Draft By-Laws: Approved by faculty Dec 17, 2015

I. Statement of Intention

We believe that it is only through shared governance that we can best advance our teaching, research and service objectives. To that end, we want to create an environment in which all members of the faculty share both the responsibility for and opportunity to participate in departmental function, and where all views are expressed and considered in respectful ways.

II. Department Faculty

(a) The department faculty comprise all full-time — tenured, tenure-track, and term — faculty members, including faculty on leave (sabbatical and leave without pay). The department faculty does not include emeritus, adjunct, affiliate, or visiting faculty. Those with joint appointments who have identified ENVS as their primary affiliation (i.e., where rank and tenure actions originate) are also considered departmental faculty.

(b) The department faculty is charged with determining the operating policies and procedures of the department, pursuant to the governance guidelines of the College of Arts & Sciences and the University. Changes to existing policies and procedures or proposals for new ones may be introduced by any faculty member for discussion and approval (by majority vote).

(c) All faculty members, with the exception of the chair who is in a leadership position, have equal opportunity to shape departmental decisions through voting or other means, except where restricted by the Faculty Manual and other university policies (as in the case of tenure-line hiring and promotion).

(d) The faculty decides by majority vote upon the recommendations made by the chair for committee assignments.

(e) The faculty, through the search committee (see Section V.a.), make recommendations to the chair concerning hiring priorities, the selection of job candidates, and the hiring of new faculty.

(f) The faculty formulate teaching-load policies, pursuant to the faculty manual and guidelines from the Dean of CAS.

(g) The faculty will meet at the call of the chair, or upon the written request of at least one half the faculty (submitted to the chair). All members of the department faculty are invited to attend regular faculty meetings.
III. Chair

In collaboration with faculty members, the chair is responsible for conceiving, shaping, and implementing existing and new academic programs in order to promote the improvement of the department and the department faculty. The chair is also responsible for encouraging and supporting the professional development of the department faculty.

(a) The chair coordinates all facets of departmental operation and oversees the administrative functioning of the department, including course assignment and scheduling.

(b) The chair will nominate faculty advisers and program directors for all graduate and undergraduate programs, for approval (by majority vote) by the faculty.

(c) The chair reports to the Dean of CAS. Though responsibilities may be delegated, the chair remains responsible for ensuring that: all major departmental functions are carried out; obligations set by the office of the Dean of CAS are met punctually; and, University-policies are followed.

(d) The chair makes recommendations for faculty hiring and reappointment, for faculty promotion and tenure, and for faculty merit. The chair also forwards the recommendations of the search committee concerning the hiring of tenure track, term, and adjunct faculty to the Dean of CAS.

(e) Except where prohibited by AU regulations (as with the Departmental or Science Rank & Tenure Committees when they consider individual faculty actions; see Section IV.c), the chair may be considered for other departmental committees, whether ad hoc or standing. If there is a nomination or voting process to serve on a given committee, the chair is subject to the same process as any other faculty member.

(f) Subject to approval and appointment by the Dean of CAS, the chair is selected by the department faculty. If a new chair must be selected, all faculty members will be notified and will have the opportunity to nominate themselves (if they are eligible) or other eligible faculty members. A faculty member cannot be nominated without the prior approval of that faculty member.

(g) All tenured faculty at the rank of Associate Professor or higher are eligible to serve as chair. After candidates are nominated, all faculty will be notified at least one week in advance as to when and where voting will take place. Faculty who are not available to vote in person may vote in absentia by email or another method. The chair is nominated by a majority of votes.

If there are 2 or more candidates and no one wins a majority of votes, a runoff is held among the top candidates. If no candidate receives the majority of votes after three rounds, the names of the top candidates and vote totals are submitted to the Dean of CAS for final resolution.

(h) The chair’s term of office is ordinarily three years, after which the selection process for a new chair will begin. The previous chair can serve an additional term if nominated by faculty vote.

(i) Under extraordinary circumstances, the Dean of CAS may be petitioned by a two-thirds vote of the department faculty to terminate the Chair’s term of office at the earliest practicable time.

IV. Standing Committees
Committees generally consist of at least three full-time faculty members. A faculty member may serve on more than one committee.

(a) **Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC)** is responsible for coordinating and encouraging efforts to improve or expand academic opportunities for undergraduates (courses, degree requirements, merit awards, internships and study abroad opportunities) and for conducting the department’s annual assessment of undergraduate programs.

(b) **The Graduate Studies Committee (GSC)** is responsible for coordinating and encouraging efforts to improve or expand opportunities for graduate students and for conducting the department’s annual assessment of graduate programs. Additionally, the GSC will review all applications to graduate programs within Environmental Science and make decisions regarding admittance and graduate funding, including departmental graduate awards. The chair of the GSC will be responsible for ensuring that graduate students fulfill the requirements for their degrees, for coordinating graduate advising, and for overseeing the administration of comprehensive examinations.

(c) **Rank & Tenure (R&T) Committee**, working on the basis of University and Department criteria, is responsible for making recommendations to the department chair concerning the following: promotions in rank, tenure decisions, tenure-track reappointments, faculty merit, and leaves of absence. On these matters, the department R&T committee is also responsible for making recommendations to the CAS Science R&T committee comprised of tenured faculty members in CAS science departments including Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Mathematics & Statistics, and Physics.

The Departmental R&T committee is comprised of all tenured members of the department faculty, unless excluded by AU regulations. To avoid a perceived conflict of interest, faculty members who have a separate vote or voice in faculty actions, such as the department chair or any faculty member serving as a dean or associate dean, are excluded from all R&T committee meetings that consider individual faculty actions. ENVS faculty who serve on the Committee on Faculty Actions will normally vote in the department and not on the CFA.

Voting on recommendations for promotion to associate professor or to full professor is restricted to tenure-line faculty committee members whose current rank exceeds that of the candidate for promotion.

(d) **Merit Review Committee** is responsible for making recommendations to the department chair on faculty merit based on guidelines provided by the college. The committee is comprised of tenured, tenure-track, and multi-year term faculty.

**V. Ad Hoc Committees**

(a) **Search Committee** is responsible for initiating decisions pertaining to the hiring of full-time faculty (term, tenure track, and senior faculty hired with tenure). A search committee is constituted by the search committee chair, who is appointed by the department chair, and is subject to approval by the College Dean’s Office. All tenured, tenure-track, and multi-year term faculty are eligible to serve on the committee.

The search committee drafts an advertisement for the open position, chooses the candidates to interview and selects the candidates to bring to campus to present seminars, subject to approval by
the CAS dean and Dean of Academic Affairs. The search committee presents its recommendations via the chair to the dean of CAS. Generally, search committees will be comprised of tenured or tenure-track faculty, but term members are eligible to serve.

(b) **Grievance Committee** is the body that reviews faculty grievances, student academic grievances and student grievances on discrimination and sexual or other harassment in accordance with the relevant sections of the Faculty Manual, the University’s Academic Regulations, and University Policies on Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment.