chair letters. If the Personnel Committee Chairperson is an Associate Professor, they are not allowed to vote on the candidate's application to Full Professor. Only Full Professors are allowed to vote on a candidate's application to Full Professor. The ad hoc committee will then make a recommendation to the Department Chairperson.

## **B. Curriculum**

1. The Curriculum Committee shall be composed of five Political Science and Public Administration faculty members and an elected Curriculum Committee Chairperson. Members shall begin committee service at the beginning of fall semester and shall serve for two academic years.

2. The Chair of the Curriculum Committee is responsible for leading the development and processing of new programs and courses and making program revisions that are approved by the Department of Political Science and Public Administration. The Chair of the Curriculum Committee is also responsible for monitoring and challenging courses and programs proposed by other departments that threaten the interests of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration. The Chair of the committee shall be elected during a May meeting and shall serve for two academic years.

3. The Curriculum Committee shall coordinate assessment of Department majors and certificate programs and compile an assessment report to be included in the Department's annual report.

### **C. Assessment**

1. The Assessment Committee shall be composed of five Political Science and Public Administration faculty members or affiliated faculty. The committee shall be led by two Co-Chairs that are elected at the May department meeting and serve for two academic years. One co-chair will lead undergraduate assessment and the other will lead graduate assessment. However, leadership of either undergraduate or graduate assessment relates to reporting responsibilities as opposed to whether or not the faculty member has graduate or undergraduate teaching status. Any tenure-track faculty member in the department can serve as either co-chair.

2. Each Co-Chair will be responsible for leading assessment activities for either undergraduate or graduate programs. All assessment activities are the responsibility of the Committee as a whole, with each Co-Chair directing the activities of their respective responsibility.

3. Co-Chairs of the Assessment Committee will be a member of the Political Science and Public Administration Department, will be elected at the May meeting, and shall serve for two academic years. All tenure-track or tenured faculty within the Department of Political Science and Public Administration are eligible to serve as either Co-Chair position. Co-Chairs may only serve for two consecutive terms at a time, after which they must take at least one term off from being a Co-Chair before volunteering to a Co-Chair position again.

4. Co-Chairs of the Assessment Committee shall coordinate assessment of Department majors and certificate programs and will work together to compile an assessment report to be included in the Department's annual report.

### **D. Graduate Program (GP) Committee**

## **Membership**

Members shall be composed of three Political Science and Public Administration faculty members or affiliated faculty. The committee shall be led by the committee Chair who is elected at the May department meeting and will serve for two academic years.

## **Responsibilities**

1. The committee shall, in consultation with the Department Chair, establish a rotation schedule for graduate courses.
2. The committee shall review applications for admission into the Masters of Public Administration and Nonprofit Management graduate programs of the Department. The committee shall correspond with graduate students upon their admission into our programs, assigning them to an advisor and communicating to them the requirements of the program.
3. The committee shall, when necessary, make recommendations to the Department regarding graduate policies or programs.

## **E. Student and Community Engagement and Outreach (SCE) Committee**

### **Membership**

The Student and Community Engagement (SCE) Committee shall be composed of three tenured, tenure-track, or part-time faculty members. The committee shall be led by the committee Chair who is elected at the May department meeting and will serve for two academic years.

### **Responsibilities**

The Student and Community Engagement (SCE) Committee shall:

1. Make recommendations to the Department regarding student and community outreach activities, including student trips, student experiential learning activities, and community outreach events.
2. Develop partnerships with community (local, state, national, and international) organizations and help create service-learning opportunities for students.
3. Make recommendations to the Department regarding student and alumni awards. The committee will consult with department faculty familiar with the academic and professional successes of prospective awardees prior to offering a list of recommendations to the Department.

4. Make recommendations to the Department regarding the end of the year awards banquet. With the help of department members, the SCE committee Chair will be responsible for organizing the awards ceremony.
5. The SCE committee and GP committee will organize the Public Service Recognition Week Conference Awards Ceremony in May.
6. Meet once at the beginning of each academic semester (Fall and Spring) and as needed.

**F. Alumni Affairs Committee**

The committee shall be composed of three members of the department and a Committee Chair who will be elected at the May department meeting and will serve for two academic years.

The Alumni Affairs committee exists to foster strong ties with graduates of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration by

1. maintaining records of alumni postgraduate career development.
2. recognizing and promoting alumni success
3. encouraging alumni engagement in campus and department activities.

**ARTICLE V. DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSON**

Article V of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration's by-laws outlines the responsibilities, privileges, duties, and the selection of various administrative positions within the department that include the chairperson and the chairperson *pro tem*

**Chairperson Selection, Duties, and Terms of Office**

The Chairperson is the administrator of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration and is responsible for carrying out department and college policies in consultation with the Department's general voting eligible faculty.

**Selection**

1. The Department of Political Science and Public Administration will send names of nominees to the Dean of the School of Arts and Science (SAS) at the April Meeting to serve as the Chairperson of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration. In addition, any member of the department who wishes to run for Chairperson may submit their name for consideration to the Dean. Once these names are received, the Dean will make the names of the candidates known



to all the members of the department via e-mail. Voting will be on-line, carried out through the SAS electronic election system.

2. All full-time, tenured members of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration with an academic rank not lower than Associate Professor shall be eligible to serve as Chairperson of the department.
3. All general department voting members as outlined in Article II of these by-laws shall each have an equal vote in the selection of the Chairperson of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration.
4. The Chairperson will be elected by majority vote of the voting members of the department at the May meeting every three years.
5. In the case that there is a tie in the voting for a Chairperson, the names of those that are tied will be passed on to the Dean of the SAS, at which time the Dean will make the final decision.

