

Department of Political Science Bylaws

1. Membership and Individual Voting Rights

Members of the Department are Senate members who hold appointments in the Department.

Every member may vote on any question before the Department,¹ with the following exceptions:

Assistant Professors may vote on appointments and on the award of chairs and other honors but may not vote on other personnel actions or on the extension or delegation of voting rights.

Only Full Professors may vote on the extension or delegation of voting rights to Associate Professors.

Joint appointees may not vote on personnel actions if they have waived their right to Department consideration of their own personnel cases.

Emeritus members may not vote except when they are recalled to teach, and then not on personnel actions or voting rights.

2. Department Authority and Collective Voting Rights

The following actions require votes of the Department:

Bylaw amendments;

The adoption of academic regulations, including curricular and degree requirements and general rules for evaluating, retaining, assisting, and rewarding students;

Appointments to the Department;

The awarding of endowed chairs and other academic honors;

Personnel actions not herein delegated to the Merit Review Committee, to wit: fourth-year reviews, nonreappointments, and advancements to Associate Professor, Professor, Professor VI, and Initial Above Scale;

General policies and procedures governing graduate admissions;

General policies and procedures governing the recruitment of academic personnel.

Even if no change is made, policies of that last category require annual approval by Department vote.

3. Department Organization

A Department Chair appointed by the Dean of Social Science possesses the executive authority of the Department, advises the administration on matters of budget and personnel, advises members on their duties, privileges, and career opportunities, calls and presides at meetings of the Department, and appoints all other Department officers, all non-Senate employees, and all committees and their chairs except for the Merit Review Committee and its chair.

An Executive Committee comprised of the Department Chair, a Committee Chair, the Department Vice Chairs, and three other members chosen by the Department Chair to ensure representation of the Department's chief fields of research and teaching. This committee advises the Department Chair on any question that the Chair or the committee may have, acts for the Department when a decision is required but time prevents a Department vote, hears complaints and proposals and formulates policy for Department approval on matters not covered by other committees, advises the Department Chair on sabbatical leave requests, teaching allocations, and allocations of space and other prized resources, and manages the conduct of elections.

A Graduate Studies Committee is chaired by a Vice Chair for Graduate Studies and comprises a representative of each of the Department's chief fields of concentration or qualification and two elected student representatives. This committee supervises the administration of the graduate program, hears and decides appeals and requests for exceptions by graduate students, approves all graduate degrees and terminations, decides or recommends all honors and awards of financial assistance to graduate students, and reviews all proposed changes in the graduate program prior to Department votes.

An Undergraduate Studies Committee is chaired by a Vice Chair for Undergraduate Studies and comprises at least three other members of the Department. Its responsibilities parallel those of the Graduate Studies Committee.

A Graduate Admissions Committee consists of a Chair, at least four other members of the Department chosen to represent its chief fields of concentration, and an elected student representative. It recommends to the Graduate Vice Chair applicants for admission and initial financial aid, ranking them as need be.

A Merit Review Committee consists of seven members elected by the Department for two-year terms, staggered so that about half are elected each year. The Executive Committee recruits and nominates candidates to achieve broad representation of fields of expertise. The committee elects a Chair from among its members. It votes and reports to the Department Chair on five-year reviews and all step and above-scale increases, and accelerations thereof, except for advancements to Professor VI and Initial Above Scale.³

4. Voting Procedures

A quorum for voting at a meeting of the Department is one-third of qualified voters in residence. Qualified voters are members who have the right to vote on the question before the Department. They are in residence unless they are on leave and not present at the meeting.

Only qualified voters may attend meetings (or parts thereof) at which votes are taken, except that the qualified voters in attendance may invite others by unanimous consent.

Passage of By-Law-Amendments requires a simple majority of qualified voters in residence, except for the extension or delegation of voting rights, which requires a two-thirds majority.

Passage of any other motion requires a simple majority of votes cast.

In each case, absentee ballots count for final passage, though not for procedural votes or amendments to motions on the floor, provided they are received within five working days of the meeting.

Department votes on personnel actions must follow reports by confidential, ad hoc review committees.

A secret ballot shall be used in all personnel cases and whenever requested by any member. When a secret ballot is used, votes shall not be tallied until absentee voting is completed.

Elections shall be held each spring for single-member positions, defined by field, on the Merit Review Committee and for the Department representatives to the Legislative Assembly of the Los Angeles Division and the Faculty Executive Committee of the UCLA College. Any tenured, non-emeritus member may run for the Merit Review Committee, and any member may run for any other position.

Votes are tallied by Approval Voting with ties broken randomly.

The Department shall meet at least once per quarter and whenever requested by the chair, any standing committee, or any three members.

These bylaws were adopted on April 21, 2016 by a vote of 23 in favor, none opposed, and one abstaining.

Addendum 1. The Department of Political Science Policy on Discretionary Statements

The Chair may place discretionary statements as defined by Regents Policy 4408 on a designated page of the Department's website if and only if all of the following conditions hold: (1) the statement is represented solely as that of the Chair; (2) the subject of the statement is a university or scholarly institutional matter; (3) the subject of the statement has a direct and substantial bearing upon the department's operation or the welfare of its faculty, staff, and students; (4) the statement is not opposed by more than one member of the Department's Executive Committee; (5) the proposed statement has been circulated to the Department Faculty and as of 24 hours from the time of circulation, no more than two Faculty members have contacted the Chair to object to the statement being posted and (6) A method must be in place to allow faculty to dissent anonymously. Once posted, such statements will be removed: (1) at the discretion of the Chair, (2) following a written request from three or more department members, or (3) after one year.

This Addendum was adopted on December 17, 2024 by a vote of 20 in favor, 5 opposed, and none abstaining.

Footnotes

¹ This clause gives Associate Professors the right to vote on all personnel actions. That right was extended to Associate Professors by two-thirds of Full Professors. Date of meeting: April 21, 2016. Vote: 19 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain.

² The right to vote on appointments was extended to Assistant Professors by two-thirds of tenured professors. Date of meeting: April 21, 2016. Vote: 22 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain.

³ The right to vote on step and above-scale increases and accelerations thereof, other than Step VI and Initial Above Scale, was delegated to the Merit Review Committee by two-thirds of tenured Professors. Date of Meeting: April 21, 2016. Vote: 22 yes, 1 no, 1 abstain.

