



The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE BY-LAWS

SECTION I. RELATIONSHIP OF THE DEPARTMENT TO THE UNIVERSITY

The Department of Political Science is an academic unit of the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley. The authority of the Department Faculty and the Department Chair, as stated herein, shall be exercised within the framework and limitations of the relevant statutes of the State of Texas,¹ the Regents' Rules and Regulations of the University of Texas System,² University of Texas System Policies,³ and the Handbook of Operating Procedures of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

II. DEFINITION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

A. Membership in the Department of Political Science. The Department of Political Science includes:

1. Tenured and Tenure-Track faculty at the ranks of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Full Professor, including Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty members with at least a 50% appointment in the Department of Political Science and if the faculty member's tenure or tenure-track is in the Department of Political Science,
2. Three-Year Lecturers I, II, III, and Senior Lecturers (full-time),
3. One-Year Adjuncts (full-time), and
4. Part-Time Adjuncts (part-time).

B. Voting and Non-Voting Members of the Department.

1. All full-time faculty are full voting members in the department. This includes faculty with joint appointments as defined in Article II.A.1. The only exceptions are that non-tenure track faculty/lecturers cannot vote on curriculum and personnel items pertaining to hiring tenure-track and tenured professor (excluding department chair searches and rank-specific elections such as DCAC and as allowed in Article IV.E.1.b.).

1. All other members of the Department of Political Science may attend Department Meetings, for information purposes, but they shall not be entitled to vote on any matters.

2. The Department Chair shall distribute a list of all voting and non-voting members of the

Department of Political Science at the first Department Meeting of each academic year.

C. Department Meetings.

1. Department Meetings shall be convened by the Department Chair at least once per semester during the academic year. The Department Chair shall notify department members of the meeting at least 5 working days in advance and shall provide a written agenda at least 2 working days (48 hours) before a meeting. The Department Chair may convene additional meetings as required to conduct the official business of the Department of Political Science.
2. The Department Chair shall be the presiding officer at department meetings. The Department Chair is required to preside at meetings on-site at Brownsville and on-site at Edinburg for one-half of all department meetings each academic year regardless of the meeting format, excluding any meetings conducted at the Harlingen campus.
3. A majority of the voting members of the department shall be considered a quorum and sufficient to conduct official business of the department.
4. At the first Department Meeting of each academic year, the voting members of the Department of Political Science shall elect a Secretary who shall be responsible for keeping written minutes of Department Meetings. The Secretary shall distribute the written minutes of meetings no later than five (5) working days after each Department Meeting.
5. Department meetings shall be conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order* (most recent edition) unless specific exceptions are made in these By-Laws.
6. Votes shall ordinarily be taken *viva voce* or by show of hands, unless at least one voting member of the Department, including the Department Chair, requests a secret ballot.
7. The Department Chair shall be required to convene special meetings of the Department if requested in a written petition signed by at least 40% of the voting members of the Department.

III. DEPARTMENT CHAIR⁴

A. Definition. The Department Chair is a faculty member who serves as the administrative leader of the department academic unit and should have the mutual confidence of the eligible department faculty of his or her Department, the Dean of the College, the Provost, and the President of the University.

B. Eligibility.⁵ To be eligible to serve as Department Chair, an individual shall:

1. hold an earned doctorate in Political Science or other recognized terminal degree in an area related to the department's academic program(s);
2. hold a tenured position in the Department of Political Science and have demonstrated leadership, managerial, and administrative abilities;
3. hold academic rank in the Department at the Associate Professor level or higher;

C. Selection and Guidelines for Department Chair Search Committee. The Department Chair shall be selected by the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts with the concurrence of the Provost after an appropriate and inclusive search committee process.⁶

1. Before beginning the search for a Department Chair, the Dean will meet with the eligible department faculty to discuss the needs of the Department, the College and the University. The Dean and Department faculty should reach a mutual agreement on whether to have an internal or external search. The Department may conduct an external search with the approval of the Dean and Provost. Eligible faculty within the department may be candidates in the search. All searches must comply with institutional hiring practices including affirmative action policy and tenure-track appointment requirements.

