By-Laws Department of Theatre Arts University of Pittsburgh Revised 10/9/2019

**1. Authority of the Department**

The authority granted by the university to the department resides in the department faculty. The chairperson, and any other departmental officers appointed or elected, shall exercise authority on behalf of the members of the faculty of the department and are responsible to them.

2. **Voting Membership**

The voting membership of the department shall be defined as follows:

a. All full-time faculty members with primary appointments in the department shall have one vote, regardless of their status in or out of the tenure stream.

b. Part-time faculty members with joint appointments whose primary appointment is in another department, shall have one-half of a vote. But the total number of votes in the category shall not exceed 20% of the total votes cast in an election; in such a case, the fractional value of each voting member in this category shall be reduced accordingly.

c. Graduate students shall have an advisory vote in all vital matters, like the election of the chairperson. The results of the graduate student vote on an issue shall be reported to the faculty as a whole prior to the faculty's vote.

d. Faculty members on **single-semester** visiting appointments and adjunct faculty shall not vote.

e. A provision for absentee balloting by mail shall be made for all vital issues, for those faculty members who are on leave or otherwise unable to attend.

3. **Department Officers**

The officers of the department shall consist of a chairperson, a **director of graduate studies, a director of undergraduate studies,** directors of other departmental programs (such as the MFA pedagogy program), and other such officers as the departmental faculty may from time to time authorize.

a. The chairperson shall be elected according to the voting procedures outlined above. If confirmed by the Dean of FAS, the chairperson shall serve for a term of either three, four, or five years. The length of the term shall be determined by the faculty in consultation with the elected candidate, and a term may be renewed after a departmental review. (Any one term may be extended no more than three times and no more than twelve years.) (Time spent away on sabbatical or leave shall not be subtracted from these limits.) (Only tenured faculty members may serve as chairperson.)

b. The chairperson is the chief executive officer of the department. He or she shall be responsible for the administration of departmental business and shall represent the department to the administration, the university at large, and. the profession in hiring, and in other negotiations in dealing with student complaints and problems. He or she shall preside over meetings of the full department and of the Tenured Faculty Council. The chairperson shall

prepare the department's budget with the advice of the Tenured Faculty Council in accordance with university guidelines, negotiate with the dean, and inform the department of major changes and challenges in departmental university relations. He or she shall exercise jurisdiction over the expenditure of departmental funds, and over the office staff and the

theatrical production staff. In general, he or she shall be responsible for the execution of the department's by-laws, regulations, policies, and procedural guidelines, and for keeping the department informed of matters which concern it.

c. The other officers of the department shall be appointed by the chairperson and confirmed by a majority vote of the full department. They shall exercise authority delegated to them by the chairperson in administering department programs and shall advise the chairperson on issues that concern those programs.

**4. Teaching and Curriculum**

a. The chairperson and other officers of the Department shall determine the staffing of courses in the department. The Chair is authorized to appoint adjunct teaching staff in consultation with the area heads.

b. Theatre Arts has the authority to approve new undergraduate courses within its area of curricular supervision. Any new course designed to fulfill general education requirements, including writing requirements, in Arts and Sciences, however, must be approved by the A&S Undergraduate Council.

c. Faculty members interested in teaching new undergraduate courses may submit course proposals to the Director of Undergraduate Studies at any time during the year. A proposal shall consist of a course description, a sample syllabus, its targeted enrollment and expected rotation within other course offerings, and a rationale explaining how the new course meets the pedagogical needs of majors in the Department. Proposals should demonstrate that they advance the educational goals of the department, adhere to rigorous academic standards, will follow clear and fair grading policies, and focus on areas different from those of existing courses. The Director of Undergraduate Studies shall review all proposals, make suggestions for improvements as needed, and arrange to bring the proposals to a vote at an upcoming faculty meeting.

d. Following an affirmative vote by a majority of the faculty, the Chair shall notify the A&S Undergraduate Council of the new course. If the course is also intended to satisfy any General Education Requirements of Arts and Sciences, the Chair shall seek final approval from the Council.

**5. Standing Committees**

a. Theatre Arts faculty may vote to authorize standing committees with ongoing responsibilities and functions.

b. One standing committee shall be the Planning and Budget Committee. This committee will be chaired by the Chair of the Department and will consist of at least two other faculty members, one staff member, and two student members, one representing the undergraduate and the other the graduate students. Normally, the student positions will be held by the elected student representatives to the faculty meetings. The Planning and Budget Committee shall meet early in the Fall semester and later as needed.

c. Another standing committee shall be the Tenured Faculty Council. A Tenured Faculty Council shall advise the chairperson on all important policy, budgetary, and personnel issues. This Council shall be empowered to act on behalf of the full department in eases when action is urgent; it shall also act on confidential personnel matters that cannot be brought before the full department.

1. The Council shall be composed of all tenured faculty members with primary appointments in the department.

2. If the number of tenured faculty members in the department rises above

seven and thus causes the Council to become unwieldy in size, then the tenured faculty may elect representatives to sit on the Council. The number of these representatives shall be determined by the tenured faculty.

**6**. **Meetings**

In order to keep the department informed of issues that concern it and to allow for democratic governance, regular meetings of departmental bodies shall be constituted.

a. A general meeting of the full department faculty shall be called by the chairperson at least once each month during the regular academic year. An agenda shall be distributed by the chairperson in advance, and any faculty member may request that an item be placed on the agenda by informing the chairperson in sufficient time prior to the meeting. A quorum shall consist of 213 of the eligible voting members of the department, fractional votes taken into consideration.

b. A meeting of the Tenured Faculty Council shall be called by the chairperson when necessary or advisable. Any two members of the TFC committee may demand an emergency meeting. A quorum shall consist of one-half of the members.

c. Matters of general departmental policy and any particular administrative, procedural, or substantive questions brought before the department shall normally be determined by the full department. If a departmental or Tenured Faculty Council meeting on a particular issue indicates the need for further investigation and clarification, the chairperson may be requested to form an

ad hoc discussion group or committee, attempting to insure that the various points of view expressed in the meeting are represented. The group or committee will hold meetings and may formulate written recommendations or proposals which can be the basis for further debate and action by the full department.

d. To insure that the views of students in the department are heard, student representatives from the undergraduates and from the graduates shall be elected by those groups to attend meetings of the full department. The student representatives shall have the right to speak on issues that concern their constituencies.

**7. Ratification**

These by-laws must be ratified at a department meeting specifically called for

the purpose. A majority of two-thirds of the votes cast at the special meeting is required for ratification.

**8. Amendments**

Amendments to these by-laws may be proposed upon petition by at least four voting members of the department. Copies of the proposed amendment shall be

distributed to all 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 votes cast shall be required for passage of an amendment.

**9. Minutes**

Minutes recording the proceedings of department meetings will be taken, maintained, and made accessible to the faculty.