

NMSU Department of Mathematical Sciences Bylaws  
Ratified December 2008

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## I Departmental Administration

**1. Department Head.** In accordance with Section 5.45 of the NMSU Policy Manual, the department head serves at the discretion of the dean with the concurrence of the executive vice president and provost. According to Section 5.06.30 this position is reviewed after 3 years, then in increments of at most 5 years, or by petition. Responsibilities of the department head are described in Section 5.45.20.

**2. Operations.** The department head manages the department's operating budget and oversees the department staff, including hiring of staff and adjunct faculty and appointment of the associate department head and the director of the Mathematics Success Center (MSC) in consultation with the Dean. Ordinarily the department head will consult with the advisory committee in personnel matters and if and when urgent matters arise. When unavailable for extended periods, the department head will assign a proxy—usually the associate department head—to look after things.

**3. Office staff.** A summary of duties of the office staff and information regarding maintenance of departmental records is contained in the departmental Staff Manual, a working copy of which is maintained on the department's internal web page.

**4. Teaching assignments.** Teaching assignments are made by the department head in consultation with the associate department head and the MSC director. Regular faculty assignments are made one semester in advance, taking into account faculty preferences, whenever possible.

**5. Committee assignments.** All regular faculty in the department are expected to serve on departmental committees. Assignments for standing (non-elected) departmental committees are made on an academic year basis by the department head, after consultation with faculty members.

## II Rights and Responsibilities of Faculty

In addition to participating in committees, departmental faculty are expected to participate in regular faculty meetings unless exempted due to scheduling conflicts including teaching, university service, or professional travel. In turn, every faculty member has the right to express openly his or her views regarding the handling of departmental matters.

### III Departmental Committees

**1. Standing committees.** The Department of Mathematical Sciences has several standing committees whose members are appointed by the department head. These committees oversee the graduate and undergraduate programs, curriculum matters such as textbooks and course content, and pedagogy, the coordination of hiring and other departmental operations. The chair of each committee is responsible for organizing regular meetings, setting agenda, and communicating results to the department head. A list of departmental committees, including members and duties, is maintained on the department's internal web page. When necessary, the department head will form an ad-hoc committee to take care of one-time or intermittent business that does not pertain to an existing committee. In all cases, committee chairs should consult with the department head to determine priorities. Workload of untenured faculty should be restricted to well-defined, uncontroversial tasks that are not overly time intensive.

**2. Elected committees.** The following committees are elected on an annual basis. Nominations for the Advisory Committee are taken during the last regular departmental faculty meeting of the Fall semester and in the spring for the other committees and recorded ballots are distributed and collected during the week that follows.

- **Advisory Committee.** This committee has three tenure-track members nominated and elected by the tenure-track faculty and one budgeted college-track member nominated and elected by the regular college-track faculty members. The associate department head serves in an ex-officio role. The chair may appoint the MSC director as an ex-officio member. The department head chairs the committee.
- **College Track Promotion Committee.** The makeup of this committee is described in the Departmental College Promotion document on the departmental internal web page.
- **Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor Subcommittee.** This committee consists of at least three tenure-track associate or professors elected by the departmental members of the committee as a whole, which consists of all tenured faculty in the case of a tenure decision and all associate professors and professors in the case of a promotion to associate professor, plus one outside member appointed by the dean, minus the department head.
- **Promotion to Professor Subcommittee.** This committee consists of three tenured professors elected by the departmental members of the committee as a whole, which consists of all tenured professors in the department plus one outside member appointed by the dean, minus the department head.

### IV Transacting departmental business and voting

**1. Robert's Rules of order.** These will be referenced to resolve procedural conflicts. A summary version of these rules will be maintained on the department's internal web page.

**2. Internal communication.** University email and departmental web pages are the official means of broadcasting information to the whole department. A list of relevant email aliases will be maintained on the department's internal web page.

**3. Agenda for regular and extraordinary meetings.** Regular departmental meetings occur once per academic month. The department head will inform the faculty of the dates and times of regular departmental meetings at the beginning of the Fall semester. Extra meetings such as those to discuss matters of hiring and of tenure and promotion will be scheduled as needed through the department head, at least one week in advance when possible. For committees with regular business, the committee chair should schedule a weekly or biweekly time during which the committee members can all meet. Committee chairs should inform members of meeting agenda in advance. For meetings of the whole department, the department head or associate department head will send a call for agenda items 4 or 5 working days prior to the meeting. Requests to be included on the agenda should be made within a day or two of this call. The department head will then prioritize these items and send out the agenda by email.

**4. Bringing business before the department.** In most cases, business concerning the department as a whole arises through its committees. In some cases other urgent matters will need to be addressed. Business brought to the whole department at a regular meeting normally takes the form of a proposal on which the affected members of the department can vote. Whenever possible, a draft proposal, including rationale, should be circulated to the department a few days prior to the meeting at which it is first to be discussed. To pass, a proposition ordinarily requires a simple majority. A ballot on a proposal will not normally be taken at or directly after the meeting at which it is first discussed, but should be taken at or directly following the subsequent meeting. In cases of unforeseen urgency, a ballot may be taken after one meeting.

**5. Matters requiring recorded ballots and eligibility.** A recorded ballot is a secret paper ballot or an electronic ballot. Recorded ballots are maintained by the department head for at least one year and until any associated policy matters are resolved. The department votes by secret ballot on decisions of tenure-track hiring and on tenure and promotion. The department also uses recorded ballots for proposals that affect official university documents. Examples include changes to program requirements, new courses, or changes in course descriptions. Amendments of policies that do not involve communication with the entire university or whose purpose is compliance with other university policies generally will not require a recorded ballot. Graduate faculty are eligible to vote on matters pertaining to the graduate program. According to NMSU policy 5.15.40, nontenure-track faculty will not vote on any faculty personnel matters. All regular, full-time faculty are eligible to vote on other routine departmental matters. The department head will resolve any question of who is eligible to vote on a given proposal. Any eligible faculty member can request a secret written ballot on any proposal brought before the department. If seconded and approved, a vote by secret ballot will be taken.

**6. Quorum.** For purposes of voting on departmental matters that require a recorded ballot, a quorum is defined as half of the eligible voters who are not on leave. If a quorum is not attained in a recorded ballot then the matter ordinarily will not be revisited during the current semester. When the vote is an informal one, as defined as a verbal or show of hands poll taken at a faculty meeting, a quorum is defined as half of the eligible voters present. Proposals brought before the department by one of its committees ordinarily will reflect the majority opinion of the committee.

**7. Conflicts of interest.** Faculty will recuse themselves or may be recused by the head from voting on matters involving serious conflicts of interest.

**8. The Hare system.** The Hare proportional (or single transferable vote) system is used to determine members of elected committees. A description of this system will be maintained on the department's internal web documents.

**9. Votes on tenure and promotion and tenure-track hiring.** Policies regarding voting on tenure and promotion are laid out explicitly in the departmental tenure and promotion document and the A&S promotion document. Hiring for tenure-track positions and positions of similar responsibility must follow policies laid out in the NMSU Search Committee Handbook. For the purposes of tenure-track hiring within the department, the search committee ordinarily consists of those tenure-track faculty not on leave. A hiring subcommittee is appointed by the department head to coordinate preliminary efforts in preparing a short list of potential candidates for interviews. Interview/Hiring ballots have two components. The first component is a numerical rank of candidates; the second component is a Yes/No/Hold vote on whether to interview/hire the candidate. Candidates are ranked according a system of comparing candidates through head-to-head competitions. The Maple program which implements this system is available on the internal web page. A vote of 2/3 or more to interview/hire will be interpreted as a recommendation to interview/hire. A vote of 1/2 or more against will be interpreted as a recommendation against interviewing/hiring.

**10. Veto privilege.** Except in tenure and promotion cases, departmental votes are interpreted as recommendations to the department head, who then insures that decisions are properly implemented. If the department head takes action contrary to a recommendation of the faculty obtained by a recorded ballot, a rationale for the veto will be provided.

**11. Exceptions.** When possible, the head will convene the faculty prior to taking action on any matter that impacts the entire faculty. In extraordinary circumstances, the department head may need to take immediate action on a matter that would ordinarily pass through department review. In such cases the head will make an effort to consult with the advisory committee prior to taking action.

## V Maintenance of bylaws

**1. Review.** The advisory committee will review these by-laws during the Spring semester of odd numbered years.

**2. Amendments to these bylaws.** A recorded ballot reflecting a 2/3 majority of the faculty of the Department of Mathematical Sciences is required to amend these bylaws. Amendments to matters directly affecting tenure-track faculty only will require a 2/3 majority of the tenure-track faculty only. Minor changes, such as typographical changes, not reflecting any change in policy, can be made by the Department Head in consultation with the Advisory Committee.

**3. Availability.** A current copy of these bylaws will be maintained on the department's internal web page.

**4. NMSU policy.** These by-laws are superseded by the NMSU policy manual.

**References:** Staff Manual, AP&P (<http://www.nmsu.edu/manual/>), A&S P&T guidelines (<http://artsci.nmsu.edu/college-forms>), and Search Committee Handbook ([http://hr.nmsu.edu/managers/search\\_handbook.html](http://hr.nmsu.edu/managers/search_handbook.html)).