

BYLAWS
Department of Biology
Valdosta State University

ARTICLE I. Meetings of the faculty

Section 1. Regularly scheduled meetings shall be held at least twice each semester, with one meeting scheduled before midterm and one following midterm.

Section 2. The head of the department shall call such additional meetings as deemed necessary.

ARTICLE II. Voting on matters of departmental policy and procedures, curriculum, academic standards and integrity, academic honors, committee membership, departmental representation, nominations for college and university positions, and revision of departmental bylaws.

Section 1. Eligibility

- a) All Biology faculty who are not part-time or temporary are eligible to vote.
- b) Absent faculty may vote by written proxy.

Section 2. Quorum

- a) A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of those eligible to vote.
- b) Proxies shall not count toward a quorum.

Section 3. Passage of a Motion

- a) A simple majority of those voting shall be required to pass a motion.
- b) A two-thirds majority of those voting shall be required to pass an amendment to the departmental bylaws.
- c) When school is not in session and during the summer session a simple majority of all those eligible to vote shall be required to pass a motion.

ARTICLE III. Committees

Section 1. Standing committees shall be composed of faculty with full-time appointments. Other faculty, due to instructional responsibilities, may serve on committees in an ex-officio capacity. Standing committees shall meet at least once each semester, except summer, and each committee shall elect its chair annually, effective Fall Semester of the academic year.

- a) Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee shall consist of all tenured departmental faculty and shall annually elect a chair. This committee shall review and make recommendations on the dossiers

of faculty applying for promotion, pre-tenure review, tenure review, and post-tenure review.

- 1) Decisions regarding promotion shall be restricted to faculty holding rank equal to or higher than that held by the applicant for promotion.
 - 2) Peer evaluation of faculty being considered for tenure shall be restricted to tenured and tenure-track faculty.
- b) Biology Curriculum Committee shall consist of four tenured or tenure-track departmental faculty elected to staggered four-year terms. This committee shall periodically review the departmental curriculum and make recommendations about all proposals for new courses and course revisions and modifications of the curriculum.
 - c) Introductory Biology Syllabus and Coordination Committee shall consist of two introductory lab coordinators and three other departmental faculty members appointed by the department head to staggered three-year terms. In consultation with the faculty who regularly teach in the introductory biology program, this committee shall determine general course policy and content for all 1000-level introductory biology lecture and laboratory courses.
 - d) Human Anatomy and Physiology Syllabus and Coordination Committee shall consist of departmental faculty involved in the teaching of BIOL 2651 or BIOL 2652. This committee shall determine general course policy and content.
 - e) Connell Lecture Committee shall consist of three departmental faculty elected to staggered three-year terms. This committee shall select a speaker and make arrangements for the annual Connell Lecture.
 - f) Laboratory Safety and Hazardous Materials Committee shall consist of three departmental faculty elected to staggered three-year terms. This committee shall periodically review and make recommendations about policies on laboratory safety and hazardous materials in the department.
 - g) Assessment Committee shall consist of three departmental faculty elected to staggered three-year terms. This committee shall periodically review and make recommendations about departmental curriculum assessment and make recommendations to the departmental Curriculum Committee about matters affecting the curriculum.

Section 2. *Ad Hoc* Committees shall be appointed by the Head of the Biology Department for a specific term of office. The Department Head shall notify the departmental faculty of the existence of any *ad hoc* committees.

Section 3. Operation of Committees

- a) Each standing committee shall elect a chair annually.
- b) Each *ad hoc* committee shall elect a chair and operate under a set of goals given them at the time of appointment.
- c) Requirements for committee vote shall conform to ARTICLE II, Sections 2 and 3.
- d) Each standing and *ad hoc* committee shall keep a record of its meetings.

ARTICLE IV. Changes in the Curriculum

Section 1. New course offerings, course deletions, changes in requirements for the A.S. and B.S.

degrees with a major in Biology and changes in the requirements for a minor in Biology.

- a) The department head or any tenured or tenure-track departmental faculty may propose such changes.
- b) Written proposals to modify courses or curricula shall be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee which shall then make recommendations to the departmental faculty.
- c) A copy of the REQUEST FOR NEW OR REVISED COURSE form plus written justification must be distributed to all departmental faculty at least one week prior to discussion and vote.
- d) A majority of the eligible voting departmental faculty is required to approve and to adopt proposals for new courses, course deletions, course revisions and changes in the curriculum and in degree requirements.

Section 2. Guidelines for the approval of specific course offerings to be offered as "Topics in Biology" (BIOL 4000/6000 and BIOL 4010/6010) shall be those initially approved by the faculty on 12-1-1992 (Appendix A).

ARTICLE V. Departmental Honors. Recipients of departmental awards must have residence credit at Valdosta State University of at least ninety (90) semester hours in academic subjects at the end of the semester in which the award is given and expectation of receipt of the degree at the next regularly scheduled graduation. Eligibility for awards is extended through the Summer Semester following Honors Day. Any person eligible for the award who does not meet the qualifications stated above may be considered for the award the following year, whether or not the student is enrolled at the time of Honors Day.

Section 1. The Marjorie E. Carter Award shall be made by the departmental faculty according to the criteria established at the time of endowment.

- a) "The recipient of the award shall be a senior college biology major who stands high academically, who most nearly typifies the standards of the University and of the Department of Biology, and who best exemplifies qualities of character and professional excellence manifest in the life and service of the late Dr. Marjorie Estelle Carter."
- b) The recipient must possess an overall grade point average of B or higher in academic courses.

Section 2. The Biology Department Award shall be given, subject to approval by the biology faculty, to the graduating senior with the highest grade point average (GPA) based on ninety or more hours of credits earned at Valdosta State University. Only those grades earned at Valdosta State University will be used in computing GPA.

ARTICLE VI. Guidelines for Tenure-track Faculty Searches

Section 1. Search Committee Designation

- a) After discussion and vote by the departmental faculty about which discipline to stipulate in the advertisement for a given faculty position, a search committee consisting of at least three tenured or tenure-track faculty shall be appointed by the Department Head.
- b) The committee's first task will be, in consultation with the Department Head and subject to approval by the faculty, to draft an advertisement for the position to be placed in *Science*, and possibly in other publications.
- c) The appointed search committee shall elect its own Chair, who will work with the Dept. Head in gathering applicants' files, reviewing their completeness, and making them accessible to committee members and other faculty, and in completing paperwork related to EEO and other required documentation.

Section 2. Application Materials, Requirements and Deadlines

- a) In order to be considered for the position, each applicant must submit, at a minimum, a letter of application (including such statements as indicated in the job ad), a Curriculum Vitae, and copies of official transcripts showing degrees earned, or the equivalent. These items must have a postmark date or FAX or e-mail date no later than the closing date appearing in the ad in *Science*.
- b) Three letters of reference are required (unless stated otherwise in the ad), but they may be accepted up to three weeks after the closing date, at the committee's discretion. The committee may decide, at its discretion, to eliminate candidates lacking one or more letters (see IV.c.).

Section 3. Potential Conflicts of Interest. Following the closing date, and after initial review of the files of all qualified applicants, if an appointed committee member shall discover that one or more applicants is a person or persons with whom the member has had a prior close personal relationship, s/he should make this known to the committee and the Dept. Head and discuss whether it is appropriate to be replaced on the committee, in order to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest.

Section 4. Review Process, Protocol & Timetable

- a) The first goal for the committee will be, within three business weeks of the closing date, to narrow the field of candidates to between one-quarter and one-third of the applicant pool (but preferably at least eight candidates), and then to present these names to the departmental faculty, at large, and request their rankings and comments about these candidates.
- b) Applicants whose names go forward to the faculty after the initial screening shall be those who, in the opinion of the committee, demonstrate via their CV, transcripts and letters:
 - 1) teaching experience in the advertised discipline, or evidence of sufficient academic background in that discipline to be well qualified to teach courses within the discipline offered in our curriculum;
 - 2) research experience in the advertised or a closely related discipline;

- 3) an ongoing interest in and commitment to teaching and research in the advertised discipline, as clearly indicated in their letters of application and supporting letters from referees;
 - 4) a likelihood of achieving tenure and promotion under the current College of Arts and Sciences guidelines.
- c) An applicant's name shall not go forward as a candidate after the initial three-week screening period if his/her file is lacking application letter, CV, copies of transcripts (or equivalent), or more than one of the three required letters of reference.
 - d) The departmental faculty shall be given a period of one week to review the candidates' folders and submit their written comments and rankings to the committee chair.
 - e) The committee chair shall tally and distribute to the committee results of the faculty's ranking and comments on the candidates. Following this, the committee shall produce a final ranking (including committee members' rankings along with those of the faculty at large). The committee shall report to the faculty the results of the overall ranking and their recommendations. If their recommended ranking varies from the overall ranking, the committee chair must submit this recommendation to the faculty for vote of approval.
 - f) From this ranking (d), the committee is encouraged to conduct telephone interviews with at least the top five candidates (or more, pending results of the phone interviews), in order to verify their qualifications, suitability, and continued interest in the specific position as advertised. The department will develop and keep on file a list of questions to ask candidates during the phone interview, to be used, with or without modification, at the committee's discretion. It is recommended that the interviews be conducted by conference call or using a speaker phone, and that at least two of the three committee members participate in each interview.
 - g) Following the telephone interviews, the committee shall reconvene to discuss its results and amend its rankings, if necessary; these final rankings shall then be submitted to the Department Head as a ranked list of potential candidates for interview.
 - h) The elapsed time between the committee chair's receipt of comments and rankings from the faculty and submission of a ranked list of finalists to the Department Head shall be no more than two business weeks.
 - i) Immediately upon receipt of the ranked list of finalists from the committee (f), the Department Head shall file the required paperwork with the University Equal Employment Office and upon notification that the search meets required guidelines shall request permission from the administration to invite the top two or three candidates to campus for interview, and to go further down the list for invitations, should one or more of the top candidates decline an interview.
 - j) Should two candidates from the ranked list of finalists not be found for interview, the committee should reconvene immediately to recommend to the Department Head such additional names as it deems may be qualified for interview; this may necessitate additional telephone interviews.

Section 5. Termination of an Unsuccessful Search. Should the committee be unable to recommend two finalists from the pool of candidates whom they have interviewed by phone, the search shall be terminated without an interview being conducted.

Section 6. Interview Process

- a) It is recommended that each candidate be scheduled for at least one full day (normal business day) on campus; a longer stay would be desirable.
- b) The committee chair and Department Head will be responsible for arranging the visit and determining the schedule; they will attempt to accommodate faculty needs and desires to meet with each candidate as much as is practicable, including office meetings as well as on- and off-campus meals.
- c) A research seminar will be required and will be scheduled at a convenient time for a majority of faculty to attend.
- d) It is recommended that a one-hour "open meeting" time for all interested faculty to meet together with the candidate be scheduled.

Section 7. Final Decision. The Department Head shall call a meeting of the departmental faculty for the first Monday after the end of the last interview for a position, where those assembled will discuss the interviews and vote according to departmental bylaws on whom to offer the position to, and whether the other candidate(s) is (are) also acceptable, should the first choice decline the offer.

Section 8. Other Considerations. Committee members may contact, by letter, phone, or e-mail, the immediate supervisor of the applicant only after being given consent by the applicant.

ARTICLE VII. Summer Session Teaching. The following guidelines (adopted iv-1982, revised x-1994) shall be used to determine priority for teaching during summer session.

Section 1. Through written solicitation, the Department Head shall determine which faculty members wish to teach during summer sessions.

Section 2. The following ranked criteria shall be considered when making teaching assignments during summer sessions.

- a) Course demand and faculty specialization.
- b) Preference will be given to faculty members retiring within two years. In order to qualify, the faculty member must have filed a written intent with the Department Head and Personnel Office.
- c) Possession of the terminal degree.
- d) A numerical ranking based on the number of summer session credit hours taught during the last four years shall be computed for each faculty member by adding the number of summer session credit hours taught by the faculty member within the last four summers and dividing by the number of summers the faculty member has taught. Faculty members with the lowest number shall have the highest priority. Courses funded by other departments or colleges but taught by Biology Department faculty will be counted in this formula.
- e) When additional course sections are available after each faculty member who desires to teach has received one section, additional assignments shall be made by rounds using the same ordered criteria.

Amended 28 February 2000.
Approved 28 February 2000.

APPENDIX A
Bylaws
Department of Biology
Valdosta State University

GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF SPECIFIC COURSES TO BE OFFERED AS *TOPICS IN BIOLOGY*
(BIOL 4000/6000 or BIOL 4010/6010)
Adopted December 1, 1992.

- I. A full-time faculty member in the Department of Biology may propose to offer a topics course under BIOL 4000/6000 or BIOL 4010/6010 for a specific semester by submitting, in advance (see IV below), the following:
 1. A detailed course outline, including
 - a) format (e.g., Lecture, Lecture/Lab, Field, etc.),
 - b) credit hours, which may vary from 2--5,
 - c) prerequisites in addition to BIOL 2230 and BIOL 2270 or their equivalents,
 - d) schedule, hours per week in lecture, lab, or field,
 - e) detailed syllabus that includes lecture/lab topics, number and value of exams, quizzes, papers, and projects,
 - f) required text(s) and other ancillary materials.
 2. Outline of equipment, supplies, and space needs as required by Department Head, including estimates of costs of supplies, travel, vehicle rental, etc.
 3. Cover letter justifying the following
 - a) need for the topics course,
 - b) specific knowledge-based goals for students successfully matriculating,
 - c) summary of instructor's qualifications for teaching subject.
 4. A current *curriculum vitae* of proposed instructor, including the following
 - a) courses taught,
 - b) publications,
 - c) list of relevant formal coursework completed (or copies of transcripts).
- II. Part-time faculty members may submit proposals only at the request of a majority of the full-time faculty members at a departmental meeting (see III). This will ensure that such proposals are approved only when the Department deems the course beneficial for the curriculum, and then only when the present full-time faculty lacks the requisite expertise to teach the course.
- III. Before any specific BIOL 4000/6000 or BIOL 4010/6010 course is scheduled, the completed proposal as described above must be approved by a majority vote of the biology faculty at a regular faculty meeting at which a quorum is present.
- IV. Deadlines for submitting proposals to the Department Head.
 - Summer Semester.....Midterm date of preceding Winter Semester
 - Fall Semester.....Midterm date of preceding Spring Semester
 - Winter Semester.....August 15
 - Spring Semester.....Midterm date of preceding Fall Semester