2. When a vacancy in the position of Department Chair is anticipated, the voting eligible department faculty shall elect, by secret ballot, a Department Search Committee. The Search Committee shall consist of at least three (3) voting eligible department faculty members and one (1) non-voting student representative majoring in Political Science. The student member may

⁴ UTS 182 Sec. 1 "General. Each academic department shall have a chair who is a member of and serves as the academic leader of the department faculty and the designated administrator of the department. The department chair reports to a dean and serves at the pleasure of the dean, with the concurrence of the Executive Vice-President for Academic Affairs. Sec. 2 Eligibility. To be eligible to serve as a department chair, an individual shall hold a tenured position in his/her respective department and have demonstrated leadership, managerial, and administrative abilities." Also, UTRGV H.O.P. Section [ADM 06-303.D.2](#).

⁵ UTS 182 Sec. 2 Eligibility. To be eligible to serve as a department chair, an individual shall hold a tenured position in his/her respective department and have demonstrated leadership, managerial, and administrative abilities. Also, see UTRGV H.O.P. ADM 06-303.D.2.

⁶ UTS 182 Sec. 3 and UTRGV H.O.P. ADM 06-303.D.4.

participate in all committee functions except those relating directly to recommendation decisions on a candidate or candidates. If there are fewer than three (3) eligible faculty in the department, the eligible faculty in the department shall serve as a committee of the whole. In the event of small committees (less than 3 members), the Dean may appoint other eligible faculty from closely related disciplines if necessary to the committee. The Search Committee will elect its own Chair by secret ballot. The current Department Chair may not serve as a member of the search committee. An internal candidate must recuse him/herself from the search process.

3. The advertisement for the Chair position will be written in accordance with the University requirements by the Search Committee in consultation with all voting eligible department faculty.

4. The Search Committee shall conduct the external chair search for candidates in accordance with University requirements and an established calendar. In the case of an internal search, the procedures and search calendar will be established in consultation with the Dean.

D. Department Chair Selection, Appointment, and Reappointment Procedures.

1. The voting eligible Department faculty members, including those who are not serving on the search committee, shall vote on all candidates, using multiple choice ballots that allow for multiple selections. The Chair of the search committee must provide to the voting eligible department faculty a C.V. of all eligible candidates. To be recommended, a candidate(s) must receive the vote of a majority (at least 51%) of the Department's voting eligible faculty members.

2. The search committee shall conduct the balloting process and report the results of the Department's vote regarding the candidates to all the voting eligible department faculty.

3. The search committee chair, in consultation with the members of the search committee, will forward the voting results to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts with their written recommendation for Department Chair with supporting rationale.

4. Should the Dean and voting eligible department faculty fail to agree on the recommended candidates for Department Chair, the Dean shall submit a rationale for his or her position in writing to the search committee. The Dean will then reconvene the search committee to recommend an additional candidate(s). If the department chair search is unsuccessful the following year, the President may extend the interim Chair's appointment or after consulting with voting eligible department faculty, the Dean, and the Provost, name a new Interim Chair.

5. The Dean will forward his or her recommendation and the results of the eligible Department faculty vote to the Provost. The Provost will forward an appointment letter to the candidate selected to serve as Department Chair.⁷

E. Term of the Department Chair

The term of appointment for a Department Chair is flexible, but with a standard term of three years. Terms may be renewed without limit, as long as the Department Chair continues to meet or exceed expectations as defined by institutional policy. Department Chairs are appointed on a fiscal year basis (12 months).⁸

F. Duties and Responsibilities of the Department Chair.

The Department Chair is responsible for the overall leadership, management, and administration of the Department, which shall include the following duties and responsibilities:⁹

1. Consulting with and representing the interest of Department faculty on policies, plans, and procedures that affect the department;
2. Strategic planning and goal setting aligned with similar efforts at the college/school and university level;
3. Promoting faculty development in teaching, research, and public service and, within the limits imposed by administrative duties, providing leadership by example in these activities;
4. Supervising the instructional, scholarly, creative and service activities of the department, and maintaining and improving their quality;
5. Articulating and implementing University policy within the department;
6. Ensuring that departmental policies and practices are consistent with those of the University;
7. Conveying faculty and program concerns and needs to dean and upper Administration;

⁷ UTRGV HOP, see ADM-06-303 (p. 1): Appointment - The school director or department chair shall be appointed by the dean with the concurrence of the Executive Vice-President for Academic Affairs/EVP for Academic Affairs."