### ***Terms of Office***

1. The chairperson of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration will serve for a three-year term that will start on September 1<sup>st</sup> of the first year and end August 31<sup>st</sup> of the third year.
2. Following their first full fall semester of service, the Department may recommend to the Dean that the Chair be relieved of their duties. A recall motion shall be brought by department as a written petition endorsed by two-thirds of the total voting membership. Notification of pending action shall be submitted to the department's eligible voting members at least two weeks prior to a specifically scheduled hearing. The Chair Pro-Tem or designee shall officiate at this hearing. At the hearing, the Chair may speak in their defense. Within two weeks of the hearing, a secret ballot shall be submitted to the department's eligible voting members. Voting shall take place on-line through the SAS on-line voting system. The dean of SAS will report the vote to the department and call an election for a chairperson if need be.

### **Chair Pro-Tem**

1. The Chair Pro-Tem shall assume the Chair's responsibilities in their absence
2. Chair Pro-Tem shall carry out other responsibilities as requested by the Chair

3. The Chair Pro-Tem will be selected by the current chair in September of each academic year

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Chair.**

In consultation with department members and administration, the chair will:

1. Represent the department in meetings and negotiations with deans and other administration officials. Act as advocate for faculty, staff, and students in the department.
2. Act as liaison between the administration and the department. Facilitate the department's efforts to implement the college's mission, strategies, and core values.
3. Initiate departmental planning in order to enhance the department's effectiveness. Work with faculty, staff, and students to develop strategic initiatives that help keep the department moving in a positive direction. Lead department response to action plans, and annual goals.
4. In consultation with department faculty and others, supervise faculty and staff; assign teaching, advisement, and other duties so as to maximize effectiveness of programs and achieve equitable distribution of workloads; prepare a departmental schedule of classes for each semester which is responsive to student needs.
5. Make recommendations on personnel actions and professional development, including recruitment, renewal, promotion, continuing appointment, sabbatical leaves, awards of discretionary salary increases to the Dean of SAS in collaboration with the Department's Personnel Committee; supervise classified and professional staff; complete performance programs, annual reviews, and other supervisory activity as needed.
6. Work to establish a positive working and learning environment for faculty, staff, and students; to initiate mediation and conflict resolution where required; to understand and implement campus guidelines regarding resolution of grievances, complaints of discrimination or of sexual harassment, and allegations of academic misconduct and make appropriate referrals when necessary.
7. Collaborate with the Co-Chairs of the Curriculum Committee to provide support for periodic reviews of curriculum, program reviews, and assessment to ensure correspondence between departmental strengths, student and societal needs, and current developments in the discipline(s).

8. Manage departmental financial accounts and budget. Prepare departmental requests for resources. Present state of department financial accounts and budget at the regular monthly department meetings.
9. Conduct regular faculty and staff meetings to share information, plan activities, solve problems and make decisions. Ensure that departmental committees receive clear charges and meet as needed.
10. Maintain communication with current majors and alumni; examples include meetings, department events, career and academic advisement, recruitment and retention activities, and fund raising efforts.
11. Work in collaboration with all Department Committee Chairs to develop and submit the department annual report or other reporting documents that are needed by the School, College, or outside accreditation body.

## **ARTICLE VI. PROVISION FOR POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION FACULTY WHO TEACH IN OTHER DISCIPLINES**

Political Science and Public Administration faculty who teach part of their load in other disciplines will continue to possess the same rights to full participation in Departmental governance as possessed by other Political Science and Public Administration faculty.

Political Science and Public Administration faculty may teach no more than one course per semester in another discipline, unless approved by the Personnel Committee and Department Chair.

Personnel decisions for Political Science and Public Administration faculty who teach part of their load in other disciplines will be made by the Political Science and Public Administration Personnel Committee and Department Chair. The decision must be made in writing and agreed upon by the Personnel Committee, Department Chair, and the faculty member invited to teach outside of the discipline. A supporting letter from the department where the Political Science and Public Administration faculty member teaches can be included in that faculty member's supporting documents. This letter will be considered by the Personnel Committee and become part of the personnel file submitted to the Dean.

## **ARTICLE VII. METHOD OF ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT**

### **A. Method of Adoption**

1. These department bylaws must be presented to the membership of the department in written form at least two weeks prior to any vote for adoption.

2. These department bylaws will be adopted if approved by three-fourths of the eligible voting membership as designated in Article I.
3. The department bylaws will be in force on the first day of the spring or fall semester after a successful approval vote.

#### **B. Method of Amendment**

1. Any amendment to the department bylaws must be presented to the membership of the department in written form at least two weeks prior to any vote for adoption.
2. The department bylaws may be amended by a secret ballot, by a two-thirds vote of the eligible voting membership.
3. Accepted amendments shall be in force on the first day of the spring or fall semester after a successful approval vote.

#### **ARTICLE VIII. ADVISORY BOARD**

The department will have an active advisory board for the Master in Public Administration and Nonprofit Management. The board will meet at least once a year and as needed. The primary role of the advisory board will be to provide guidance and advice to both the faculty and graduate students of our MPA program, by providing insight that can help improve our program as well as enhance the educational experience and job opportunities for our students. Membership of the board will reflect individuals who have distinctive experiences and backgrounds across an array of organizations and fields in order to bring a more holistic perspective to the board.

#### **ARTICLE IX. GOVERNANCE RULES**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Department of Political Science and Public Administration in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of the department, Buffalo State, or SUNY may adopt.