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**Governance Guidelines**  
***For the Department of Teacher Education***  
***And Curriculum Studies***

**College of Education**  
**University of Massachusetts Amherst**

**December 2018**

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# Department of Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies

## *Preamble*

The primary focus of our work in the Department of Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies in the College of Education at the University of Amherst is to enhance the practice of education through scholarship that informs the preparation of educational practitioners, the development of curriculum, and the practice and assessment of teaching and learning. Our approach is shaped by our fundamental commitment to social justice and diversity, by our understandings that knowledge, learning and practice are interconnected, situated, contextual, and social, and by our belief in the importance of engaging in local, national and international dialogue in order to advance education in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Our commitments and understandings lead us to work collaboratively with diverse stakeholders to construct equitable learning communities across a variety of contexts. Through our engagement in educational practice, inquiry and dialogue with diverse learners, families, community members, preservice and in-service teachers, administrators, politicians, and scholars, we advance our understanding of teaching and learning, the preparation of teachers and teacher educators, the development of curriculum and the construction of more equitable and diverse learning communities.

Another important way that we work to advance education in the Commonwealth is to maintain small practitioner concentrations. In these concentrations, together with our students and cooperating schools, we envision alternative ways to prepare our teachers and their children for the possible worlds -they will help to construct. To support this exploration, we are committed to working toward learning communities that are intellectually engaging, reflective, equitable, and respectful.

# Governance Guidelines

## I. TECS Mission Statement

The Department of Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies (TECS) seeks to improve public education through 1) The planning, delivery, and continuous improvement of pre-K-12 teacher education programs at the undergraduate level and masters levels; 2) Research and advanced study that furthers understanding of teacher education, curriculum development, teaching, and learning; and 3) Leadership in policy development and the promotion of effective teacher education, curriculum, and school practices in the Commonwealth.

## Principles of Governance

The purpose of governance is to help the TECS Department create a working environment that will enable us to realize our mission. Three principles guide our governance document:

- Governance needs to support faculty, students, and staff in their efforts to create equitable learning communities that push the boundaries of our current understandings and to critique the practices, policies and procedures we create in terms of the values expressed in our mission statement.
- Governance needs to support faculty, students, and staff in their efforts to create structures and practices that work through the tensions and competing agendas that occur within any community while protecting both collegial relations and each other's time, space and academic identities.
- Governance needs to support faculty, students, and staff in their efforts to create programs and educational strategies that are appropriate for the current financial landscape while also advocating for increased spending and seeking alternative funding for our concentrations and research activities.

## II. Organization, Duties, and Procedures for Governance of the TECS Department

### A. Student and Staff Representation

The Department Chair will assign staff to be represented at meetings and in committees as needed. For student representation, each academic unit (Concentration) within the TECS Department will select a student to serve on a TECS Department Student Advisory Committee (TECS SAC). The following principles should guide Concentrations in the process of selecting students:

- Students selected should work to represent the interests of ALL students, including part-time students who may not be available for committee work;
- Committee work should be distributed across a range of students so that students' academic work will not suffer; and
- Committee work can be conducted in an efficient and timely manner.

TECS SAC members, in consultation with the TECS Department Chair, will determine among themselves who will represent student interests in Department meetings, standing committees, task forces, and search committees. If necessary and appropriate, the TECS SAC will nominate additional students from the student body to serve on committees and submit their names to the Department Chair. The TECS SAC must insure that students in all Concentrations are consulted on issues they would like represented in TECS committees and kept informed of the work accomplished in these committees. TECS committees will make all reasonable efforts to have student representation. In the event that they are unable to find student representation, TECS committees will proceed with their responsibilities.

**B. Department Chair**

The TECS Department shall be headed by a chair, who will serve as the departmental leader and the departmental spokesperson.

The TECS Department Chair will:

- Lead and coordinate the department's personnel processes, program planning, operations, evaluations, and resource requests and allocations in collaboration with the Departmental Assistant. The Chair will ensure the faculty's primary responsibility in academic and personnel matters, and student participation in these matters. In order to ensure adequate resources for carrying out their governance responsibilities and communication with the TECS Department's students, the Chair will be provided with appropriate administrative services (office space, secretarial assistance, administrative assistants), financial resources (travel, discretionary, and other funds), teaching loads commensurate with the responsibilities, and additional compensation.
- Ensure full and complete communication between the TECS Department, the Departmental Administrator, the College Administration and major College-wide organizations.
- In collaboration with the Departmental Administrator, monitor appropriate departmental mechanisms for the selection of student representatives to serve on TECS Department and College of Education committees in accordance with University policy.
- In collaboration with the Departmental Administrator, review and approve grant proposals, resource requests and allocations, TECS Department admissions procedures, and other matters mandated by College or Department governance, including academic offerings subsequent to review by the department academic matters committee.

## **1. Selection of TECS Department Chair**

### *Eligibility*

Associate and full professors may be nominated for the chair position. Assistant professors without tenure and non-tenure track faculty are not eligible to serve as the TECS Department Chair.

When a chair is being sought, the Dean will consult with the TECS Department Personnel Committee and the following process will be initiated. The DPC will request nominations from the TECS Faculty and Students from eligible faculty members. Eligible faculty members will be notified of their nomination. Eligible faculty members may accept or decline the nomination. If more than one eligible faculty member accepts the nomination, a faculty vote will be held to select the person who will be recommended to the Dean as the new TECS Department Chair. If only one faculty member is nominated, a faculty vote will be taken to affirm the nominee by a majority of votes cast. Prior to the vote the nominee(s) will make a brief presentation to and take questions from the TECS faculty at a regularly scheduled departmental faculty meeting.

If the Dean accepts the TECS faculty candidate, the Dean shall proceed with the appointment with the concurrence of the Provost. If the Dean does not accept the TECS faculty candidate, the Dean will meet with the Department to try to achieve a resolution; if that fails, the matter will be referred to the Provost for resolution.

## **2. Resignation/Removal of Chair**

If the chair wishes to resign she/he shall resign to both Dean and Department in writing. If, at any time, the TECS Department or any sizable proportion of it should petition the Dean for removal of the Chair or the Dean seeks her/his removal, the Dean shall follow the procedures as outlined in the Faculty Senate Document #90-029. The Dean, in consultation with the TECS Personnel Committee, may appoint an Interim Chair who will serve for no more than a year until such time as the process set out in this document can be followed.

## **3. Appointment of a Faculty Member to the Position of Chair of the TECS Department**

The appointment of a faculty member to the position of Chair of the TECS Department shall normally be made for a period of three (3) years, with an evaluation at the end of two (2) years. In keeping with a view of the role of Chair as a service to the TECS Department, the maximum number of years that a faculty member may serve as Chair is six (6) years, out of their entire tenure at UMass. When the appointment is made, the administrative stipend and professional portions of the salary shall be specified in writing. If and

when the administrator assumes full-time faculty responsibilities, her/his salary will be adjusted in accordance with the provisions established at the time of the administrative appointment. Reappointment of a Chair of the TECS Department may only be made subsequent to a second election.

**4. Appointment of a Faculty Member to the Position of Interim Chair of the TECS Department**

When an Interim Chair is needed to serve during the temporary leave of the Department Chair, the Dean shall follow the procedures as outlined in the Faculty Senate Document #90-029. The Dean, in consultation with the TECS Personnel Committee, may appoint an Interim Chair who will serve for no more than a year until such time as the process set out in this document can be followed.

**C. TECS Department Meetings**

The TECS Department Chair shall convene meetings of the department at least twice a semester for the purpose of deliberation and decision-making with members of the department. Decisions will be approved by voting. In accordance with university policy, a vote of the department is advisory to the department chair.

**1. Voting Procedures**

*Eligibility*

- All faculty half-time or more, including full joint appointments.
- Visiting, temporary, or less than half-time cannot vote.
- Anyone on a paid leave including sabbaticals, parental, and medical leaves is eligible to vote.

*Quorum*

- 50% of all eligible voters. People who are on leave (i.e. eligible for absentee vote) count for the purposes of determining a quorum.

*Required for passage of a motion*

- A majority vote by a quorum of the department will carry any motion put forward, seconded, and discussed.
- Voting will normally be by a show of hands or voice vote, but will be made by secret ballot by the request of any voting member.
- When secret ballot is requested, the vote will take place immediately in the meeting, using paper ballots.

### *Absentee voting*

- There will be no proxy voting (i.e. you cannot have someone else vote for you).
- Faculty who are on approved leaves, or have notified the chair before the meeting that they cannot attend due to work conflicts or documented personal emergency, may cast an absentee ballot.
- Absentee ballots shall be cast by email to the Department Assistant within 24 hours after the minutes from the faculty meeting are distributed with the text of each motion.

### *Prior notice of motions*

- Meeting agenda shall be distributed 2 business days prior to the department meeting. Any items to be voted on shall be included in the agenda.

### *Waiving or suspending the by-laws*

- Any provision of the bylaws can be waived by a 2/3 vote
  - If during a department meeting: 2/3 of eligible voters present
  - If outside of a department meeting, 2/3 of all eligible voters.
  - Any motion to waive a provision must specify the duration of the waiver.

### *Amending the by-laws*

- Bylaws may be amended by a 2/3 vote of eligible voters.
- The voting will be by secret ballot and the written text of the proposed amendment will be circulated at least 7 days prior to the conclusion of the voting period.

TECS meeting agendas and minutes from the prior meeting will be sent to the TECS faculty via departmental listserv two days prior to meetings. Any member of the TECS Department can add items to the agenda of department meetings.

## **D. TECS Departmental Committees**

### **1. TECS Advisory Committee**

The TECS Department will develop and maintain an Advisory Committee for routine administration, allocation for resources, and the like.

