

**BYLAWS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH**

**June 2025**

**1. Preamble**

To promote effective, open, and equitable governance that allows full participation by its faculty, the Department of Chemistry of The University of Pittsburgh shall maintain, distribute to its faculty members annually, and translate into practice the following set of bylaws.

The governance of the Department is further subject to the bylaws of the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences and the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences Statement on Departmental Governance and Criteria and Procedures for Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion, and Conferral of Tenure, which are published annually in the October 1 issue of the Arts and Sciences Gazette. The bylaws of the Department of Chemistry extend but do not replace or supersede those of the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences.

**2. Membership and Meetings**

- A. Persons Included:** The voting membership of the Department shall be defined as follows. Each person holding a full-time tenure or tenure-stream (T/TS) or a full-time non-visiting appointment-stream (AS) faculty position with a primary appointment in the Department of Chemistry shall have one vote. Full-time AS faculty shall have one vote in decisions that are related to hiring new regular full-time AS faculty. Additionally, AS faculty shall not have a vote on decisions related to faculty tenure, T/TS faculty hiring, or T/TS faculty terminations.
- B. Meetings:** In each fall and spring term, the Chair of the Department shall call at least one meeting of the faculty. The Chair or the Chair's designee shall preside. The time and place of each meeting shall be announced in advance. The Chair may call additional meetings as necessary, or on the recommendation of any committee or faculty member.
- C. Decisions of the Faculty:** Issues shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast, except in cases where a larger percentage of the vote has been explicitly required by the Department's bylaws or regulations. Voting shall be by show of hands, unless a secret ballot is required by policy, called for by the Chair, or called for by a member and approved by a majority of those present. Members unable to attend a meeting may submit their vote to the Chair in writing, by absentee ballot or by electronic mail. Members unable to attend a meeting may designate a member to read a written statement on their behalf.
- D. Quorum:** A quorum shall exist when one-third of the membership is present.
- E. Meeting Agenda:** The agenda for each faculty meeting will, if necessary, be prepared by the Chair and included in the meeting announcement. Decisions, but not discussion, at any meeting shall be limited to agenda items. Meetings may be for the purpose of discussion only.
- F. Recording of Meeting Minutes:** The Chair shall either record the minutes of each meeting of the faculty or designate another person to record the minutes of a faculty meeting. The minutes of each faculty meeting shall be communicated to all faculty members and the minutes will be maintained in the office of the Chair for review by the faculty if needed.

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**3. Executive Officers**

- A. Executive Officers:** The executive officers of the Department shall include the Chair, and any other faculty as designated by the Chair.

**The Chair - Appointment:**

Only full-time faculty members with primary appointments in Chemistry at the rank of Full Professor with tenure are eligible for the position of department chair. The normal term is three years, with the possibility of a single consecutive renewal, with the combined terms not exceeding eight years. Specific policies have been approved by the faculty for recommendation of Chair appointments to the Dean of the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences and are described in the Appendix.

- B.** In the event of an unexpected loss of the Chair (owing for example to illness, a leave, or resignation), an Acting Chair will be appointed by the Dean of the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences following consultation with the Chair (if possible) and the Full Professors of the Department.
- C. The Chair:** The Chair is the Chief Executive Officer of the Department. The Chair shall act in concert with the Faculty and shall seek the Faculty's opinion and advice. The Chair may make determinations contrary to the Faculty's counsel but must, in such cases; give the reasons for doing so. The duties of the Chair shall include but not be limited to the following:
- The Chair shall be responsible for the administration of the Departmental business and shall represent the Department to the administration, the University at large, and the profession; in hiring and other negotiations and in dealing with student complaints and problems.
  - The Chair shall preside over meetings of the Voting Members of the Department and the FDLRP Committee.
  - The Chair shall prepare the Department's budget, negotiate it with the Dean, and inform the specific affected committee or staff members of the Department, in writing, of its general dimensions.
  - The Chair shall exercise jurisdiction over the expenditure of Departmental funds.
  - The Chair shall inform all faculty members of current policies and procedures regarding tenure.
  - The Chair shall communicate policy and procedure changes in a timely manner to the full faculty and/or others impacted by said policy or procedure changes.
  - The Chair shall include appropriate members of the Department in those matters that may have an impact on their daily activities.
  - The Chair shall be available to hear the individual or collective concerns and opinions of the faculty on any topic.
- D.** In general, the Chair shall be responsible for the execution of the Department's bylaws, regulations, policies, and procedural guidelines; for the day-to-day functioning of the Department; and for keeping the Department informed of matters that concern it. The general duties of the Chair are further described in the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences Statement on Departmental Governance.

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- E. Executive Officers:** The executive officers of the Department shall exercise the authority delegated to them by the Chair in administering Departmental programs and shall advise the Chair on relevant matters.

**4. Promotion and Tenure**

- A.** Promotion and tenure procedures shall be in accordance with the guideline set forth in the Dietrich School of Arts & Sciences Faculty Handbook and Bylaws and the Department of Chemistry guidelines.

**5. Role of Non-Voting Members**

As described below, non-voting members play an integral role in the day-to-day function and overall success of the Department of Chemistry.

- A.** Except as noted in Section 2 (A), non-voting members of the Department of Chemistry include tenure stream faculty with secondary appointments in the Department of Chemistry and Emeritus faculty with primary appointments in the Department of Chemistry.
- B.** With the approval of the Chair, non-voting members may be invited to participate in departmental meetings, committees, or events except for any meeting, committee, or event restricted by the Chair for voting members only.

**6. Waiving Provisions of the Bylaws**

- A.** Any provision of these bylaws may be waived at any meeting of the Voting Members of the Department for the duration of that meeting, or any part thereof, by the consent of three-quarters of the Voting Members present. Any provision may be waived outside of a Departmental meeting if three-quarters of the Voting Members of the Department consent. Voting shall be by secret ballot in response to a written proposal to waive the provision, indicating the duration of the proposed waiver.

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**7. Amendments**

- A.** Amendments to these bylaws may be proposed upon petition by the Chair or at least ten Voting Members of the Department. Copies of a proposed amendment shall be distributed to all Voting Members of the Department, and the date of the meeting in which it is to be acted upon shall be announced at least two weeks in advance of any formal action. A majority of two-thirds of the voting membership shall be required for passage of an amendment.

**8. Communication**

- A.** The bylaws will be distributed to all members of the faculty at the beginning of each fall term. Faculty members joining the Department after the start of the fall term will receive copies of the bylaws of the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences and of the Department of Chemistry upon arrival. The current bylaws shall be posted on the Department's web site.

**9. Procedures for Course Approvals**

- A.** The approval of new courses in the Chemistry Department will be a three step process.
- The division most closely aligned with the course material should approve the course content (at the minimum, a syllabus) and the need for such a course in the divisional curriculum.
  - Once a division has approved the course and its content, the course should be presented to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) or Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC), as appropriate, for evaluation. The UCC/GCC will work with the faculty creating the course to ensure that it complements and reinforces the existing curriculum. Once the UCC/GCC has approved the course, its recommendation will be sent to the Departmental Chair by the UCC/GCC chair.
  - Finally, the full faculty will vote whether to accept and approve the course proposal at a faculty meeting.

Once the course has been approved, it will be offered during the next appropriate term.

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### **DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES**

The following is a list of Departmental committees that currently function in the Department.

The Chair may, from time to time, establish ad hoc committees as necessary to address matters arising that do not naturally fall into the responsibility area of a standing committee. Faculty search committees are normally ad hoc. Voting and/or Non-voting Members may be assigned to committees by the Chair with the exception of the Division Chairs, Budget and Finance, and the Faculty Development and Long Range Planning Committee all of which shall be elected positions.

No committee can, by itself, implement changes in any departmental policy or procedure. Committees shall make recommendations to the full faculty, normally in the form of a written proposal or an oral presentation at a meeting of the full faculty. Policies and procedures may be implemented only after a vote by the full membership, as prescribed in Section 2, and the approval of the Chair, as prescribed in Paragraph 3C.

Serving on standing and ad hoc committees provides the mechanism by which the opinions, concerns, views, and expertise of non-voting members of the Department are incorporated into Departmental governance. Non-voting members normally attend and participate in full faculty meetings where proposals formulated by the committee on which they serve are to be discussed or decided upon. However, final decisions of the faculty on matters of Departmental governance lie in the hands of the voting members, as prescribed in Section 2.

#### **1. Budget and Finance**

Function: To aid in the annual preparation of the Departmental budget and to establish funding priorities and policies. Representation of at least one full professor, one associate professor, and one assistant professor is required on this committee.

#### **2. Diversity**

Function: Increase and support diversity in the University of Pittsburgh undergraduate and graduate chemistry programs. Increase and support diversity of faculty at all ranks within the Department. Promote opportunities for K-12 outreach.

#### **3. Faculty Development and Long-Range Planning**

Function: FDLRP identifies the department's long-range objectives in the hiring of new faculty (for example, by identifying future research directions and disciplinary initiatives) and strategies for achieving those objectives. FDLRP screens potential hires identified by ad hoc search committees and votes on whether the potential hire is consistent with the long range objectives. A positive vote by FDLRP shall be followed by consideration of the potential hire at a meeting of the full faculty: such a meeting is normally closed to non-voting members except for tenure stream faculty with secondary appointments in the Department of Chemistry. A negative vote by FDLRP may terminate further consideration of the potential hire. However, consistent with Paragraph B of Section 2, any member of the faculty may request consideration of the potential hire at a meeting of the full faculty. Representation of at least one full professor, one associate professor, one assistant professor, and one AS faculty member is required on this committee.

#### **4. Undergraduate Curriculum**

Function: The annual coordination and long-range planning of undergraduate course offerings. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee is composed of the Director of Undergraduate Studies (Chair) and a faculty member from each of the Departmental programs (Physical, Organic, Analytical, Biological, and Inorganic). The Director of Undergraduate Studies shall be responsible for convening the committee and providing oversight for the undergraduate curriculum as a whole.

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**5. Graduate Curriculum**

Function: The annual coordination and long-range planning of graduate course offerings. The Graduate Curriculum Committee is composed of the Director of Graduate Studies (Chair) and a faculty member from each of the Departmental programs (Physical, Organic, Analytical, Biological, and Inorganic). The Director of Graduate Studies shall be responsible for convening the committee and providing oversight for the graduate curriculum as a whole.

**6. Graduate Student Advisement**

Function: As described in the Graduate Student Handbook, the members of this committee aid graduate students in designing their program of study and monitor their progress towards milestones in the graduate program.

**7. Graduate Recruiting**

Function: To devise appropriate marketing strategies to enable the Department to continue to enlist the highest number of applications from as talented and diverse pool of candidates as possible.

**8. Graduate Admissions**

Function: To review applications of potential graduate student candidates, to make offers of admission to those students they deem appropriate, and to recruit those students to accept that offer.

**9. Seminar**

Function: The annual coordination of speakers to visit the Department to lecture on various disciplines of chemistry.

**10. Graduate Student Advisory Board**

Function: Graduate students are invited to participate in Departmental matters through the Graduate Student Advisory Board (GSAB), which would then transmit this information to the Chair.

**11. Safety**

Function: To ensure that all policies and practices within the Department are committed to ensuring that an overall culture of safety is adopted by all faculty, students, staff, and visitors.

**12. Support Services**

Function: This committee serves as the liaison to facilities such as the Machine Shop, Electronics Shop, Glass Shop, Mass Spec, NMR, X-Ray, Materials Characterization Lab (MCL), Audio-Visual, Library, and IT support.

**13. Publicity**

Function: To oversee and coordinate the department's publicity efforts, including managing the website and updating social media platforms to promote departmental activities and initiatives.