

**Department of Civil Engineering**  
**By-Laws of Departmental Council**

**Approved by Academic Council**  
**January 30, 2007**  
**Amended October 15, 2008**

**Senate Approved: March 31, 2009**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. DEFINITIONS .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. OBJECTIVE .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. STRUCTURE .....</b>	<b>3</b>
3.1 MEMBERSHIP .....	3
3.2 STANDING COMMITTEES.....	4
3.3 AD-HOC COMMITTEES.....	6
3.4 TERM OF OFFICE.....	6
3.5 DUTIES OF OFFICE .....	7
<b>4. MEETINGS .....</b>	<b>9</b>
4.1 SCHEDULE OF DEPARTMENTAL COUNCIL AND STANDING COMMITTEES MEETINGS .....	9
4.2 DEPARTMENTAL COUNCIL MEETINGS .....	9
4.3 COMMITTEE MEETINGS .....	10
<b>5. PROCEDURES .....</b>	<b>11</b>
5.1 PROCEDURE FOR NOMINATION TO COUNCIL OFFICE OR STANDING COMMITTEE POSITIONS .....	11
5.2 ELECTIONS.....	11
5.4 VACANCIES.....	12
<b>6. OTHER GENERAL PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES .....</b>	<b>12</b>
6.1 ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES .....	12
<b>7. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>12</b>
7.1 AUTHORITY .....	12
7.2 DECISIONS OF COUNCIL.....	12
7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES.....	13
<b>8. GUESTS AND OBSERVERS.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>9. AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>
CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS FOR DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL COUNCILS .....	14

## 1. Definitions

**Administrative Staff** – all full-time administrative staff in the Department.

**Alumni** – all graduates from a program of the Department and who have identified themselves as potential non-voting members for Council.

**Associate Chair, Undergraduate Program** – the Associate Chair of the Department who oversees the undergraduate programs offered by the Department.

**Associate Chair, Graduate Program** – the Associate Chair of the Department who oversees the graduate programs offered by the Department.

**Chair** – Chair of Departmental Council

**Council** – the Departmental Council for the Department.

**Department** – the Department of Civil Engineering; Departmental has equivalent meaning.

**Faculty Member** – all full-time faculty members of the Department

**Graduate Student** – a full-time student registered in a civil engineering graduate program offered by the Department

**Guest** – an individual who is not a member of the Council, but who has been invited to address council concerning a specific issue.

**Member** – all individuals who are members of the Council, including undergraduate and graduate students, support staff and faculty members.

**Observer** – any member of the public who is not a member of the Council.

**Support Staff** – all full-time technical and administrative staff in the Department.

**Technical Staff** – all full-time technicians and technologists in the Department.

**Undergraduate Student** – a student registered in an undergraduate program offered by the Department.

**Vice-Chair** – Vice Chair of Departmental Council

## **2. Objective**

The purpose and objectives of Council are:

- to develop and recommend academic policies relevant to the Department;
- to promote effective teaching, learning and research in a collegial environment within the Department;
- to represent, maintain and advance the interests of Council members within the Department and the constituencies they represent; and
- to work with the administration and other groups within the University around areas of common concern.

## **3. Structure**

### **3.1 Membership**

The membership of Departmental Council shall be composed of:

- all faculty members, including the Chair and the Associate Chair(s) of the Department excluding those faculty members on leave;
- the Administrative Assistant ex-officio non-voting as a representative of the administrative staff;
- one non-voting member elected by and from the technical staff;
- undergraduate and graduate students elected by their respective constituencies as indicated in the following table;
  - 1 - 2<sup>nd</sup> year undergraduate student
  - 1 - 3<sup>rd</sup> year undergraduate student
  - 1 - 4<sup>th</sup> year civil undergraduate student
  - 1 - 4<sup>th</sup> year geomatics undergraduate student
  - 1 - graduate student from the PhD programme
  - 1 - graduate student from the Master's programme
- The student membership is subject to the requirement that the number of student members be not less than one-third, and not more than one half, of the total faculty members on the Council. Council may amend the student member composition as appropriate to ensure that this requirement is met.

## **3.2 Standing Committees**

The Departmental Council shall establish the following standing committees:

### **3.2.1 Undergraduate Curriculum Committee**

#### **Mandate:**

- To make recommendations to Council regarding:
  - short-term curriculum problems within the undergraduate program;
  - long-term curriculum planning to meet the academic needs of the program; and
  - undergraduate program and course changes.
- To liaise with the Budget and Resource Committee to help determine the resources necessary for implementation of new academic programs.
- To interact with the Department Advisory Council.
- To present to Council at least one written report each academic year (one of them being at the last meeting of the academic year).

#### **Membership:**

- Four faculty members elected by the Council. (one from each discipline)
- One undergraduate student, not necessarily a member of Council, elected by the undergraduate students on Council.
- The Department Chair, ex officio
- The undergraduate Associate Chair, ex officio.
- The Chair of the Committee is elected.

### **3.2.2 Strategic Planning Committee**

#### **Mandate:**

- To advise the Department Chair on budget matters pertaining to the Department.
- To identify and prioritize the immediate needs for, and to make short and long term plans for, the physical resources and equipment necessary to maintain the academic programs and courses relevant to the program(s) offered by the Department.
- To determine the resources required to support any proposed new program, and to report those needs to Council prior to Council's approval of the proposed program.

- To liaise with the other committees of Council when matters of physical and budget resources arise.
- To present to Council at least one written report each academic year (one of them being at the last meeting of the academic year).

**Membership:**

- One faculty member from each of the four disciplines (voting).
- All other Council members are entitled to attend (non-voting).
- The Chair of the Department, ex-officio non-voting.
- The Associate Chairs of the Department, ex-officio.

**3.2.3 Research and Graduate Studies Committee**

**Mandate:**

- To foster growth of research and graduate studies within the Department through promotion of these activities both within and outside the Department.
- To promote faculty research initiatives.
- To advocate for research space and resources.
- To be an advocate of the researchers and graduates students concerns and/or research needs and liaison with other committees of the Council when needed.
- To make recommendations to Council regarding short and long-term plans for the graduate curriculum.
- - To liaise with the Strategic Planning Committee to help determine the resources necessary for the graduate program.
- To present a written, annual report to Council about the research activities being carried out within the Department by the last meeting of the academic year.
- Operational matters such as admissions, scholarship, performance and examinations will be handled only by the faculty members of the committee to ensure compliance with the University's Policies on Student Confidentiality, as described in [www.ryerson.ca/privacy](http://www.ryerson.ca/privacy).

**Membership:**

- Four faculty members elected by the Council, one from each of the four disciplines.
- One graduate student.
- The Associate Chair of Graduate Studies, ex-officio.
- The Chair of the Department, ex-officio non-voting.

**3.3 Ad-Hoc Committees****Mandate:**

- These committees may be established from time to time to investigate, report, and/or make recommendations on specific issues.

**Membership:**

- When possible, faculty and student membership should reflect the membership proportions of the Council as a whole.

**3.4 Term of Office****3.4.1 Officers of Council**

The Officers of Departmental Council (Chair and Vice-Chair) shall be elected from the faculty membership of the Council at the first regular meeting of the fall semester to take office at the beginning of the academic year. The term of office is one year.

A member is eligible for reappointment or re-election, as the case may be, except that no member shall serve for more than two consecutive terms, but on the expiration of one year after having served the second of two consecutive terms, such person may again be eligible to run for office.

A member elected to fulfill the term of a vacant office is eligible to hold the office for two full terms in addition to the remainder of the term he or she is elected to fulfill.

**3.4.2 Members of Standing Committees**

Members shall hold office for a renewable one year term.

### **3.4.3 Members of Ad-Hoc Committees**

Members of ad-hoc committees shall hold office until the report of the committee has been approved by Council, or the ad-hoc committee has been disbanded by Council.

### **3.4.4 Student Members of Council**

Undergraduate and graduate student members shall be elected annually.

