

Valdosta State University
Department of Music Bylaws

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Valdosta State University, Department of Music Bylaws

Statement of Purpose

This document serves as a fundamental guide for the Department of Music at Valdosta State University, ensuring operational consistency and coherence. It acts as a centralized reference, outlining policies, procedures, and expectations to support a transparent and collaborative shared governance process. Within this framework, faculty and staff actively engage in the decision-making process, fostering relationships that promote cooperation and leadership development while facilitating judicious yet creative university governance.

Our shared governance spans values, culture, management, finance, and administration, striving to balance efficiency and effectiveness with equity and fairness within legislative or accreditation frameworks. Central to this process is the careful consideration and utilization of relevant data. At its core, our successful shared governance model prioritizes open communication, actively seeking input, listening attentively, and incorporating diverse perspectives. This strengthens confidence among the department's constituents, contributing to the mutual benefit of each individual and the department. This document embodies our commitment to a thriving and inclusive Department of Music.

These bylaws supplement and are subject to the regulations and policies of the College of the Arts and Valdosta State University.

Mission Statement

The Department of Music at Valdosta State University is dedicated to providing a comprehensive and rigorous academic program aligned with the mission of Valdosta State University and the University System of Georgia.

Our mission is to:

Uphold high levels of excellence in instruction, performance, service, and scholarship, fostering an environment of continuous improvement and artistic achievement.

Provide thorough training in professional programs and the liberal arts, preparing individuals to excel in their chosen fields by offering a curriculum that integrates theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and experiential learning.

Offer a diverse selection of music courses and experiences to all University students, engaging them in music and emphasizing the vital role of music in our global society. We strive to create an inclusive and supportive community that values the richness of cultural diversity.

Enhance individual achievement by fostering life-long learning, critical thinking skills, ethical practices, and support for and involvement in the arts and arts institutions. Our goal is to nurture well-rounded individuals who contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Serve as a cultural center for South Georgia, providing the community with artistic experiences of lasting value. We are committed to outreach and collaboration, enriching the cultural fabric of the region through performances, educational initiatives, and partnerships.

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By embracing these principles, the Department of Music at Valdosta State University aims to cultivate a vibrant and dynamic learning environment that empowers students to become accomplished musicians, critical thinkers, and contributing members of a global society.

Administration

The Department Head shall be appointed in accordance with university policy governing appointments.

The primary responsibility of the Department Head is to promote the interests, welfare, and shared governance of the Department of Music through executive oversight and financial management, striving to balance efficiency and effectiveness with equity and fairness within legislative or accreditation frameworks. The Department Head will assign and evaluate the services of each faculty member; maintain instructional staffing; oversee the expenditure of funds; preside over music faculty meetings; approve committee membership and assignments; and report to the music faculty on administrative decisions affecting the department.

In the event of a Department Head's absence from campus exceeding one week, the Department Head must adhere to University guidelines regarding recommendations for an acting Department Head.

Assistant Department Head(s) may be appointed at the discretion of the Dean and Department Head, and whose responsibilities may include assisting the Department Head with academic programs, student success, and operations. The Assistant Department Head reports to the Department Head.

Faculty Meetings of the Department

Frequency: Regularly scheduled meetings of the department will meet at minimum once a month, and at maximum once a week during faculty contract period. The Department Head may call additional meetings as deemed necessary. Faculty members may call a departmental meeting by providing a written request to the Department Head. Meetings may be conducted in-person, online, or in hybrid-mode, to be determined at the discretion of the Department Head.

Agenda: All departmental meetings will have a draft agenda provided to the faculty no less than two business days prior to the scheduled meeting requesting items to be added by the faculty. The final agenda will be provided to the faculty at the meeting. Documents requiring discussion or voting at the scheduled meeting must be shared with the faculty no less than five business days prior to the meeting.

Minutes: The faculty meeting will begin by voting to approve the minutes from the previous meeting, which will be the first agenda item. All meeting minutes will be archived electronically and made accessible to all faculty. Faculty members will receive the minutes from the previous meeting, along with the drafted agenda, at least two business days before the scheduled meeting.

All faculty meetings will be conducted using the rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order. In cases of discrepancies between Robert's Rules of Order and these bylaws, these bylaws shall supersede Robert's Rules of Order.

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Departmental Governance: Voting

Eligibility: All Music Faculty who are full-time faculty, regardless of rank, are eligible to vote. (This includes Tenure Track, Non-Tenure Track, Lecturers, and Limited-Term Faculty.)

Adjunct faculty may choose to elect a representative to participate as a full voting member in departmental meetings. Representatives must be an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Music. Representatives commit for the duration of the semester and may be renewed upon re-election. The Department Head is responsible for coordinating the election of an adjunct representative within the first week of the semester. The representation ratio shall be one for every three adjunct faculty members.