⁸ UTRGV H.O.P. ADM 06-303.D.4.a.

⁹ UTS 182, Sec. 5 and UTRGV H.O.P. ADM 06-303.D.5.

8. Recruiting faculty and students and identifying student constituencies;
9. Assisting the dean in college fundraising and outreach efforts;
10. Guiding and mentoring tenure-track faculty and new hires;
11. Maintaining an environment of collegiality and shared governance;
12. Addressing questions, complaints, grievances, and suggestions from faculty, staff, and students;
13. Promoting the welfare of the university in concert with university vision and strategic goals;
14. Preparing and submitting to the academic dean personnel evaluations and recommendations associated with appointment, reappointment, non-reappointment, tenure, promotion, and merit for professional and clerical staff;
15. Preparing budget requests and supervising the allocation and expenditure of department funds;
16. Assessing trends and development within the Political Science discipline and facilitating the development of appropriate new curricula or revising existing curricula as necessary;
17. Developing effective professional relationships with relevant community organizations and agencies and with related academic departments at other institutions in the State;
18. Representing the department in meetings with other department chairs, university administrators, and faculty;
19. Cooperating and consulting with other academic unit chairs in the development of co-requisites and interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary courses and programs.
20. Serving as a liaison with relevant professional associations;
21. Monitoring the alignment of University and department policies, procedures, and standards with those of state and national regulatory and accrediting agencies.
22. Preparing, revising and submitting department class schedules and faculty class assignments to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts;
23. The Chair may be assigned additional responsibilities by the academic dean Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, or President.

G. Department Chair Review Procedures¹⁰

The Department Chairs may be removed from the administrative position at any time for reasonable cause at the discretion of the dean, and concurrence of the Provost. Service as Department Chair is also subject to periodic formal evaluation. There are three separate procedures for initiating an evaluation of a Department Chair:

1. The Department Chair must undergo an in-depth review process, including input from department faculty and staff at the beginning of the final year of their term. It is the Dean's responsibility to initiate this evaluation process at the appropriate time.
2. The Dean may initiate the evaluation of the Department Chair at any time.
3. The voting eligible department faculty may initiate a formal evaluation of the Chair's performance at the request of a majority (at least 51%) of all voting eligible department faculty. The Department Chair is not eligible to participate in the voting on this matter if it pertains to their office. The vote shall be by secret ballot at a called Department Meeting.
4. In all of the above cases, the Dean and the voting eligible Department faculty, excluding the Department Chair, shall meet to establish the procedure for the evaluation process, which shall be consistent with the general evaluation procedures for academic administrators in the *Handbook of Operating Procedures*, and transmit them to the Provost. During this meeting, a simple majority (at least 51%) of the voting eligible department faculty will constitute a quorum. The procedure adopted should ensure a high level of participation by the voting eligible Department faculty.
5. The Dean of the College of Liberal Arts shall distribute tabulations of any data collected excluding written comments, in the evaluation process to all voting eligible Department faculty and Provost. The Dean shall provide written comments to the Department Chair and Provost regarding the outcome of the review.
6. The voting eligible department faculty may meet with the Dean and with the Chair to discuss the evaluation.
7. As part of the evaluation process, the voting eligible department faculty shall make a formal recommendation, to be determined by majority (at least 51%) vote of the voting eligible department faculty, on whether to retain or remove the Department Chair. This

¹⁰ UTRGV H.O.P. ADM 06-303.D.6.

recommendation shall be communicated in writing to the Chair, Dean, and Provost. The Department Chair may submit a written response of the Department's recommendation.