### **3.4.5 Technical Staff Representative**

The member chosen from the technical staff shall be elected for a renewable one year term.

## **3.5 Duties of Office**

A thorough knowledge of the By-Laws and Robert's Rules of Order is a prerequisite for all officers of Council.

### **3.5.1 Chair**

The Chair shall:

- call the meetings of Council;
- prepare and circulate written notice and Agenda of Council meetings, with the assistance of the Recording Secretary;
- preside at all meetings of the Council, enforce the objectives, By-Laws, and Rules of Order, and ensure that the committees perform their duties;
- be an ex-officio non-voting member of all standing committees and of any committees established by the Council;
- communicate actions of Council to the administration of the University when requested by Council;
- prepare and circulate Minutes of Council meetings with the assistance of the Recording Secretary

### **3.5.2 Vice-Chair**

The Vice-Chair shall:

- in the absence of the Chair, perform the duties of the Chair;



- in the event that the Chair's position is vacated, perform the duties of the Chair and arrange for the timely election of a new Chair;
- call for nominations/elections for students and support staff and ensure elections are carried out in a timely manner;
- assist the Chair in any manner, as requested by the Chair.

### **3.5.3 Recording Secretary**

In addition to being the representative on Council for the administrative staff, the Administrative Assistant of the Department of Civil Engineering shall act as Recording Secretary of the Council of the Department of Civil Engineering. The responsibilities of the Secretary include:

- assisting the Chair in preparing and circulating written notice and Agenda of Council meetings;
- attending Council meetings and taking of Minutes during Council meetings;
- assisting the Chair in preparing and circulating these Minutes; and
- maintaining soft and hard master copies of the By-Laws and revising them as Council approves changes.

### **3.5.4 Chairs of Committees**

The responsibilities of the Chairs of Committees include:

- ensuring all positions in their committee are filled, and for reporting the membership of their committee to the Vice-Chair of Council as soon as membership composition is known;
- calling committee meetings;
- submitting agenda items from their committee for Council meetings.
- giving an oral report of their committee's activities at each regular Council meeting;
- submitting a written report by the end of the academic year to the Council.

## **4. Meetings**

### **4.1 Schedule of Departmental Council and Standing Committees Meetings**

#### **4.1.1 Departmental Council**

In the first two weeks of September of each academic year, the Council Chair must schedule six Council meetings during the coming academic year: one on the last Wednesday of September, one on the third Wednesday of each of the following months: October, November, January, March and one on the second Wednesday of April.

#### **4.1.2 Standing Committees**

Standing committees shall meet as required. Each committee shall submit and present a written report to Council at least once per academic year, the preferred time being at a regular meeting or after consultation with the Council Chair. A standing committee may request that the Chair of Council call a special meeting of Council to report on the work and recommendations of the committee.

#### **4.1.3 Special Meeting**

A special meeting of Council shall be held following a written request by 15% (rounded up) of the full membership to the Chair, or by an administrative request of the Dean or Chair of the Department. The agenda for such meetings will be provided to all members of Council at least 2 working days (48 hours) in advance of the meeting, which will be scheduled at the next available timetabled Council meeting slot.

### **4.2 Departmental Council Meetings**

#### **4.2.1 Notice of Meetings and Distribution of Agenda**

The written notice and Agenda of a regularly scheduled Council meeting shall be distributed no later than 72 hours (3 days) and not earlier than 96 hours (4 days) prior to the meeting.

#### **4.2.2 Submissions of Agenda Items**

Individual Council members may submit agenda items. All agenda items and supporting documentation are to be submitted to the Chair and/or Vice Chair at least 96 hours (4 days) prior to the meeting for inclusion in the written agenda of the meeting. Agenda items submitted after that time will be discussed under the "New Business" portion of the meeting.