Should the adjunct faculty body fail to elect representatives who are willing and able to participate, they shall forgo representation for the duration of the semester until re-elections take place in the following semester. Adjunct faculty are not required to attend faculty meetings, though their participation is welcomed. As such, representative(s) for the adjunct faculty body are not required to attend faculty meetings unless they would like to participate in the voting process when voting occurs.

Proxy: Absent voting members may assign proxies for votes. Proxies shall not count toward meeting a quorum. Proxies must be assigned and communicated to the Department Head twenty-four hours prior to the meeting.

Quorum: A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of those faculty eligible to vote.

Passage of a Motion: To approve a motion during a meeting with a quorum, a simple majority from the attending members is required.

Committees

Committee Assignments

The process for faculty interested in serving on a committee involves communicating their interest via email to the department head before the first faculty meeting of the academic year. The Department Head makes final appointment decisions.

Standing Committees

A standing committee is a permanent committee established within an organization or institution to deal with specific areas of responsibility or ongoing functions. These committees are typically formed to address recurring tasks or matters that require continuous attention or oversight. Chairs are ex-officio and non-voting members of their respective Standing Committee. Standing committees of the music department include the following:

- Assessment
- Curriculum and Education Policies
- Personnel
- VSO Principals
- Area Heads

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Scholarship
Recruiting/Webpages
Theory

Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees are typically established to address specific issues, projects, or situations that arise, which may not fall under the purview of existing standing committees or require specialized attention. Unlike standing committees, ad hoc committees are not permanent and are created as needed. Once the objective of the ad hoc committee is achieved, it is disbanded.

Chairs serve at the discretion of the Department Head.

Chairs

All permanent, full-time faculty are qualified to serve as committee chair. Temporary full-time faculty or part-time faculty may serve as chair at the discretion of the Department Head.

Assessment Committee

The primary responsibilities of the Assessment Committee may include:

Program Evaluation: Conducting regular evaluations of the department's degree programs to ensure they remain relevant, rigorous, and aligned with best practices in music education. This may involve collecting feedback from students, alumni, and industry professionals, as well as analyzing retention and graduation rates.

Faculty Development: Providing support and resources for faculty members to enhance their teaching effectiveness and assessment practices.

Data Analysis and Reporting: Collecting, analyzing, and interpreting assessment data to inform decision-making and continuous improvement efforts within the department, this includes creating the Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IEP) and Institutional Effectiveness Report (IER), annually, and the Comprehensive Program Review (CPR) when required. Regular reports on assessment findings and recommendations will be shared with the department.

The Assessment Committee consists of four to five full-time faculty members. The Chair and the Chair-elect will be elected by the committee for a two-year term each.

Curriculum and Education Policies Committee

The primary responsibilities of the Curriculum and Education Policies Committee include:

Curriculum Proposal Review: Reviewing all curriculum proposals forwarded by the Department Head for proposal sustainability and compliance with accreditation standards.

Catalog Review: Reviewing the undergraduate and graduate catalog no less than once a year for accuracy.

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Curriculum Deviation Requests: Reviewing all curriculum deviation requests forwarded by the Department Head.

The Curriculum and Education Policies Committee consists of at least five full-time faculty members with diverse area representation. The Chair and the Chair-elect will be elected by the members of the committee for a two-year term each. The Chair of this committee will serve on the College of the Arts Executive Curriculum Committee.

Personnel Committee

The Committee will follow the department, college, university and University System of Georgia's promotion and tenure guidelines. This committee shall review and make recommendations on the dossiers of faculty applying for pre-tenure review, promotion, tenure, and post-tenure review.

The Committee shall compose Departmental Recommendation Letters to strive for objective advocacy towards personnel actions.

The Personnel Committee consists of all tenured music faculty. The Chair of the Personnel Committee is appointed by the Department Head or nominated by the committee members and serves as chair for one year. The Chair is required to attend the college Personnel Committee meetings but is not a voting member on the college committee. The immediate-past Chair will serve on the College of the Arts personnel committee the subsequent year as a voting member. Tenured faculty voting on the College or University Personnel Committees do not participate on the departmental level. The University Personnel Committee representative is appointed by the Dean of the College of the Arts and serves a three-year term.

VSO Principals Committee

The Valdosta Symphony Orchestra (VSO) Principals Committee facilitates communication and collaboration among the principal musicians of the VSO and administration.

The Valdosta Symphony Orchestra (VSO) Principals Committee is a standing committee who facilitates communication and collaboration among the principal musicians of the VSO and administration. The VSO Principals Committee consists of full-time Valdosta State University Department of Music faculty who actively perform with the VSO. Adjuncts and imports in titled positions are not obligated to participate in VSO Principals Committee meetings.

The Chair will be elected by current VSO Principals for a three-year term and may be re-elected for subsequent terms. The Chair shall preside over meetings, represent the committee when necessary, and facilitate communication between committee members and the Executive Director.

Area Heads Committee

Areas are specialized disciplines within the Department of Music with applied faculty members of instrument families who provide dedicated support for students, fostering artistic and academic excellence to ensure student success.

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The area heads shall be responsible for the academic integrity and faculty mentorship of their designated areas, ensuring that curriculum, instruction, and assessment align with university and department standards. Area heads will advise Department Head on scholarship awards for students and collaborate with other area heads on departmental and university-wide priorities. Area heads are strongly encouraged to complete webpage editing training. Each area head receives one (1) Service Credit on semesterly Workload.

The area heads in the Valdosta State University Department of Music are appointed by the Department Head. Area heads are full-time faculty members of the Department of Music.

The Areas of the Department of Music are as follows:

- Brass
- Conducting
- Jazz
- Keyboard
- Percussion
- Strings
- Voice
- Woodwinds

Scholarship Committee

The Scholarship Committee advises the Department Head regarding scholarship requests as presented by Area Heads. The Scholarship Committee considers the department's needs and each student's merits. The Scholarship Committee consists of at least five departmental representatives with diverse area representation. The Chair and the Chair-elect will be elected by committee members for a two-year term each.

Recruiting/Webpages Committee

The Recruiting/Webpages Committee is responsible for promoting the Department of Music's programs and opportunities to attract a diverse and talented pool of applicants. The committee is responsible for coordinating communications between prospective students, area heads, and university admissions. By actively engaging in outreach activities, attending music events, and maintaining communication with prospective students, this committee helps create a vibrant and inclusive musical community within the Department of Music.

The Recruiting/Webpages Committee consists of at least five full-time faculty members with diverse area representation. At least two members of the committee must have webpage editing training. The Chair and the Chair-elect will be elected by the members of the committee for a two-year term each.

Theory Committee

The Theory Committee revises and maintains the music theory curriculum to keep courses and materials up-to-date and relevant to twenty-first century music students. The committee seeks to follow the

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university system and accreditation requirements. The committee strives to follow current trends in music theory pedagogy and research to orient undergraduate and graduate courses toward student success after graduation. The committee also advises music theory graduate assistant(s) in pedagogical approaches used in the classroom. The Theory Committee consists of all theory faculty and one additional member of the music faculty. The Chair will be appointed by the Department Head.

Tenure and Promotion

Jurisdiction

The Department of Music holds initial jurisdiction over tenure, promotion, and retention decisions. Final decisions rest with the Dean and the President.

Each subdivision within the college has the authority to make recommendations, playing a significant role in the decisions.

The Department Head is responsible for informing faculty about the necessary procedures for reviews and promotions.

Third-Year Review

All full-time faculty conduct a routine "third-year review" at the beginning of their third year.

Purposes of the review include:

- Providing early indications of potential for tenure and/or promotion
- Reminding faculty of criteria for tenure and/or promotion decisions
- Informing faculty of any circumstances that might affect decisions
- Identifying deficiencies and making suggestions for correction
- Recommending non-reappointment when appropriate

This step-by-step process ensures transparency, involvement of relevant faculty members, and adherence to established criteria for tenure and promotion within the Department of Music.

Tenure

Criteria for tenure decisions are established by the tenured music faculty.

These standards are communicated to the entire music faculty and the Tenure & Promotion Committee (TPC). Department of Music tenure recommendations and competency reviews follow procedures outlined in the Department and University Tenure & Promotion documents.

Promotion

University policy guides final Department of Music recommendations:

- Full professors recommend associate professors for promotion
- Full and associate professors recommend assistant professors for promotion
- Full, associate, and assistant professors recommend lecturers for promotion
- Criteria for promotion are outlined in the Department of Music Tenure & Promotion documents

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Early considerations for promotion are at the discretion of the President and must follow University System of Georgia policy

Amendments

These bylaws may be amended in the following manner:

- (a) Proposals for amendment shall be submitted in writing to the Department Head at least fourteen days prior to a faculty meeting. The Department Head will forward the proposal to the faculty at least seven days prior to the faculty meeting at which the proposal is to be considered.
- (b) No voting will take place until wording has been finalized through department-wide discussion.
- (c) Voting can only take place once quorum of members eligible to vote has been established.
- (d) Voting will be conducted through anonymous paper ballots for the faculty members in attendance. If a quorum is not reached, the vote will be postponed to a later date.
- (e) Amendment voting cannot utilize proxies.
- (f) Faculty joining the meeting remotely may submit their paper ballots prior to the in-person meeting.
- (g) Faculty joining the meeting remotely will count toward quorum.
- (h) Early submission of ballots must be folded and placed within a sealed envelope with the faculty member's name noted on the envelope.
- (i) At the time of vote count, the folded ballot is retrieved from the respective envelope and placed into the ballot box alongside other submitted ballots. Care must be taken to preserve the anonymity of the ballot.
- (j) Amendments are passed by receiving at least two-thirds of the votes cast by persons entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions.