Constitution of the Department of Writing and Linguistics

Preface

This document defines the Department of Writing and Linguistics of Georgia Southern University. Procedures of the department will be delineated in accompanying policies.

Any provision in this Constitution that violates policies or statutes of Georgia Southern University or the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia will be null and void. If any provision of this Constitution contradicts other policies of Georgia Southern or the Board of Regents that are not explicitly stated, the Department may ask university administration for recommendations on appropriate actions, including amendment of this Constitution.

Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission
The Department of Writing and Linguistics strives to produce B.A. graduates who understand the art and science of language and writing. Through curriculum, capstone courses, internships, writers’ readings, and activities for students, the major supports the University’s mission to link theory with practice, to extend the learning environment beyond the classroom, to promote student growth and life success, and to facilitate students’ development as thinkers and writers.

Vision
Because excellent writing abilities, language awareness, and technology skills are vital in our rapidly changing global society, the Department of Writing and Linguistics seeks to promote scholarly and creative activity and to expand students’ intellectual and professional connections to local, regional, national, and international writing and linguistics communities.

Values
The faculty in the Department of Writing and Linguistics uphold these values:

- excellence and innovation in scholarship and creative work, pedagogy, and technology
- rigorous and comprehensive study of writing and linguistics
- opportunities for students to apply and showcase their talents and knowledge
- seminar-based learning and individualized feedback on student work
- learning that occurs beyond the classroom through research and creative activity, internships, community-based learning, online study, and study abroad
- a community that supports diversity in ideas, culture, identities, and styles of teaching and learning
- outreach to the profession and community through local, regional, national, and international educational programs, conferences, workshops, sponsorships, and events

ARTICLE I. DEPARTMENT DEFINITION
The Department of Writing and Linguistics at Georgia Southern University teaches students to write effectively in English and to understand how language works in context. Through study and practice in writing and linguistics, we promote creative expression, critical thinking and research, rhetorical and cultural awareness, and problem-solving.

We provide First Year Writing courses that give all students foundational instruction in writing and research. Our major coursework develops students’ expertise in four areas: Creative Writing, Linguistics, Professional and Technical Writing, and Rhetoric and Composition.

The Department of Writing and Linguistics teaches courses on the University’s three main campuses at Statesboro, Armstrong, and the Liberty Center. The department also offers courses online. As approved by the Dean, courses may be taught at other locations.

ARTICLE II. DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP

A. Department membership
We affirm that we value the contributions of all members of the department: tenure-track, non-tenure track, lecturer, temporary faculty (visiting instructors, limited-term faculty), and part-time faculty. Faculty have voting rights in the Department as outlined below.

Table 1: Faculty Voting Rights by Rank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty Category</th>
<th>Voting Rights</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenure-track</td>
<td>May vote on general faculty business brought to vote in department meetings. May vote on personnel policies or actions as policy allows. May vote in committees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-tenure track</td>
<td>May vote on general faculty business brought to vote in department meetings. May vote on personnel policies or actions as policy allows. May vote in committees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>May vote on general faculty business brought to vote in department meetings. May vote on personnel policies or actions as policy allows. May vote in committees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary (full time over 10 months)</td>
<td>May vote on general faculty business brought to vote in department meetings. May not vote on any personnel policies or actions. May vote in committees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time (hired one semester at a time)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Service-Obligated Faculty
Faculty roles are described in the Faculty Handbook. Faculty who are expected to provide service to the university as part of their employment are tenure-track faculty, non-tenure track faculty (NTT), and lecturers.

Temporary and part-time faculty may participate in service activities if they choose, but their participation is not required or expected according to their contract terms. Service to the department will not be considered in reappointment decisions for temporary and part-time faculty. Temporary and part-time faculty who wish to participate in service activities should contact the department chair to request opportunities to serve.

C. Organizational Roles
While the department chair leads this list, this list is not a hierarchy. See the policy on assigning organizational roles for duties of each position and ways faculty enter and exit these positions. It is possible that a role may go unfilled.

- Department chair, who will maintain a presence in Statesboro and at Armstrong
- Area coordinators, who function as liaisons for faculty within the areas
- First Year Writing coordinator(s)
- Writing Center coordinators
- Assistant Chair
- Website coordinator
- Internship coordinators
- Honors coordinator(s)

Some of these positions may include a reduction of teaching load. Department and University policies will govern decisions about reductions of teaching load.

The following positions within the Department are open to service-obligated faculty. Nominations are due by the first department meeting of the fall semester, when the vote will occur. Terms of service are two years.

- Ombudsperson
- Parliamentarian

D. Department Chair
Duties and responsibilities of the Department Chair are consistent with those described in College of Arts and Humanities policies and procedures.

The Department Chair is appointed with the approval of the Board of Regents and holds office at the pleasure of the President. Appointments are made after consultation with faculty of the Department, the Dean, and the Provost.

The Chair must hold tenure, must hold the rank of associate professor or professor, must be eligible for graduate status, and must have earned a terminal degree in a teaching field appropriate to the Department.

E. Qualifications of Faculty for Teaching Assignments
In all areas, faculty must demonstrate the qualifications (including education, scholarship, publications, and other professional service) appropriate to the types of courses and level of courses they have been assigned.

Tenure-line faculty teaching area-specific courses are expected to sustain scholarly activity including both research (e.g., conference presentations, publications, etc.) and service to the discipline (e.g. participation in professional organizations, reviewing manuscripts and conference proposals, etc.) related to one or more of the specialties listed in the area-specific teaching policy.

Lecturers with MAs or terminal degrees in the field and NTT faculty may also teach at the 2000 level and above, as appropriate to their experience and expertise and with the approval of the department chair. In keeping with SACSCOC practices, faculty may demonstrate experience and expertise through relevant coursework, degrees earned in fields relevant to an area, conference presentations, and publications, among other means.

Visiting instructors (previously known as limited-term faculty) are hired at the discretion of the Department Chair with approval from the Dean and the Office of the Provost. Contract terms must be approved by the Office of the Provost. Visiting instructors with terminal degrees in the field may also teach at the 2000 level and above, as appropriate to their experience and expertise and with the approval of the Department Chair.

Retired and part-time faculty must also demonstrate critical engagement with their disciplines through relevant coursework, degrees earned in fields relevant to an area, conference presentations, and publications, among other means. More information can be found in the area-specific policies, which have been developed using input from appropriate professional organizations, area faculty, SACSCOC guidelines, and disciplinary scholarship. Area-specific guidelines will be approved by area faculty.

In general, faculty should meet all qualifications of a given level, but exemption from a qualification may be made in response to departmental needs, curriculum development, or exceptional circumstances.

ARTICLE III: Department Meetings

A. Calling Meetings
Department meetings are called by the Department Chair, who will strive to schedule meetings at least one month in advance, although urgent situations may require meetings with less notice. Meetings of the full Department are a means of conveying information to faculty members, of discussion among faculty members, of raising concerns for discussion, and of voting on department business, among others.

The Department Chair or the Chair’s designee will preside over each department meeting. The Department of Writing and Linguistics follows Robert’s Rules of Order. Any faculty member may
move for particular departmental actions in a faculty meeting, consistent with Robert's Rules of Order.

B. Attendance
Attendance at meetings of the full Department is expected and required of all tenure-track, non-tenure track, and lecturer faculty (service-obligated faculty) as part of their service to the department. Visiting instructors and part-time faculty are welcome to attend and participate in meetings.

C. Location
Department meetings will be called either at a single campus (Armstrong or Statesboro) or will be called to meet jointly at Statesboro and Armstrong while connected electronically with voice and video (e.g., WebEx, Skype, or site-synchronous technology). To be present at a full department meeting, faculty must physically attend at one of the campuses.

Pre-semester department meetings will alternate between Armstrong and Statesboro.

D. Quorum
For voting to occur at a department meeting, a quorum must be in attendance. A quorum is defined as 50 percent of all service-obligated faculty (the total of tenure-line, NTT, and lecturer faculty across campuses) plus one.

ARTICLE IV: AREAS AND COMMITTEES

A. Area Membership
The content areas in the Department of Writing and Linguistics are the following: Creative Writing, Linguistics, Professional and Technical Writing, and Rhetoric and Composition. Though not degree-content areas, First-Year Writing and English as a Second Language constitute program areas.

Faculty responsible for courses within the department’s content areas will constitute the faculty for the areas. Other faculty with experience, education, or interest in an area may affiliate with an area through participation in area meetings and relevant professional development. An individual may be a member of more than one faculty area with the Department Chair’s approval, but may vote on only one area committee.

B. Committee Membership
Faculty with contractual requirements for service will serve on department committees. Members will be appointed or elected to these committees on a regular basis as specified in the documentation for each committee.
1. Area Committees
Area committees oversee the work within an area and are responsible for overseeing curriculum in their areas.

Each area will have an area chair. The term of the area chair is three years. Each area will vote to elect a chair, or may opt to ask the department chair to appoint an area chair. The area chair is responsible for calling area meetings, bringing up curriculum issues for discussion within the area, and for proposing schedules of classes for the area to the Department Chair.

2. Standing Committees
Standing committees exist to address the needs of the Department. The default term of service on a standing committee is two years. The chair may ask a faculty member to extend his or her service on a committee for an additional year if needed.

A. Strategic Planning Committee (SPC)
1. Membership
   ● Department chair (chair of SPC)
   ● Creative Writing area chair
● Linguistics area chair
● Professional/technical writing area chair
● Rhetoric and composition area chair
● Senior (by academic rank) writing center director
● Senior (by academic rank) First Year Writing coordinator
● At-large TT faculty, Statesboro
● At-large lecturer or NTT faculty, Statesboro
● At-large TT faculty, Armstrong
● At-large lecturer or NTT faculty, Armstrong/Liberty
● Chair of the recruiting committee

The Department Chair will serve as chair of this committee. This committee will meet monthly to address its responsibilities.

2. Responsibilities
   ● Provide feedback to the Chair on matters related to administration and strategic growth of the Department.
   ● Serve as liaison with department committees to ensure clear communication and avoid overlap of activities.
   ● Review curriculum proposals approved by area committees and vote on approval on behalf of the Department. Serve as final arbiter on curriculum issues.
   ● Develop and maintain an overall department committee reporting structure and schedule.
   ● Review relevant committee proposals and recommendations prior to departmental distribution.
   ● Develop a schedule for and periodically review the Department’s mission statement, constitution, strategic plan, SLOs, assessment plans and reports.
   ● Review job ad templates developed by each area.

Note: Curriculum proposals must pass with two-thirds majority; any measure receiving less than two-thirds support returns to the home committee for possible revision.

One member of the SPC will be designated each year to manage submissions to the online CIM system on behalf of the committee. One member of the SPC will be designated to serve on the CAH curriculum committee, which has a two-year term.

3. Subcommittees
   Subcommittees of SPC exist to support department operations. While subcommittee work is not as demanding as work on the department’s standing committees, this work is still valuable to the Department. Subcommittee members are appointed by the Department Chair to two-year terms.

   To facilitate the functionality of the Department, subcommittees may exist as part of the SPC. Service on a subcommittee is important but is less significant than work on a
standing committee. Membership on these subcommittees is determined by the chair of the SPC. These subcommittees are as follows:

1. Technology
   a. Membership
      The subcommittee will consist of at least four department faculty members, all appointed by the Department Chair. Individual members’ terms will last two years and will be staggered, so that two members’ terms begin in even years and two members’ terms begin in odd years. Subcommittee membership will have these traits:
      1. Featuring at least one faculty member each from the tenure and lecturer tracks and
      2. Representing at least three of the department's four areas.
      The subcommittee will elect its Chair at its first meeting that follows fall-semester department elections.
   b. Responsibilities
      1. Solicit and consider proposals for classroom/pedagogical technology and make recommendations regarding acquisitions to the Strategic Planning Committee. Proposals should be submitted by area, not by individual faculty, by December of each academic year. Proposals should include:
         a. the technology requested and its purpose;
         b. the courses that will require the technology;
         c. the concepts, skills, or methods that will be taught using the technology and/or the pedagogical role of the technology;
         d. the cost of the technology, including the number of licenses needed for students and faculty; and
         e. any additional supporting information such as how the technology is used in industry and in other programs
      2. Analyze and rank proposals and forward recommendations to the Strategic Planning Committee and department chair for approval at the beginning of the spring semester. The SPC will make any additional recommendations for changes and the technology subcommittee will solicit funding based on those final recommendations
      3. Pursue funding for classroom/pedagogical technology from the College.
      4. Pursue funding for classroom/pedagogical technology from the University's Student Technology Fees.
   2. Ad-hoc subcommittees as needed/created by the chair

B. Personnel Committee
1. Membership
   The committee will consist of no fewer than five tenured faculty members at the rank of associate or full professor as well as one Senior Lecturer or Principal Lecturer; faculty will represent at least two of the department’s areas. The committee will elect a Chair at
its first meeting following department elections. All members must be in physical
residence on one of the three campuses during the duration of the committee
appointment. When a faculty member goes up for promotion to full professor, all faculty
at the rank of full professor will participate on the committee in addition to the other
members.

2. Responsibilities
   a. Promotion and tenure
   Committee members are responsible for reviewing all relevant documents prior to
   meeting and/or voting on personnel actions. The committee solicits from all tenured and
   permanent faculty, as appropriate, recommendations regarding third-year review,
   promotion, and tenure of faculty. These comments are given to the committee to weigh
   in its deliberation of these personnel actions. The committee submits its
   recommendation to the Chair, consistent with department, CAH, and university policy
   and procedures. The committee also reviews and updates as needed the department’s
   promotion and tenure guidelines.
   
   b. Hiring needs
   The committee, in consultation with the Strategic Planning Committee, maintains a
   priority list of department hiring needs. This list is reviewed and updated on an annual
   basis. The committee may also propose requests for staffing and new personnel to the
department.

C. First-Year Writing Committee
   1. Membership
   The committee will consist of the Coordinator of First-Year Writing and four other faculty
   members. The Coordinator of First-Year Writing is the Chair of this committee.
   2. Responsibilities
   a. The committee will consider and make recommendations on issues relating to
   curriculum, assessment, technology, and other matters of first-year writing. The
   Coordinator of First-Year Writing will bring these recommendations to the Strategic
   Planning and department faculty for consideration.
   In the case of substantial curricular change, the First-Year Writing Committee will follow
   guidelines for area committees.

D. First-Year Writing Assessment Committee
   1. Membership
   The Committee will consist of at least five department faculty from any of Georgia
   Southern University’s campuses, all appointed by the Department Chair. Individual
   members’ terms will last two years and will be staggered so that no more than 60% of
   members will rotate off in a given year. Committee membership will ideally consist of
   faculty who are current in the discipline of FYW. The Committee will elect a chair at the
   first meeting of the year.
   2. Responsibilities
   This committee is charged with:
a. Designing and implementing assessment of FYW courses as required by the university and department, to be approved by the Department Chair and FYW Coordinator/s.
b. Writing the Core Area A Assessment report and submitting it to the OIE annually or as required.
c. Collaborating with the FYW Coordinator and FYW Committee to determine directions for professional development and program design based on the assessment data.

E. Recruiting and Marketing Committee
1. Membership
The committee will consist of at least three faculty members. The Department Recruiting Coordinator will be designated by the Department Chair and will chair this committee.
2. Responsibilities
   a. Organizing and scheduling outreach to prospective majors at official university functions.
   b. Serve as hosts of prospective students who visit campus.
   c. Organize and schedule various departmental events for faculty and students, as well as alumni and other community members.
   d. Gather and publish information, in print and/or electronic formats, describing departmental, faculty, and student activities that may be of interest to department members, current students, prospective students, alumni, and the general public. This work may include making recommendations to the department webmaster.

F. Major Assessment Committee
1. Membership
The Committee will consist of at least four department faculty members, all appointed by the Department Chair. Individual members' terms will last two years and will be staggered, so that two members' terms begin in even years and two members' terms begin in odd years. Committee membership will reflect this composition:
   a. Including at least one faculty member each from the tenure-line and lecturer tracks
   b. Representing at least three of the department's four areas.
      The Committee will be chaired by the department's Assessment Coordinator, appointed by the Chair.
2. Responsibilities
   a. This committee is charged with designing and implementing assessment of the BA in Writing and Linguistics as required by the university and department.
   b. Gain approval of the assessment plan for each assessment cycle from the SPC and annually present the findings to SPC and the department at the beginning of each academic year
   c. Revise the assessment plan based on those recommendations from SPC.
   d. Develop and maintain a five-year plan, to be approved by the SPC, that includes
updated cycles for internal and external assessment purposes.

G. Awards Committee
1. Membership
The Committee will consist of at least five faculty members, representing at least two areas. The committee will elect a chair after their first meeting. Individual members’ terms will last two years and will be scattered, so that two members’ terms begin in even years and two members’ terms begin in odd years. Committee membership will reflect this composition:
   a. represent Creative Writing and at least one other area
   b. include at least one faculty member each from the tenure and lecturer tracks
   c. include the Chair of the Marketing Committee
The Committee will elect its Committee Chair at the first Committee meeting that follows Fall- semester department elections.

2. Responsibilities
   a. Oversee the scholarships awarded by the Department of Writing & Linguistics, which includes the Brittany “Ally” Harbuck Scholarship, the Brannen Creative Writing Awards, the Starnes/Brannen Scholarship, and the AWP Intro Journals Project. It will also be responsible for hosting the annual Senior event (this may include a Senior Reading or Senior Showcase). The committee will also oversee the Golden award for teaching and the Golden fellowship to support faculty research and creative activity.
   b. For each award, the Committee will manage the call for entries, submissions, judging, and coordinate the publicity and announcements of winners. The committee will coordinate with pertinent Department committees, including Marketing and Recruitment, in publicizing the awards.
   c. Organize and publicize two annual award ceremonies: a fall Harbuck Scholarship award ceremony, and a spring Department award ceremony (in which the winners and finalists of all other awards/scholarships will be recognized).
   d. Serve as the point of contact for donors and benefactors endowing the awards and scholarships, maintain donor relationships, and seek feedback for future events.

3. Ad-hoc Committees
   Ad-hoc committees may be established as needed to address particular tasks or issues within a specific and limited period of time, not to exceed two years without specific re-authorization by a vote of the faculty.

4. New Committees
   A new committee may be formed at the request of a voting faculty member. The request must be made in writing to the Strategic Planning Committee for its consideration. If affirmed by a majority vote of SPC, the committee will be presented for a vote of approval at a department meeting.
C. Meeting Minutes
All committees, whether area committees, standing committees, or ad-hoc committees, should take minutes of meetings and share them with the department electronically. The Personnel committee, however, is exempt from this minutes requirement; Personnel must write memos of decisions related to promotion and tenure applications and, in some cases, fifth-year reviews.

D. Committee Chair
All committees, whether standing or ad hoc, must designate a chair to call, organize and preside over committee meetings. The chair will ensure each meeting has a recorder to take minutes. Committee Chairs whose term has expired will ensure that incoming committee members, including new Chairs, will have access to documents and materials regarding committee business. Each spring, committee chairs will prepare for the department chair an annual report summarizing work completed during the year and a brief description of committee members’ contributions.

Committee Chairs will call meetings as needed to conduct business before the committee or on request of the Department Chair. Other department faculty may request a meeting of a specific committee on consultation with the Committee Chair and Department Chair or by majority vote of the department faculty. Only members of standing committees or of ad hoc committees may vote on issues before the committee. All members of voluntary ad hoc committees may vote. Other faculty, staff, and students may attend committee meetings but may speak and participate only when approved by the committee. The Personnel Committee will close its meetings as necessary when discussing personnel issues, consistent with state and federal law as well as university policies and regulations.

E. Membership on College and University Committees
Service-obligated faculty must provide service to Georgia Southern beyond work within the department. Faculty should consider how service outside the department can contribute to their development as faculty members at Georgia Southern and can impact their prospects for promotion in rank.

The chair will consult with service-obligated faculty to discuss opportunities to serve on college and university committees, and the chair will nominate faculty for these positions when the college or university requests nominations.

These are typical positions for department representatives. The first group will be decided by vote. Nominations are due by the first department meeting of the fall semester, when the vote will occur. Terms of service are two years.

- CAH Faculty Advisory Board/Governance Committee (tenure-track faculty)
- CAH Faculty Advisory Board/Governance Committee Alternate (lecturer or NTT)
- CAH Personnel Committee (tenure-track faculty; preferably full professor)
- CAH Curriculum Committee
The following positions will be filled by nomination and appointment. The term of service is one year and may be repeated.

- CAH Technology Committee: (member of the department’s subcommittee, preferably the chair)
- CAH Awards Committee
- CAH Diversity and Inclusion Committee
- CAH Teacher Education/Preparation Committee
- “For the Love of Blue” Representatives
- Library Liaison
- Dean of Students Liaison

ARTICLE V: POLICIES
Departmental policies direct day-to-day activities. Departmental policies will be brought up for discussion in full department meetings, but will be voted on as described below.

Policies affecting only tenure-track faculty will be voted on only by tenure-track faculty. Policies affecting lecturers will be voted on by lecturers, NTT, and TT faculty. Policies affecting non-tenure track faculty will be voted on by NTT, lecturers, and TT faculty.

Departmental policies must remain in line with relevant college and university policies and may not contradict those higher-level policies. In the absence of a departmental policy, relevant college and university policies will be followed.

ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENTS AND RATIFICATION
A. Amendments
Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed in writing to the department chair, or they may be required in response to college or university policy. The Strategic Planning Committee will review amendments proposed to the chair. If a majority of the Strategic Planning Committee votes to send forward a proposed amendment, the amendment will come to a vote by the department. Without majority support from the Strategic Planning Committee, an amendment will not go forward to the department.

Amendments to the Constitution must be distributed to the department electronically at least one week before a scheduled department meeting. The amendment will be on the agenda for that meeting, and a vote will occur in keeping with Robert’s Rules of Order. If the amendment receives a majority of votes in favor when a quorum is present, it will take effect as specified in the language of the amendment.

B. Ratification
The Chair will submit this proposed Constitution to the faculty in electronic form. The Chair will call a department faculty meeting to discuss and review this document. Voting faculty members may make motions to adopt changes in the draft document, which may be accepted by majority (half plus one) vote. Additional meetings for discussion, review and revision may be scheduled if necessary. Discussion, review and revision may be halted by a two-thirds majority of the voting
faculty. Voting on ratification of the Constitution is considered general faculty business, and voting rights for general faculty business are spelled out in Article II. The revised document will then be submitted to the Department for approval by vote. Votes will be collected and counted by the department administrative staff. The new Constitution will be adopted if approved by two-thirds of faculty who vote by the deadline.

C. Implementation
The new Constitution will take effect at the beginning of the semester following approval.

Revision History
Version 1.0   Approved Spring 2020; in effect Fall 2020.