



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS

Bylaws

Effective Date: 04-07-2017

PREAMBLE

The Bylaws herein provide a framework within which the faculty of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (herein referred to as the Department) participate in the educational and decision-making processes of the Department. These Bylaws are valid to the extent they comply with policies, procedures, and processes set forth by the State of Texas, The University of Texas System Regents' Rules and Regulations, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP), and the Guidelines established by the Office of the Provost and the Dean's office of the College of Health Affairs.

ARTICLE I: Name

Section 1. Name

- A. This organization shall be known as the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (COMD) at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

Section 2. Composition

- A. The Department is comprised of academic and clinical components. The Department shall be led by a Chair whose duties shall be to provide leadership and to manage and oversee the academic and clinical components, budget, faculty and staff, and inventory. The Chair reports to the Dean of the College of Health Affairs. The Department Chair must have an earned doctorate, a rank of associate or full Professor, and tenure.
- B. Management and oversight of the clinical component shall be the responsibility of a Clinical Manager who reports to the Department Chair. The Department Chair shall also appoint an External Placement Liaison whose responsibility will be to place graduate students in practicum sites outside the university and to work with external practicum supervisors as they mentor graduate students under their supervision. The Clinical Manager at minimum must hold a master's degree in speech-language pathology as well

as the Certificate of Clinical Competence and Texas state licensure. The External Placement Liaison must hold the rank of clinical assistant, clinical associate or clinical full professor.

- C. During times when the Department has a Chair whose discipline is outside the field of audiology, speech-language pathology or speech and hearing science, the Department shall have a Program Director whose responsibilities will be those typically reserved for the Department Chair. The Program Director is appointed by the Dean of the College of Health Affairs and must be a General Faculty member who may hold any academic or clinical rank.

ARTICLE II: Mission

It is the mission of Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders to enrich the lives of the people of the Rio Grande Valley, State of Texas, United States and internationally by preparing professionals who are highly competent, compassionate, and ethical service providers equipped to work collaboratively with educational, health, medical and social science disciplines; who conduct transformative research to enrich the lives of persons with disorders of communication; and who value meaningful engagement with the communities they serve.

ARTICLE III: Membership and Voting Rights

Section 1. General Faculty

- A. The General Faculty of the Department shall consist of all full-time faculty members within the Department (i.e., tenured and tenure-track academic faculty, clinical assistant, associate and full professors and lecturers).
- B. Full-time faculty holding joint appointments with the Department as their administrative home (defined as at least 51% of their annual workload) shall be considered members of the General Faculty of the Department.
- C. Part-time faculty and clinical supervisors, and persons on one-year appointments (OYAs) shall not be considered General Faculty.

Section 2. Voting Faculty

- A. All full-time faculty members described in III.A. and III.B. shall have full voting rights on matters brought to a vote at committee meetings, faculty retreats or faculty meetings.

ARTICLE IV: Organizational Structure

Section 1. See Appendix

ARTICLE V: Standing Committees

Section 1. General Guidelines

- A. Faculty members meeting the requirements of III.A. and III.B. shall be eligible to serve on Department committees.
- B. Committee members will be determined at a faculty retreat which shall take place the week before the commencement of a new academic year. Committee membership shall be on a voluntary basis. In cases where there are no volunteers for a committee, the Chair shall appoint any number of faculty members to the committee as he or she sees fit.
- C. Each committee at the beginning of the academic year shall elect from the committee membership a chair to serve for that year.
- D. Term length shall be one academic year. Faculty may serve as many consecutive terms as desired.
- E. Committees are charged to keep minutes of all meetings and submit copies of minutes to the Chair.
- F. Committee members who voluntarily vacate their position or fail to participate in committee meetings or activities shall be replaced by the Chair upon request from the committee chair.

Section 2. Standing Committees

- A. Admissions Committee—Graduate
 - 1. The charge of the Admissions Committee—Graduate is to evaluate and accept applications for entry into the graduate program. Every year the Committee shall review admissions requirements and procedures and make recommendations to the faculty for any changes the Committee deems necessary.
 - 2. The Committee shall consist of a minimum of four (4) faculty members. The Department Chair shall not serve on this committee.
 - 3. The Committee shall meet during the spring semester when graduate applications are submitted, and at other times as specified by the Committee chair.
 - 4. The chair of the Committee shall be chosen from among its members.
 - 5. Issues may be brought before the Committee at any time by any faculty member including the Department chair.
- B. Admissions Committee—Undergraduate
 - 1. The charge of the Admissions Committee—Undergraduate is to evaluate and accept applications for entry into the undergraduate program. Every year the Committee shall review admissions requirements and procedures and make recommendations to the faculty for any changes the Committee deems necessary.
 - 2. The Committee shall consist of a minimum of four (4) faculty members. The Department Chair shall not serve on this committee.

3. The Committee shall meet during the spring semester when undergraduate applications are submitted, and at other times as specified by the Committee chair.
4. The chair of the Committee shall be chosen from among its members.
5. Issues may be brought before the Committee at any time by any faculty member including the Department Chair.

C. Annual Evaluations Committee

1. The charge of the Annual Evaluations Committee is to inform faculty of the pathways for annual evaluations and to critically review each faculty member's annual evaluation dossier. The Committee is responsible for completing the appropriate evaluation and routing form and to inform the Department Chair when all annual evaluations are completed so the Chair can conduct his or her independent evaluations. The Committee is also responsible for annually reviewing the Department's *Comprehensive Faculty Annual Evaluation and Promotion and Tenure Policy* in conjunction with the Tenure and Promotion Committee to determine if changes need to be made for consideration and vote by the General Faculty.
2. The Committee shall consist of a minimum of four (4) faculty members. The Department Chair shall not serve on this committee.
3. The Committee shall meet according to the pathways established by the Office of the Provost, and at other times as specified by the Committee chair.
4. The chair of the Committee shall be chosen from among its members.
5. Issues may be brought before the Committee at any time by any faculty member including the Department chair.

D. Bylaws Committee

1. The charge of the Bylaws Committee is to propose the initial bylaws to the faculty for a vote. Once ratified, the Committee is to review the bylaws annually to determine if changes are necessary. If changes are necessary the Committee is to present those changes to the General Faculty for a vote.
2. The Committee shall consist of a minimum of three (3) faculty members. The Department Chair shall not serve on this committee.
3. The Committee shall meet at least one time during each academic year or more often if deemed necessary by the Committee chair.
4. The chair of the Committee shall be chosen from among its members.
5. Issues may be brought before the Committee at any time by any faculty member including the Department chair.

E. External Advisory Board

1. The charge of the External Advisory Board is to provide the Department and Department Chair strategic advice in regard to evaluating the undergraduate, graduate and clinical programs on a periodic basis. Other duties include assisting in identifying potential collaborative ventures and initiatives between the Department and the community and assisting in identifying professionals who may want to participate in a mentorship program for first-generation and struggling

undergraduate students in the program. Additional duties may be assigned by the Department Chair as necessary.

2. The Board shall consist of a minimum of six (6) individuals outside the university. Members should represent a wide range of clinical settings within the discipline as well as advocacy, educational, health care, and governmental representatives. Members shall be nominated by faculty of the Department. Those nominated will be contacted and recruited by the Department Chair.
3. The Committee shall meet at least one time during each semester or more often if deemed necessary by the Committee chair.
4. The chair of the Committee shall be the Department Chair.

F. Externship Committee

1. The charge of the Externship Committee is to determine policy in regards to the placement of graduate students in practicum sites external to the university. The Committee is also responsible for assisting the External Placement Liaison in assigning graduate students to external practicum placement sites if called upon to do so.
2. The Committee shall consist of a minimum of four (4) faculty members. The Department Chair shall not serve on this committee.
3. The Committee shall meet at least one time during each semester and summer term or more often if deemed necessary by the Committee chair.
4. The chair of the Committee shall be the External Placement Liaison.
5. Issues may be brought before the Committee at any time by any faculty member including the Department Chair.

G. Graduate Curriculum Committee

1. The charge of the Graduate Curriculum Committee is to periodically evaluate the graduate curriculum to determine if changes are necessary to improve the effectiveness of the graduate curriculum. The Committee presents potential graduate curriculum changes to the General Faculty for a vote of approval.
2. The Committee shall consist of a minimum of four (4) faculty members.
3. The Committee shall meet at least one time during each academic year or more often if deemed necessary by the Committee chair.
4. The chair of the Committee shall be the Department Chair.
5. Issues may be brought before the Committee at any time by any faculty member.

H. Speech and Hearing Center Committee

1. The charge of the Speech and Hearing Center Committee is to determine policy in regards to the operations and policies of the in-house Speech and Hearing Center.
2. The Committee shall consist of a minimum of the Clinical Manager and all full-time clinical faculty members. The Department Chair shall not serve on this committee.
3. The Committee shall meet at least one time during each semester and summer term or more often if deemed necessary by the Committee chair.

4. The chair of the Committee shall be the Clinical Manager.
 5. Issues may be brought before the Committee at any time by any faculty member including the Department chair.
- I. Tenure and Promotion Committee
1. The charge of the Tenure and Promotion Committee is to inform faculty going up for promotion and/or tenure of the pathways for promotion and tenure and to critically review each faculty member's promotion and tenure dossier. The Committee is responsible for completing the appropriate evaluation and routing form and to inform the Department Chair when all promotion and tenure evaluations are completed so the Chair can conduct his or her independent evaluations. The Committee is also responsible for annually reviewing the Department's *Comprehensive Faculty Annual Evaluation and Promotion and Tenure Policy* in conjunction with the Annual Review Committee to determine if changes need to be made for consideration and vote by the General Faculty.
 2. The Committee shall consist of all General Faculty who hold the rank of associate and full professor with tenure, with the exception of the Department Chair who shall not serve on this committee.
 3. The Committee shall meet according to the pathways established by the Office of the Provost, and at other times as specified by the Committee chair.
 4. The chair of the Committee shall be chosen from among its members.
 5. Issues may be brought before the Committee at any time by any faculty member including the Department chair.
- J. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
1. The charge of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee is to periodically evaluate the undergraduate curriculum to determine if changes are necessary to improve the effectiveness of the undergraduate curriculum. The Committee presents potential undergraduate curriculum changes to the General Faculty for a vote of approval.
 2. The Committee shall consist of a minimum of four (4) faculty members.
 3. The Committee shall meet at least one time during each academic year or more often if deemed necessary by the Committee chair.
 4. The chair of the Committee shall be chosen from among its members.
 5. Issues may be brought before the Committee at any time by any faculty member.

ARTICLE VI: Special (ad hoc) Committees

Section 1. General Guidelines

- A. The Department Chair has the authority to assemble special ad hoc committees as the Department's needs may dictate.

- B. Faculty members meeting the requirements of III.A. and III.B. shall be eligible to serve on ad hoc committees.
- C. Committee members shall be appointed by the Department Chair.
- D. Once impaneled, the ad hoc committee shall elect from its membership a chair to serve for the duration of the committee's existence.
- E. Term length shall be indefinite and determined by the nature of the committee's charge.
- F. The chair of the Committee shall be chosen from among its members.
- G. Committees are charged to keep minutes of all meetings and submit copies of minutes to the Chair.
- H. Committee members who voluntarily vacate their position or fail to participate in ad hoc committee meetings or activities shall be replaced by the Chair upon request from the committee chair.

ARTICLE VII: Meetings

Section 1. Annual Faculty Retreats

- A. An annual retreat of the General Faculty shall be held at least one time per academic year during the week immediately before fall semester classes commence.
- B. Faculty shall be given notice via email at least fifteen (15) working days prior to the Faculty Retreat. A tentative agenda shall be included with the announcement. A request for additions to the agenda shall be made at this time.
- C. A reminder shall be sent via email at least five (5) working days prior to the Faculty Retreat. The final agenda will be included with this notification.

Section 2. Regular Faculty Meetings

- A. Dates of Regular Meetings of the General Faculty for the fall semester shall be determined at the Annual Faculty Retreat.
- B. Dates of Regular Meetings of the General Faculty for the spring semester shall be determined during the last Regular Faculty Meeting of the Fall Semester.
- C. Faculty shall be given a reminder notice at least five (5) working days prior to the Regular Faculty Meeting. The tentative agenda will be included with the notice.
- D. A final reminder shall be sent at least two (2) working days prior to the Regular Faculty Meeting. The final agenda shall be included with this reminder.
- E. Faculty may petition the Chair to call a Special Faculty Meeting if 50% plus one of the General Faculty sign a petition requesting a Special Faculty Meeting. The Chair may call a Special Faculty Meeting at any time but must give at least five (5) work days' notice of such meeting.

Section 3. Quorum and Voting

- A. A quorum for any meeting (committee or faculty) shall consist of at least half of the General Faculty.

- B. Only General Faculty as outlined in Article III, Section 2.A. may vote on issues brought before committees or meetings involving faculty.
- C. Voting by email is permissible in special circumstances in which a formal meeting cannot be called within a reasonable timeframe. Electronic voting may be permissible as long as half of the faculty on the Committee or in the Department agree to such vote. In such cases, electronic voting will be open for a period of three (3) working days, closing at 5:00 p.m. local time on the third day.
- D. Vote by proxy is not permitted.

Section 4. Parliamentary Procedure

- A. Except as otherwise provided herein, or by unanimous consent of the members, the procedures governing the Department and its Standing Committees shall be in accordance with the rules contained in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE VIII: Faculty Annual Evaluations and Promotion and Tenure

Section 1. Policy and Procedures

- A. Policies and procedures for annual faculty evaluations and promotion and tenure shall follow the most recent version of the Department's *Comprehensive Faculty Annual Evaluation and Promotion and Tenure Policy*.

ARTICLE IX: Approval of and Amendments to the Bylaws

Section 1. Ratification of and Amendments to the Bylaws

- A. These Bylaws shall be reviewed, edited and drafted by the Bylaws Committee in a form that shall be distributed to the Department Chair.
- B. Upon review by the Department Chair, these Bylaws shall be distributed via email to all General Faculty of the Department for a vote on ratification.
 - 1. General Faculty shall have at least three (3) working days to review the Bylaws before a vote is taken.
 - 2. A vote may be taken during a Regular Faculty Meeting or via email, at the Department Chair's discretion.
 - 3. These Bylaws shall require an affirmative vote of 50%-plus-1 of the General Faculty in order to be ratified.
 - 4. Shall the Bylaws not be ratified, General Faculty should address their concerns to the Bylaws Committee chair via email. Any necessary changes will be made and then the ratification process will start anew.
- B. Once ratified, amendments to the Bylaws may be proposed to the Bylaws Committee chair at any time by any of the Standing Committees, the Department Chair or individual General Faculty member(s).

1. Upon review by the Department Chair, any proposed amendments to the Bylaws shall be sent to all General Faculty via email no less than fifteen (15) working days prior to a vote.
 2. Ratification of any amendments to these Bylaws may occur at any Regular Faculty Meeting or via email, at the Department Chair's discretion.
 3. Ratification of any amendment to these Bylaws shall require an affirmative vote of 50%-plus-1 of the General Faculty.
- C. These Bylaws and any amendments thereto become effective upon approval of the Dean of the College of Health Affairs and the Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

APPENDIX: DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