8. As part of the evaluation process, the Dean will conduct a separate and independent evaluation. Included in this evaluation should be an evaluation of strengths and areas in need of improvement and a recommendation to retain or remove the Department Chair. Copies of this recommendation should be provided to the respective Department Chair, the voting eligible department faculty, and Provost. The Department Chair may submit a written appeal of the Dean's recommendation.

H. Department Chair Advisory Council

1. The Department of Political Science shall have a Department Chair Advisory Council (DCAC). The purpose of the Council will be to advise the Department Chair on matters related to department, college, and university policy and to provide a regular means of communication with members of the Department.

2. The Department Chair Advisory Council shall include four (4) voting eligible members of the Department, who shall serve one-year terms. No person shall be a member of the Department Chair Advisory Council for more than five (5) consecutive terms.

3. The four (4) members of the Department Chair Advisory Council shall be elected as follows:

a. One (1) 3-Year Lecturer shall be elected by voting eligible 3-Year Lecturers in the Department.

b. One (1) assistant professor shall be elected by voting eligible assistant professors in the Department.

c. One (1) associate professor shall be elected by voting eligible associate professors in the Department.

d. One (1) full professor shall be elected by voting eligible full professors in the Department.

In the case of a tie vote between two or more candidates, the individual with the most years in rank shall be deemed elected to the position.

Each campus (Edinburg and Brownsville) shall have at least one member on the Department Chair Advisory Council.

I. Associate Chair. The Department Associate Chair is a full-time faculty member who is an administrative leader of the department academic unit and should have the confidence of a majority of the voting eligible Department faculty, the Department Chair, the Dean of the College, the Provost, and the President of the University.

1. Eligibility.¹¹ To be eligible to serve as Department Associate Chair, an individual shall:

- a. hold an earned doctorate in Political Science or other recognized terminal degree in an area related to the department's academic program(s);
- b. hold a tenured position in the Department of Political Science and have demonstrated leadership, managerial, and administrative abilities;
- c. hold academic rank in the Department at the Associate Professor level or higher;
- d. be assigned to, and resident on, a campus other than the Department Chair (Edinburg or Brownsville).

2. Selection of the Department Associate Chair. The Department Associate Chair shall be selected by the Chair of the Department of Political Science with the concurrence of the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and voting eligible members of the Department of Political Science.

3. Term of the Department Associate Chair

The term of appointment for a Department Associate Chair is flexible, with standard terms being between three and five years. Terms may be renewed without limit as long as the Department Associate Chair continues to meet or exceed expectations as defined by institutional policy. Department Associate Chairs are appointed on a fiscal year basis (12 months).¹²

4. Duties and Responsibilities of the Department Associate Chair.

The Department Associate Chair is responsible for:

- a. assisting the Chair with the overall leadership, management, and administration of the Department as defined in Article III.F. of these By-Laws.
- b. The Associate Chair may be assigned additional responsibilities by the Chair, Dean, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, or President.

J. Graduate Program Coordinator. The Department Graduate Program Coordinator is a full-time faculty member who is an administrative leader of the Department's graduate programs and

¹¹ UTS 182 Sec. 2 Eligibility. To be eligible to serve as a department chair, an individual shall hold a tenured position in his/her respective department and have demonstrated leadership, managerial, and administrative abilities. Also, see UTRGV H.O.P. Section ADM 06-303.D.2.

¹² UTRGV H.O.P. Section ADM 06-303.D.4.a.

should have the confidence of a majority of the voting-eligible Department faculty, the Department Chair, the Dean of the College, the Provost, and the President of the University.

1. Eligibility. To be eligible to serve as Department Graduate Program Coordinator, an individual shall:

- a. hold an earned doctorate in Political Science or other recognized terminal degree in an area related to the Department's academic program(s);
- b. hold a tenured position in the Department of Political Science at the academic rank of Associate Professor or higher,
- c. have demonstrated leadership, managerial, and administrative abilities;

2. Selection of the Department Graduate Program Coordinator. The Department Graduate Program Coordinator shall be selected by the Chair of the Department of Political Science with the concurrence of the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and the voting eligible members of the Department of Political Science.

3. Term of the Department Graduate Program Coordinator

The term of appointment for a Department Graduate Program Coordinator is flexible, with standard terms being between three and five years. Terms may be renewed without limit as long as the Department Graduate Program Coordinator continues to meet or exceed expectations as defined by the Department of Political Science *Evaluation Criteria and Standards for Annual Review, Tenure, Promotion, and Comprehensive Periodic Evaluation*.

The Department Graduate Program Coordinator is a 9-month academic year appointment.

4. Duties and Responsibilities of the Department Graduate Program Coordinator

The duties and responsibilities of the Department Graduate Program Coordinator are as follows:

- a. chair the Graduate Studies Committee *ex-officio*,
- b. serve as the initial point of contact in the Department for prospective and current graduate students regarding admissions requirements, university regulations, and teaching and graduate assistantships,
- c. work with the Department Web Liaison and Department Chair to develop web content about the Department's graduate programs and to ensure that information about the Department's graduate programs on the Department's website is accurate and up-to-date,

- d. work with the Department Chair on graduate course scheduling, enrollment capacity, and strategic enrollment management,
- e. work with the Department Chair and Department Faculty on the placement of graduate teaching assistants, graduate research assistants, and graduate assistants,
- f. insures that all thesis option students have an appropriate Thesis Chair and Thesis Committee,
- g. attend all relevant college and university meetings involving graduate education and report back to the Department on these meetings as appropriate,
- h. work with Department Faculty to monitor the progress of students through the graduate program,
- i. advise graduate students on how to resolve problems that may arise during their enrollment in the graduate program,
- j. collaborate with graduate student associations to foster a good academic climate in the Department for graduate students,
- k. certify that graduate students have completed all requirements for receiving the appropriate graduate degree.

IV. DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES

Department committees consist of standing committees and *ad hoc* committees.

A. Eligibility and Membership

1. All voting members of the Department are eligible to serve on all Department committees, unless otherwise specified in these By-Laws, and with the exception that Lecturers may not sit on any committee responsible for hiring tenure-track or tenured professors and curriculum decisions.
2. All Department committees, except search and screen committees for Department Chair, Annual Review Committee, the Tenure & Promotion Committee, and the Comprehensive Periodic Evaluation Committee, shall be appointed by the Chair, subject to approval by a majority vote of voting eligible members of the Department. The Department Chair shall submit his/her proposed list of committee members, including Committee Chairs, to the Department at the first Department meeting of each academic year.

3. All standing and *ad hoc* committees shall include Department members from both the Edinburg and the Brownsville campuses.

B. Terms

The term of service on standing committees is for three-year staggered terms.

C. Voting by Committees

Committees are encouraged to strive for consensus, but in lieu of consensus committees are to reach decisions by majority vote and in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order* (most recent edition).

D. Committee Charge

All standing committees shall be officially charged by the Department Chair no later than September 30th of each academic year with a list of assigned tasks and responsibilities, a schedule for completing those tasks and responsibilities, notwithstanding that standing committees may initiate proposals or consider proposals from any member of the department.

E. Standing Committees

The Department shall have the following standing committees:

1. Annual Review Committee (ARC).

a. All Department committees, except search and screen committees for Department Chair, and all faculty evaluation committees (annual review, tenure & promotion, 3rd year review, comprehensive periodic evaluation), shall be appointed by the Chair, subject to approval by a majority vote of voting eligible members of the Department. The Department Chair shall submit his/her proposed list of committee members, including Committee Chairs, to the Department at the first Department meeting of each academic year. For faculty evaluation committees, the Chair shall submit his/her proposed list of committee members, including Committee Chairs unless otherwise provided for in ADM policies, to the full-time faculty for a vote no later than the March department meeting each year. Evaluation committees will be voted on by all full-time POLS faculty in Spring of each year in accordance with Pathways which require completion of this process by May 1.

b. The Annual Review Committee shall be composed of seven (7) tenured and tenure-track members of the Department and two (2) Full-Time 3-Year Lecturers. No more than four (4) members of the committee, including the two (2) 3-Year Lecturers can be non-tenured members of the faculty and said members must have at least three (3) years prior experience as an Assistant Professor or 3-Year Lecturer at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

- (i) The two Full-Time 3-Year Lecturers and one tenured faculty member shall be appointed by the Chair of the Annual Review Committee as a Lecturer Sub-Committee for purposes of conducting the annual review all Full-Time Lecturers.

- (ii) The tenured faculty member on the Lecturer Subcommittee shall *de facto* serve as Chair of the Lecturer Subcommittee.
- (iii) No Lecturer shall review or evaluate tenured or tenure-track faculty.

c. The evaluations shall be conducted in accordance with UTRGV Handbook of Operating Procedures ADM 06-502, ADM 06-503, and ADM 06-504¹³ and the Department of Political Science *Evaluation Criteria and Standards for Tenure and Promotion, Including Comprehensive Periodic Evaluation*.¹⁴

2. Tenure and Promotion (T&P) Committee.

a. The Tenure & Promotion Committee will evaluate all tenured and tenure-track faculty seeking promotion/tenure and all tenure-track faculty entering their third year of the probationary period, at the appropriate time in accordance with UTRGV Handbook of Operating Procedures ADM 06-503 and ADM 06-504 plus Appendices and the Department of Political Science Evaluation Criteria and Standards for Tenure and Promotion.

b. The Tenure and Promotion Committee shall be composed of all tenured members of the Department at or above the rank applied for by a candidate.

c. The Department Tenure and Promotion Committee shall elect a Chair from among its members.

d. The Chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee shall represent the Department on the college-level Tenure and Promotion Committee.

3. Comprehensive Periodic Evaluation Committee

a. The initial department evaluation of faculty members subject to comprehensive periodic review will be conducted by the department Comprehensive Periodic Evaluation Committee. The Comprehensive Periodic Evaluation Committee shall consist of three (3) tenured faculty members with at least two (2) members of the committee having achieved the rank of Full Professor. The committee shall be elected by the tenured faculty members of the Department.

b. If the department is composed of fewer than three tenured faculty, or less than two Full Professors, the department's tenured faculty shall elect the remainder of the committee from

¹³ [University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Handbook of Operating Procedures](#)

¹⁴ Approved by the Department of Political Science on October 23, 2015. By reference, this document is incorporated into the By-Laws and may only be amended under the terms established in the By-Laws.

among the tenured members of the College of Liberal Arts as required to complete the committee's membership as defined in section V.E.3.a.

c. The Chair of the Department Comprehensive Periodic Evaluation Committee shall be elected by the Committee from among its members.

4. Curriculum Committee.

a. The Curriculum Committee shall be responsible for reviewing all curriculum proposals at the Department level, including proposals for new courses, proposals to terminate courses, proposals to teach special topics courses, and proposals for new or revised degree programs and requirements. The Curriculum Committee shall submit any recommendations to the Department Meeting that it deems appropriate for approval by the voting eligible members of the Department.

b. The Curriculum Committee shall be composed of five tenured and tenure-track members of the Department.

c. The Chair of the Curriculum Committee shall present all curriculum proposals approved by the Department to the University Curriculum Committee (UCC/Graduate Council) and shall be responsible for submitting and securing the required approvals at other levels of the University.

5. Travel and Scholarships Committee

a. The Travel and Scholarships Committee shall review all faculty applications for the use of Department travel funds and student applications for scholarship awards under the Department's jurisdiction. The Committee shall submit its recommendations to the Department Chair.

b. The Travel and Scholarship Committee shall be composed of five voting eligible faculty members.

6. Program Evaluation and Assessment Committee (PEAC)

a. The Program Evaluation and Assessment Committee shall be responsible for conducting program evaluations and assessment of the Department based on Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Administrative and Educational Support Unit Assessment criteria. The committee chair shall prepare reports for the Department and appropriate administrative offices.

b. The Program Evaluation and Assessment Committee shall be composed of three (3) voting eligible members of the Department.

7. Recruitment and Student Success Committee

a. The Recruitment and Student Success Committee shall represent the Department at student recruitment events and activities and develop programs or activities designed to recruit students into the Department's undergraduate and graduate programs.

b. The Recruitment and Student Success Committee shall be composed of up to 10 full-time faculty members of the Department.