#### **4.2.3 Agenda**

The Agenda for a Departmental Council Meeting will include:

- Call to Order
- Approval of the Minutes of the last meeting

- Discussion arising out of the Minutes
- Urgent Business
- Reports
  - Chair of the Department
  - Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
  - Budgetary Planning and Physical Resources Planning Committee
  - Research and Graduate Studies Committee
  - Current ad-hoc committees
  - Other Ryerson committees when possible (e.g. Senate, Board of Governors)
  - Faculty and student associations
- Notices and Announcements
- Agenda items submitted as per 4.2.2
- New Business
- Adjournment

#### **4.2.4 Quorum**

A quorum for conducting a full Council meeting shall consist of not fewer than 50% of the full membership, with the further requirement that no fewer than 50% of those in attendance be from the faculty membership.

#### **4.2.5 Minutes of Meetings**

The Minutes of Council meetings will be circulated within 10 working days following meetings.

### **4.3 Committee Meetings**

#### **4.3.1 Attendance at Committee Meetings**

Any Council member may attend a meeting of any committee, of which he/she is not a formal member, as a non-voting participant.

A committee member may not appoint a voting designate to act in their stead at committee meetings.

#### **4.3.2 Input to Committees**

Matters to be reviewed by committees can come from the following sources:

- Committees will review matters pertaining to their mandates at their own initiative.
- Committees may also be requested by Council to review other matters.

- Any member of Council may request a committee to review a matter. In this situation, the proposal must be submitted in writing (e-mail included) to the committee and must be co-signed by another Council member.

## **5. Procedures**

### **5.1 Procedure for Nomination to Council Office or Standing Committee Positions**

The Chair of Council shall call for nominations annually in early September. Names of the nominees shall be freely available to all members of Council. The Chair will call for nominations from the floor at the first September meeting. If positions remain vacant after the first September meeting, the Chair may request that the Vice-Chair to initiate a second call for nominations or that the respective constituencies appoint members to the committees.

### **5.2 Elections**

The Chair of the Council, with the assistance of the Administrative Assistant, will ensure that the elections are conducted by the appropriate constituencies with adequate advance notice and in a democratic way.

#### **5.2.1 Members of Council**

Election of the members of Council representing the undergraduate and graduate students shall take place at the beginning of the academic year (September). The Chair will oversee these elections and they will be run by the Ryerson Civil Engineering Student Society, (RCESS) for undergraduate students. Votes will be conducted by secret ballot.

The elections of the other members of Council who are representing specific constituencies such as technical staff will take place annually in September. The Chair will oversee these elections.

#### **5.2.2 Officers of Council**

The Officers of Council shall be drawn from the faculty membership. Elections for the Officers of the Council shall take place in the first September meeting of each year. The Department Chair or his designated representative shall oversee the election of the Chair of Council. The new Chair of Council shall oversee the election of the Vice Chair and members of standing committees. The elected officers will take office upon election.

#### **5.2.3 Members of Standing Committees**

Members of standing committees shall be drawn from the Council membership, unless otherwise allowed. Elections by the appropriate constituencies shall take place in the first September meeting of each year.

#### **5.2.4 Officers of Committees**

Each standing committee will elect a Chair and a Secretary from its membership. The Chair and Secretary must be faculty members of Council.

#### **5.4 Vacancies**

The call for an immediate election to fill any vacancy on Council or in committee membership will be conducted by the Chair except as outlined below:

- **Chair**  
In the event that the position of Chair becomes vacant, the Vice-Chair shall call the elections and ensure that the elections are conducted in a democratic way.
- **Student Members of Council**  
In the event that an undergraduate student is unable to continue membership, the Chair shall instruct the students to elect a replacement for the remainder of the term of office. (as per item 5.2.1)

### **6. Other General Procedural Guidelines**

Other general procedural guidelines will be Robert's Rules of Order.

#### **6.1 Additional Procedures**

- Friendly amendments to motions are permitted. A friendly amendment to a motion is an amendment approved by the mover and seconder of the motion. Friendly amendments are incorporated into the motion without a vote.
- Friendly withdrawals of motions are permitted. A friendly withdrawal of a motion is the withdrawal of a motion approved by the mover and seconder of the motion. Such motions will be withdrawn without a vote.

