

Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures  
Faculty of Arts

# **Department Council Bylaws**

Approved by the Department: September 29, 2020

Approved by the Dean of Arts: March 12, 2021

Approved by Senate: April 6, 2021

## **1. Department Council**

### **1.1 Mandate**

Students, faculty, and staff are partners in the functioning of the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures (hereafter Department). The Department Council (hereafter Council) is the principal mechanism for bringing together these constituencies to identify, discuss, and resolve matters of mutual concern. The specific mandate of the Council is:

1.1.1 To develop and recommend policies relevant to the Department within the context of general University policies.

1.1.2 To contribute actively to the operation and long-term planning of the Department through the creation of committees, working groups and other mechanisms as deemed appropriate.

1.1.3 To provide a forum for debate, discussion, and the dissemination of information on matters pertinent to the Department.

### **1.2 Authority of Council**

In keeping with Ryerson's constitutional provisions for Department/School Councils (Senate Policy #45), the authority of Council is as follows:

1.2.1 The 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, approval by Council, and by the Chair of the Department and Dean of the Faculty of Arts, will provide authority for action. Such action will be reported by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts to Senate for its information.

1.2.2 If such policies have extra-Departmental ramifications, they shall be transmitted to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts for discussion with the Dean's Council of Chairs. If there are no ramifications beyond the Faculty, the matter may be settled there with the approval of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, and shall be reported to Senate by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts for its information. If there are broader ramifications, the recommendation shall be brought to Senate for action.

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

1.2.4 Without prejudice to the above protocols, the authority of Council embraces two additional principles:

1.2.4.1 The Council will not enter into debate or take action on any matter that would jeopardize customary expectations of confidentiality in respect to students, faculty, or staff, or on matters of an explicitly contractual nature.

1.2.4.2 The Council does not have the authority to override decisions made by Departmental committees that do not formally report to it, for example the

Department Evaluation Committee (DEC) and Department Hiring Committee (DHC). Council does, however, have the authority to discuss such decisions and to provide advice, save in cases precluded by considerations of confidentiality and/or contractual requirements, as specified above. The determination of such restrictions is the responsibility of the Chair of the Department.

### **1.3 Membership**

Voting membership on Department Council shall be comprised of the following:

1.3.1 All RFA members of the Department.

1.3.2 At least two CUPE Unit 1 contract lecturers in the Department, to be elected by all contract lecturers and from qualified CUPE Unit 1 contract lecturers every September. The number will be one CUPE Unit 1 contract lecturer per language stream offered in the undergraduate program housed in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures.

1.3.3 The Departmental Administrator and the Undergraduate Program Administrator.

1.3.4 Students to be elected from and by each year of the undergraduate degree program housed in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures. The number will normally be one student from each year of study, provided the resulting ratio is not less than one-fourth and not more than one-third of the total RFA Council membership. If adjustments are required, the order of precedence of representation shall be from fourth year to first year. Student representatives shall be reported to the Department Chair by the end of the third week of classes in each Fall semester.

In addition to the voting membership stated above, meetings of the Council are open to all Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures faculty, instructors, staff and students to attend.

### **1.4 Voting**

1.4.1. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting.

1.4.2 The Chair of Council shall vote only to break a tie

### **1.5. Chair of Council**

The Chair of Council will be elected by and from RFA, CUPE Unit 1 and staff Council members, normally at the first Fall semester meeting of Council. The Chair of the Department or his/her designate shall convene the meeting.

1.5.1. The Chair of Council is responsible for:

1.5.1.1. Calling and conducting meetings.

1.5.1.2. Setting agendas.

1.5.1.3. Maintaining a written record of Council decisions, actions, and recommendations, and ensuring that a copy of these records is filed with the Departmental Administrator.

1.5.1.4. Monitoring follow-up to Council actions.

1.5.2. The Chair of the Department and Chair of Council are *ex-officio* members of all Council committees and sub-committees.

1.5.3. The Chair of Council and Chair of the Department may request another Council member to act in his or her stead on an interim basis.

1.5.4. There is no limit on the number of terms that may be served by a Chair of Council, provided that an election is held each year.

## **1.6. Council Procedures**

1.6.1. Meetings will normally be held twice a year, once in each of the Fall and Winter semesters. There will in any event be no fewer than two meetings per year. Additional meetings may be held at the call of the Chair of Council or at the request of at least three Council members.

1.6.2. Notices of meetings will normally be distributed at least five days in advance in electronic form or hard copy.

1.6.3. Quorum is 50% of Council's full voting membership. RFA members must constitute a majority of the members present. Faculty members on leave will not be counted in the quorum calculation unless present at the meeting either personally or via such other media as Council may permit.

1.6.4. Voting matters are normally decided by a simple majority of voting members present at a meeting. Decisions may be taken outside meetings through ballots distributed electronically or in physical form to all members.

1.6.5. A decision to amend the Bylaws of the Department Council requires a two-thirds majority of voting members to be present at a meeting and can be taken only after written notice (including the text of the proposed amendment) has been provided to all voting members at least three business days in advance of the meeting.

## **1.7. Committee Structure, Mandates, and Composition**

1.7.1. The Department Council or the Department Chair may establish and determine the structure and operating procedures of any additional standing or *ad hoc* committee.

1.7.2. Membership of all committees and subcommittees is on a volunteer basis and is approved by Council.

1.7.3. The term of office of members of any committee or sub-committee is normally one year, beginning on July 1st and ending on June 30th.

1.7.4. There is no limit on the number of terms that may be served by a member of any committee or sub-committee, provided that the member is re-elected or appointed by the Department Chair every year.