8. Graduate Studies Committee.

a. The Department Graduate Studies Committee shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

- i. to oversee the development of graduate program recruitment materials, and to participate in graduate student recruitment activities, in cooperation with the Department Committee on Student Recruitment and Student Success,
- ii. review all applications to the Department's graduate programs in a timely manner,
- iii. select students for admission to the Department's graduate programs based on established admissions criteria,
- iv. develop formal written criteria for awarding graduate assistantships, graduate research assistants, and graduate teaching assistants,
- v. award graduate assistantships and teaching assistantships to both prospective and current graduate students in consultation with the Department Chair and Department Faculty,
- vi. to review all course and curriculum proposals related to the Department's graduate programs,
- vii. to periodically review and make recommendations to the Department to improve its graduate programs.

b. The Graduate Studies Committee shall be composed of five (5) voting eligible members of the Department, including the Graduate Program Coordinator, who shall *ex-officio* serve as Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee.

9. Web Liaison

The Web Liaison shall work with the Department Chair, the Dean of Liberal Arts, and UTRGV's relevant information technology groups to develop and update the Department website.

10. Social Media Liaison

The Social Media Liaison shall work with the Department Chair, the Dean of Liberal Arts, and UTRGV's relevant information technology groups to develop and update the Department's social media sites and any social media sites under the jurisdiction or responsibility of the Department.

11. Library Liaison

The Library Liaison shall work with the Department Chair and the University Libraries to develop and update the Library's collections in Political Science.

F. Ad Hoc Committees

1. Ad Hoc Committees shall be created on an as-needed basis and shall exist until they have completed their charge or assigned task(s) unless a specific date for termination is established by a vote of the Department Meeting or by the Department Chair at the time the committee is established.

2. Faculty Search and Screen Committee(s).

a. Faculty search and screen committees are *ad hoc* committees convened for the purpose of conducting one or more searches for new Department faculty members. Faculty search and screen committees shall be selected and operate in accordance with the UTRGV *Handbook of Operating Procedures* and the UTRGV *Faculty Recruitment Manual*.¹⁶

b. All search and screen committees in the Department of Political Science shall include at least one voting-eligible member of the Department, where possible, whose primary sub-field is related to the position being searched by the Department.

G. Faculty Senate

If the distribution of department representatives on the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Faculty Senate allows the Department of Political Science to elect two or more representatives to the Faculty Senate then at least one of the Department's elected Faculty Senate representatives shall be from each of the two campuses (Edinburg and Brownsville).

¹⁶ University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Division of Academic Affairs, [Faculty Recruitment Manual](#)

V. RATIFICATION AND AMENDMENT

1. Ratification. The By-Laws will become effective immediately when approved in a secret ballot vote by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Department's tenure and tenure-track faculty.

2. Amendments:

a. Any voting-eligible member of the Department can propose an amendment to the By-Laws.

b. Proposed amendments may be submitted in writing to any Department Meeting.

c. At least 20 working days must elapse between the proposing of a By-Law amendment to the Department and a vote on that amendment by the Department.

d. An amendment shall pass with a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all voting eligible members of the Department.

e. All votes on amendments to the By-Laws shall be conducted by secret ballot.

3. Transparency. The most up-to-date Departmental By-Laws shall be available on the Department's website within 10 working days of their approval or the approval of any amendments.

Approved by Department of Political Science, November 20, 2015 Approved
by the Dean of Liberal Arts, October 6, 2021

Amended September 9, 2016 (Associate Chair)

Amended May 12, 2017 (Graduate Program Coordinator/Committee)

Amended October 5, 2018 (Web, Library, and Social Media Liaisons)

Amended December 4, 2020 (Lecturer Review Subcommittee)

Amended May 5, 2023 (Faculty Evaluation Committee dates and structure)

Amended February 9, 2024 (Committee membership & terminology)

Amended October 11, 2024 (Lecturer Department Membership)

Amended November 9, 2024 (Lecturer Voting Right on Lecturer Search Committee)