

# **Department of Geography**

## **Bylaws**

Revised February 12, 2004

This document describes the policies and procedures by which the Department of Geography of the University of Delaware operates to achieve its mission. The Geography Department has a valued history of operating and achieving its mission in a collegial atmosphere. This atmosphere is based on respect for each individual and efforts to maintain an environment where issues and differences can be discussed and resolved in a constructive manner. The policies and procedures set forth herein are intended to preserve and protect this operating style.

## **1 Membership in the Department**

The membership of the Department consists of the faculty, a subset of whom comprise the voting faculty. The faculty consists of 1) all persons who hold tenure-track, research, visiting, or adjunct appointments in Geography, and 2) all persons who hold joint appointments in Geography. The voting faculty consists of all continuing faculty members whose primary appointment is in the Geography Department (including the Chair and Associate Chair) and other faculty who have expressly been given voting privileges by a two-thirds majority vote of the Geography voting faculty.

## **2 Responsibilities and Privileges of the Faculty**

The mission of the Department encompasses all aspects of research and education in geographical studies, including graduate research and education, undergraduate education, and service to the professional and University community. The Department voting faculty are responsible for determining how the Department achieves its mission, including responsibility for the academic programs of the Department. All new degree programs, changes in existing programs, and new regular Geography courses require the approval of a majority of the voting faculty in the Department. New experimental and topics courses require the approval of the Chair. The other rights and responsibilities of the faculty are outlined in the following sections.

## **3 Department Organization and Operation**

### **3.1 Officers of the Department**

The *Chair* is the chief administrative officer of the Department. Responsibilities of the Chair include providing leadership to the Department in achieving its mission, administering the policies and procedures of the University and the Department, and acting as the primary representative of the Department within the institution and the profession.

The *Associate Chair* assists the Chair in the administration of the Department. The Associate Chair's duties include chairing the academic council and reviewing and making recommendations on curricular issues. Additional specific duties are determined in consultation with the Chair.

## **3.2 Department Committees**

### **3.2.1 The Academic Council**

The *Academic Council* is composed of two voting faculty members and the Associate Chair. The two voting faculty members serve one-year terms and are elected each spring semester (by consensus or vote) to those terms by the voting faculty. The Academic Council advises the Chair concerning the general administration of the Department and assists the Chair in providing leadership to the Department. In addition, the Academic Council is responsible for reporting to the faculty concerning graduate student progress.

### **3.2.2 The Awards Committee**

The *Awards Committee* includes three voting faculty members who are elected each spring semester (by consensus or vote) to one-year terms by the voting faculty. The Awards Committee is responsible for making recommendations to the faculty concerning annual awards for undergraduate students, graduate students and faculty. Once the faculty have chosen award recipients, the Awards Committee is responsible for compiling the appropriate materials for the submission of nominations and completion of awards.

### **3.2.3 Promotion and Tenure Committee**

See Section 5.1.

### **3.2.4 Peer Review Committee**

See Section 5.2.

### **3.2.5 Other Committees**

Other standing or ad hoc committees may be formed as deemed necessary by the Chair and the voting faculty. The voting faculty will appoint the members of the committees, with one member designated as the committee Chair.

## **3.3 Department Meetings**

The faculty of the Department of Geography will endeavor to come to decisions on all matters through consensus. For those matters on which a consensus cannot be obtained, a vote will be taken. For official actions, except those specified in this document, a majority of the voting faculty will be needed for approval. Determination that a consensus has been reached, that a vote must be taken, or that a decision should be deferred to a later meeting, will normally be left to the discretion of the Chair. Any voting faculty member may challenge the Chair's decision that a consensus has been reached, and if the challenge is seconded by one additional voting faculty member, then a vote must be taken and Roberts Rules of Order will be implemented for the remainder of the discussion.

In accordance with the bylaws of the College of Arts & Science, the Department generally holds at least four faculty meetings every semester to consider matters of Department policy. These faculty meetings are scheduled at a time when no faculty member has scheduled class responsibilities, and therefore all faculty are expected to attend these meetings unless excused by the Chair. Faculty

meetings may be called by the Chair, by the Academic Council, or by written petition of a majority of the voting faculty.

Whenever possible, faculty meetings will be scheduled at least one week in advance and at a time that does not conflict with the teaching schedule of any voting faculty member. Each faculty meeting will have an agenda, usually prepared by the Chair or the Academic Council. Normally, agenda items will be solicited from the voting faculty at least one week in advance, and the agenda will normally be distributed to the faculty at least one day in advance of the meeting. Although other business may be discussed at the faculty meeting, official action may be taken only on items on the agenda.

Voting faculty, including those on sabbatical, may attend and participate in all faculty meetings; non-voting faculty and a representative of the graduate students will be invited to attend and participate in portions of faculty meetings as appropriate. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the voting faculty who are not on sabbatical or leave of absence; faculty on sabbatical or leave of absence do not count in determining a quorum. A quorum must be present at a faculty meeting for action to be taken. Voting faculty may vote on all Department matters, and those unable to attend a meeting may submit proxy votes. Faculty on sabbatical and those on leave retain their voting rights. All votes will be open votes, unless decided otherwise by a majority open vote of the faculty.

## **4. Appointments**

### **4.1 Tenure-Track Appointments**

The Chair, in consultation with the voting faculty, is responsible for administering the recruitment of new tenure-track faculty. The Chair actively solicits the views of the voting faculty regarding the desired qualifications of candidates for open positions and formulates an advertisement to attract such candidates. A search committee, appointed by the voting faculty, reviews applications for the positions and with approval of the majority of the voting faculty identifies a set of finalists who are invited to campus for interviews. The voting faculty are responsible for determining any candidates to whom an offer will be made. In order for a tenure-track offer to be made to a candidate, a majority of the voting faculty must approve of the hire.

### **4.2 Non-Tenure-Track Appointments**

Appointment of research, adjunct and visiting (limited term) faculty, temporary faculty and professional staff is made upon recommendation of the Chair and approval by a majority of the voting faculty. When time constraints prevent a faculty vote, the Chair may make temporary appointments.

## **5 Promotion, Tenure, and Reviews**

### **5.1 Promotion and Tenure Policy**

All policies and procedures on the promotion and tenure of faculty are contained in the *“Department of Geography Policy on Promotion and Tenure”* document. This document may be amended at any time with the affirmation of at least two-thirds of the voting faculty, and subsequent approval by the College and University.

## **5.2 Committee on Promotion and Tenure**

The composition and function of the Department's promotion and tenure committee is specified in the "*Department of Geography Policy on Promotion and Tenure*" document.

## **5.3 Peer Review Committee**

Peer reviews will be conducted in accordance with University policy. For assistant professors and instructors, a peer review committee consisting of three voting faculty members will be appointed by the voting faculty and will consist of associate professors and full professors. For associate and full professors, the peer review committee consists of three full professors who are members of the voting faculty; if there are fewer than three full professors who are members of the voting faculty, then the Chair will appoint additional voting faculty to the peer review committee. The peer review committee solicits written information from the faculty member being reviewed documenting his or her contributions in each of the areas of research, teaching, and service. The Committee evaluates the faculty member and submits a written report to the Department Chair, a copy of which is given to the faculty member.

## **6. Amendment**

These Policies and Procedures may be amended at a duly constituted Department meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting faculty.