### **7. Policy Recommendations**

#### **7.1 Authority**

Authority for policy recommendations of Council is explained in Policy 45 of **Academic Policies and Procedures of Ryerson University**.

#### **7.2 Decisions of Council**

- Decisions of Council will normally be made by a simple majority of the members present and voting (including proxies).

- Substantive issues will require a two-thirds majority of the members voting (including proxies) to pass.
- An issue is defined by Council as substantive when at least one third of the members present and voting declare it to be so.
- Secret ballot may be invoked at the request of any Council member.

### **7.3 Recommendations of Committees**

Recommendations of committees shall be approved by Council before being transmitted and/or implemented.

## **8. Guests and Observers**

- Guests from inside or outside Ryerson may be invited by members to attend Council meetings as non-voting participants. Notice of presence of all guests must be given in the Agenda.
- All Council meetings are public and open to Observers. Observers do not normally participate in Council discussions but may be allowed to address Council at the discretion of the Chair of Council. Notice of presence of observers is not required.

## **9. Amendments to By-Laws**

A notice of motion of proposed by-law changes must be circulated at least two weeks prior to a meeting. Amendments to By-laws require a two-thirds majority vote of the Council members.

# APPENDIX:

## RYERSON UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Constitutional Provisions for Department/School Councils

Ref. .: Senate Policy 45

Approval Date: May 6, 1986

Status: CURRENT

Each department/school shall establish a department/school Council to develop and recommend policy relevant to the department/school as it relates to the general policy of the University.

Such Councils shall:

a) include all full-time members of the teaching staff of the department, course supervisors, assistant Chair(s), the Chair, and where applicable one member chosen by and from the sessional and part-time instructors of the department. The department may co-opt additional members. The number of such additional members shall be set out in the by-laws.

b) include a number of elected or appointed students to the ratio of not less than one-third, and not more than one half, of the total of faculty members on the Council. Schools and departments at Ryerson which have no program of study and therefore have no students shall be exempted from this requirement.

c) meet formally at least twice a year as a full Council. A quorum shall consist of not fewer than 50% of the full membership.

d) establish a sub-committee to consider curriculum and course development as it relates to the department/school and may establish such other sub-committees as may be thought necessary. Faculty and student membership on each sub-committee shall reflect the membership proportions for the whole department/ school Council established under paragraph b) above, save in cases where there may be a conflict of interest. In such cases, machinery shall be established, to provide for input of data from the excluded group. Recommendations of sub-committees shall be approved by the department/school Council before being transmitted or implemented.

e) submit their by-laws for the approval of Senate.

A department/school Council may initiate policy recommendations on any matter pertaining to the operation of the department. If such policies have significance and effect only within

the department/school, approval by the department/school Council, and by the Chair and Dean, will provide authority for action. Such action will be reported by the Dean to Senate for its information.

If such policies have extra department/school ramifications, they shall be transmitted to the Dean of the Faculty/Division for discussion with the committee of Chairs. If there are no ramifications beyond the Faculty/Division, the matter may be settled there with the approval of the Dean, and shall be reported to the Senate by the Dean for its information. If there are broader ramifications, the recommendation shall be brought to Senate for action.

In the event of a disagreement between a department/school Council and the Dean, or between a department/school Council and its Chair and Dean, the disagreement will be referred by the disputants to the Vice President, Academic. In the event of continuing disagreements, the matter shall be reported to the President for action. Should such a dispute have bearing on the academic policy of the University as a whole, the matter shall be reported to Senate upon its resolution.

Note: See related curriculum policies including Ref. No. 7 "Procedures for the Preparation, Submission and Approval of Academic Proposals", Ref. No. 21 "Academic Jurisdiction", Ref. No. 32 "Procedures for Program and Course Curricular Revisions", Ref. No. 33 "Program Balance", Ref. No. 35 "Degree Programs Policy", Ref. No. 112 "The Development, Review and Approval of New Undergraduate Degree Programs", Ref. No. 126 "The Periodic Review and Evaluation of Undergraduate Programs at Ryerson", and Ref. No. 127 "Procedures for Graduate Program Approval".