

Commonwealth Honors College Faculty

By-Laws

Approved November 11, 2015

I. Statement of Principles

Effective governance supports structures and practices that help create a collegial environment and efficient procedures with which to conduct the affairs of Commonwealth Honors College (CHC) and the University. This document is intended to facilitate the work of the College as it is outlined in the MSP Collective Bargaining Agreement. Nothing in it should be construed as contrary to University Policies.

II. Commonwealth Honors College (CHC) Faculty Unit

Lecturers whose appointments at the University are within CHC and Joint Departmental/CHC hires constitute a unit referred to as Commonwealth Honors College (CHC) Faculty. All members of this unit will participate in meetings and vote on matters other than personnel and curricular issues confined to the Lecturer faculty, on which only Lecturer faculty may vote. While the primary responsibility of most Lecturer faculty is teaching, at least one service activity is also recommended for all full-time Lecturers.

III. Unit Coordinator

While the CHC Faculty Unit will report to the CHC Associate Dean for Curriculum, it shall be headed by a Unit Coordinator elected or appointed from its own ranks. The Unit Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring proper procedures are followed, calling and leading faculty meetings, communicating with CHC and University administration; overseeing voting for membership on committees; compiling agendas and chairing faculty meetings; advocating for faculty resources; coordinating administrative matters related to personnel actions; keeping faculty informed of their rights and responsibilities and ensuring compliance with University policies and collective bargaining agreements.

A. Selection of Unit Coordinator

A full-time CHC faculty employed at CHC for at least two prior years are eligible to serve as Unit Coordinator. Nominations for the position will be accepted from all CHC faculty during the first two weeks of the Fall semester. Election will be by closed ballot in the subsequent week. In the event of a tie, ballots will be recast.

B. Term of Office for Unit Coordinator

The term of office for the Unit Coordinator shall be one academic year. If a Unit Coordinator resigns or is unable to carry out the term of service, a special election will be held.

IV. CHC Faculty Meetings (Committee of the Whole)

Unit meetings, which include all full-and part-time CHC faculty members, shall be convened by the Unit Coordinator for the purpose of sharing information, receiving reports and recommendations from standing committees, discussing CHC curriculum and personnel issues, voting on proposals from committees, and conducting other business. While these meetings are for the faculty, CHC administrators may, at times, be invited to attend. Joint Departmental/CHC faculty may attend these meetings; but, they will not have voting privileges on matters concerning only Lecturer faculty.

A. Schedule and Frequency of Meetings

Meetings of the Committee of the Whole shall be held once a month during the academic year, at a regular time selected in advance and during which few or no courses taught by faculty are scheduled. If regular meetings must be established at times when faculty teach, these meeting times will alternate so that no particular faculty are prevented from attending all meetings. The Unit Coordinator will determine the dates of these meetings at the beginning of each academic year.

B. Notification of Meetings and Agendas

The Unit Coordinator will notify faculty of upcoming meetings and gather and prepare agendas. Agenda items must be submitted to the Unit Coordinator at least two days in advance of a meeting, at which time agendas will be circulated.

C. Meeting Minutes

The Faculty will designate a minute-taker from among its ranks who will take and prepare minutes for approval at subsequent meetings. The minute-taker will preferably agree to serve in this position for an entire semester or academic year.

D. Voting Procedures and Consensus

Faculty will seek consensus whenever possible. When decisions are necessary, the Unit Coordinator, or designated Chair of a particular faculty meeting in the absence of the Unit Coordinator, will articulate the apparent consensus of the whole. At this point, any faculty member may instead call for a vote in which the simple majority will prevail.

All part-time and full-time CHC faculty shall have equal voting privileges. Except for elections, voting will be by public acclamation. Faculty unable to attend a meeting may designate a proxy to vote for them or communicate their position. Proxy status must be communicated, in writing

or by e-mail, directly to the Unit Coordinator, one week in advance of the meeting, by the individual for whom the proxy will act.

E. Special Meetings

Any two faculty members may call a special meeting to address urgent issues. The relevant issue must be clearly articulated to the Unit Coordinator, who will call and schedule the special meeting. All CHC faculty must be notified of a special meeting, preferably with at least one week's notice.

V. Faculty Personnel Committee (FPC)/College Review Committee

The MSP contract mandates that faculty at the departmental level establish, once a year, a personnel committee in order to exercise the responsibilities described in the collective bargaining agreement (Secs. 11.1, 12.1, 12.2, and 12.3 and Articles XXI, XXVI and XXXIII). These include review of Annual Faculty Reports (AFRs), distribution of merit pay, reappointments and promotions, and anomaly pay requests. Since CHC is a College, and not a Department, the FPC may also perform the duties of the College Review Committee outlined in the MSP contract (Article 12.4)—primarily those of promotion. Only Lecturers, not Joint Departmental/CHC hire faculty, are eligible to serve on the FPC.

A. Election and Constitution of the FPC

All CHC Lecturer faculty who are members of the bargaining unit are eligible to serve on the FPC; however, part-time faculty should not be expected to serve unless they so choose. Nominations for election to the FPC will be solicited by the Unit Coordinator during the first two weeks of the Fall semester. Election will be by secret ballot in the succeeding week and will be conducted by the Unit Coordinator. (All Lecturer members of the bargaining unit will be eligible to vote.) The FPC shall consist of three to five members; and, their term of service shall be one academic year (September 1 to May 31). Members up for promotion may serve but must recuse themselves from proceedings regarding their own cases. Members should also recuse themselves in the event of any other conflict of interest.

B. Duties of the FPC Chair

The Chair of the FPC will be elected by the members of the FPC. The Chair will schedule and convene regular meetings and will communicate promotion decisions, in writing, to the affected member and the Dean of CHC in a timely manner. The Chair is also responsible for adhering to the MSP collective bargaining agreement and Red Book policies. The FPC Chair also addresses any apparent conflicts of interest by (potentially) voting faculty members, who should then be recused from particular decisions.

C. FPC Vacancies

Should a member not be able to serve out their elected term, the faculty may choose to elect another member through their normal voting process.

D. Annual Faculty Report and Evaluation of Merit

All Faculty with positions of 50% FTE or greater should file an Annual Faculty Report (AFR) in October, following procedures outlined the MSP contract. The Chair of the FPC will communicate to the Faculty regarding activities that will be evaluated for merit in this report. Evaluations of merit must be consistent with job descriptions and follow guidelines outlined by the MSP.

E. FPC By-Laws

The Faculty Personnel Committee will operate on the basis of a set of by-laws handed down from the previous year's committee. These by-laws may be revised by the current committee, follow procedures outlined within the by-laws.

VI. College Review Committee

Since CHC is a College, and not a department, the Faculty Personnel Committee may perform, if the faculty so choose, all functions of the College Review Committee as outlined in the MSP contract, Article 12.4.

VII. Curriculum Committee

The CHC Faculty Curriculum Committee shall be a committee of the whole. Subcommittees to address particular curricular matters may also be formed, from time to time. At least two faculty Lecturers should serve on the CHC Curriculum Committee. These faculty will report from the CHC Faculty Curriculum Committee of the whole to the CHC Curriculum Committee.

VIII. Ad-Hoc Committees

Faculty may constitute ad-hoc committees to address issues such as space, diversity, etc., by proposal and consensus or vote at meetings.

IX. Joint CHC-Departmental Hires

Joint CHC-Departmental Hires will be invited to attend faculty and committee meetings, but will not have voting privileges on personnel and curricular issues confined to the Lecturer faculty.

X. By-Law Adoption and Amendments

By-laws shall be adopted by a vote of at least two-thirds of all CHC Faculty present at a meeting or by their designated proxies, not counting abstentions. Should the by-laws not be approved, the Unit Coordinator shall convene a meeting to discuss any disagreements in order to facilitate an amended document.

By-laws will become effective immediately upon the results of voting.

Proposed amendments to the by-laws may be brought by any two faculty members. The proposed amendment must be circulated for a least one week before the meeting at which it will be discussed and voted upon.