The coordinator (or her/his/their designee) of each concentration (M.Ed., Ph.D.) and licensure programs as well as a representative from the department staff, will be asked to serve on the Advisory Committee. The

Advisory Committee will advise the Department Chair on ongoing matters of administration (see role of Department Chair). Each semester, at least three meetings of the Advisory Committee will be convened by the Department Chair. However, if (s)he/they deems it necessary, the Chair may convene extraordinary meetings of the Advisory Committee to discuss urgent issues. When voting on a specific matter is necessary, each member of the Committee has one vote.

**Responsibilities of Advisory Committee Members will include:**

- Gathering from concentrations and programs their needs and issues and represent and report them to the Advisory Committee.
- Reporting items discussed at the Advisory Committee meetings back to their respective concentrations and programs.

**2. TECS Department Personnel Committee**

The TECS Department will elect a Department Personnel Committee to make recommendations to the Department Chair and the College Personnel Committee.

**The TECS Personnel Committee will:**

- Serve as the primary level of review for all personnel matters including AFRs, RTDYs, tenure, and promotion.
- Discharge the primary responsibility of the faculty in the area of faculty status as defined by University governance policy as well as policies determined by the faculty and administration of the College of Education, such as those concerning the awarding of merit pay.
- Disseminate the department merit guidelines on a yearly basis; review and revise the guidelines in accordance with department faculty feedback.

**Committee membership**

The Personnel Committee will be nominated by faculty and elected by ballot. The committee consists of five (5) faculty members, the majority of whom are tenure track and who are not being considered for tenure or promotion during the term of service on the committee. The chair of the committee must be a tenured faculty member. Although non-tenure track and pre-tenure faculty members may serve on the committee, only those members at or above rank may vote on the tenure and promotion cases for tenure-track faculty. The department recognizes the critical representation of faculty of color in personnel decisions; therefore, we commit to configuring the committee to maximize racial diversity, while not placing inequitable service responsibilities for underrepresented faculty.



**Term of office**

Elections for the committee will be held in April to begin planning for service in the fall, and the term of service will be for two years. Members will serve a staggered two-year term. The chair will serve first as a member and then as the chair. The Committee will select a chair from among the continuing members at the beginning of each academic year.

**Evaluation of Tenure and Promotion Cases**

Tenure and promotion recommendations will be guided by the University guidelines as described in the Academic Personnel Policy Handbook (aka the Redbook). Accordingly, faculty must demonstrate excellence in two of the three areas of faculty work and strength in the third to achieve tenure or promotion. Moreover, the faculty member must have a record of achievement sufficient to have gained substantial recognition on and off campus from scholars or professionals in his or her field; and must show significant potential for continuing professional achievement. Evidence of substantial recognition is presented, in part, by the comments of external reviewers at peer institutions. For the purposes of evaluation, the department chair will solicit letters from external scholars at peer institutions, receipt of a total of five to seven (5-7) external letters is regarded as sufficient for the purposes of evaluation of tenure and promotion cases.

**3. TECS Academic Matters Committee**

The TECS Department will develop and maintain an Academic Matters Committee. In order to coordinate the work of departmental and school academic matters, the department will name one member to serve at both levels.

**The TECS Academic Matters Committee will:**

- Constitute the first level of review for courses and academic programs.
- Make recommendations on courses and academic programs to the Department Chair and the School Academic Matters Committee.
- Provide leadership in all internal and external reviews of academic programs of study in the department.
- Prepare a Progress Report on work undertaken by the committee to be presented at a TECS Faculty Meeting in the fall, and a Final Report to be presented at the final TECS Faculty Meeting of the spring semester.

**Committee membership**

The Academic Matters Committee consists of three full-time faculty members, one of whom also agrees to serve on the school-level Academic Matters Committee, and a graduate student. The faculty members of the Academic Matters Committee will be nominated by faculty through written nominations and elected by written ballot.

**Term of office**

The Academic Matters Committee will be elected in April to begin planning for service in the fall, and the term of service will be from September 1 through August 31. For actions concerning academic matters needed in the summer, the Department Chair, or his/her designee, should try to contact all members of the departmental Academic Matters Committee, but at least three members of the committee will have to be reached for voting on action.

The members of the Academic Matters Committee should serve for one year, except for the chair, who will serve for two years, first as a member and then as the chair. The Committee will select a chair: from among the continuing members at the beginning of each academic year.

**4. Other Committees**

The TECS Department Chair, in consultation with the faculty, will determine the need for other committees that may be necessary for the smooth management of the department. The Department Chair will determine both the membership and the charge for these committees. Committees will be open to student participation, as appropriate. Student nominations for these committees will be made in consultation with the TECS SAC.

**E. Amendments**

This document may be amended by a majority vote of the total faculty, as defined in this document, through a mail ballot conducted by the Department Chair's Office and Faculty/Student Advisory Committee.

*These governance guidelines take effect on January 1, 2019*