

Department of Biology, University of Oregon
Governance Overview
1 August 2015

The policies and procedures described in this document are intended to be consistent with the policies of the University of Oregon, as posted by the Office of Academic Affairs, and of the College of Arts and Sciences, and with the various requirements of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between United Academics and the University of Oregon. It is understood that internal governance policy and any policies developed through internal governance, both within this unit and as specified in the CBA, are subject to the approval of the appropriate dean and the Provost or designee. This document reflects the equitable participation of all Department of Biology Tenure Track Faculty (TTF) and Career Non-Tenure Track Faculty (NTTF) in the development of department policies and practices.

I. Faculty Administrative Roles.

Department Head. The Department of Biology Department Head typically serves a 3-year term, and may be reappointed for an unlimited number of terms. The Head is appointed by the Dean from among candidates put forward by the Department. The Head has decision-making authority over all matters within the Department apart from those first requiring approval of the Dean.

Signature Authority in Department Head's Absence. Signature authority in the absence of the Department Head shall fall to a member of the Executive Committee. Determination of the Executive Committee member with signature authority will depend upon the schedules and availability of the Executive Committee members. There are enough members on the committee that it seems a virtual certainty that one will always be available. In the event that a member of the Executive Committee is not designated prior to the Department Head's absence, an authorized signature can be obtained from any current Executive Committee member.

Curriculum Coordinator. In consultation with the Department Head, a NTTF or TTF devotes 0.5 FTE to matching non-tenure and tenure track faculty with courses to fulfill curriculum needs and goals.

Executive Committee. There are no associate heads in Biology, but the department head regularly consults with an Advisory Committee that consists of one TTF member from each of the Institutes to which tenure track faculty members belong, **and one Career NTTF member**. When a Biology faculty member is Institute Director, the Director is a member of the Executive Committee. When another department's faculty member is

director, a Biology faculty member from the Institute is chosen by the Institute to represent that Institute on the Biology Executive Committee. The advisory committee typically meets early in each term during the Fall, Winter and Spring quarters. Topics of discussion vary depending on the status of departmental priorities, but typically focus on budget, policy matters, and space re-allocation and renovation. The committee is advisory in nature, with recommendations to the department made at faculty meetings.

Institutes. Nearly all tenure track faculty members in Biology also are members of a research Institute. Currently there are five such Institutes: Oregon Institute of Marine Biology (OIMB), Institute of Ecology and Evolution (IEE), Institute of Neuroscience (ION), Institute of Molecular Biology (IMB), and Environmental Sciences Institute (ESI). Note that the ESI is newly formed and has not yet formulated all of its policies and procedures. It currently does not have a representative on the Executive Committee, and is not yet included in relevant standing committees within the Department of Biology. Faculty members may be members of more than one Institute, although most are members of a single Institute. Most but not all Institutes also include TTF members from other departments. The Institute staffs oversee all pre-award and post-award grants administration for faculty members within an Institute, and indirect cost returns are allocated to the Institutes. If a faculty member is not an Institute member, the Department of Biology staff oversees pre- and post-award grants administration and receives indirect cost returns.

II. Standing Committees.

Non-tenure track and tenure track faculty are appointed annually by the Department Head in consultation with individual faculty. Final assignments are typically made during the summer preceding the relevant academic year and distributed to all faculty. The appointments include designating committee members and committee chairs for most standing committees. Exceptions include the Advisory/Executive Committee (see Section I above), the Personnel Committee (members are elected each year), and the Graduate Recruitment Committee (members are appointed by Institute directors, with typically one member each from IEE, ION, and IMB; OIMB recruits independently, and ESI is still developing procedures and policies and thus is not included yet with membership on standing committees). Committees vary with respect to having either or both tenure track and non-tenure track faculty members, as indicated for each committee below. Decisions made by department committees and at department meetings are preserved by the Business Manager and appropriately archived in the Biology office. Access to these decisions is readily available to all TTF and NTTF.

Curriculum: Reviews proposals for changes in our course offerings or in our major requirements. Presents a yearly report to the department with

recommended changes. Handles other curriculum issues on an *ad hoc* basis. Members typically include the Departmental Curriculum Coordinator (currently a non-tenure track Career Senior Instructor), and one tenure track faculty member each from OIMB, IEE, ION, and IMB. One administrative staff person is assigned to help organize meetings and collect information. This is a decision making body; records of decisions are kept in the Biology office by the Curriculum Assistant.

Development: Oversees fundraising activities on behalf of the department. This committee is advisory and could consist of both TTF and NTTF but not been active for many years. Distribution of endowment funds is overseen by Department Head with input requested from selected Graduate and Undergraduate Affairs Committee members.

Diversity: Promotes recruitment, retention and mentoring of non-majority students in the Department of Biology, including Summer Program for Undergraduate Research, which brings under-represented minority undergraduates from other universities to the University of Oregon to participate in research with Biology faculty members. Coordinates activities with NIH- and NSF-funded training programs. Members typically include SPUR Director (non-tenure track faculty member), one undergraduate advisor (non-tenure track faculty member), and one other non-tenure track or tenure track faculty member. One administrative staff person is typically assigned to organize meetings and collect information. This committee is advisory, reporting to the department head and sometimes at faculty meetings.

Executive: This committee advises the Department Head on budget and policy matters, including reviews and recommendations as to the allocation and renovation of space. See section in Faculty Administrative Roles for more information.

Graduate Affairs: Oversees graduate progress. Members include one tenure-track faculty each from OIMB, IEE, ION, and IMB. Any member may call a meeting at any time to discuss students or the Graduate Handbook. The chair works closely with the Graduate Program Manager, an administrative staff person, on an *ad hoc*, usually day-to-day basis to resolve short-term issues. Members are responsible for appointing the second year proposal exam committee for students in their respective institutes. Members are responsible (a) for ensuring that students meet deadlines for quarterly exams, proposal exams, and DAC committee meetings, (b) for reviewing annually the progress of students in their respective institutes, and (c) for making sure the annual progress report forms for each student is properly filed with the Graduate Program Manager. The Chair, in consultation with the Graduate Program Manager is responsible for approving all Doctoral Dissertation Committees, Advancements to Candidacy, and Graduation. The Chair also mediates all terminations of graduate students for unsatisfactory progress in

consultation with the respective Institute Member, Institute Director, and the student's advisor. Failure of students to meet deadlines result first in a reminder to the student from the Graduate Program Manager, a second reminder is sent to the student and his/her advisor from the Chair of the GAC, the third reminder is sent to the advisor from the Biology Department Head. Members of the committee consult on an ad hoc basis with the Curriculum Coordinator on the graduate curriculum and any concerns arising from GTF teaching performance. This is a decision making body; records of decisions are kept in the Biology office by the Graduate Coordinator.

Graduate Recruiting and Admissions: Oversees the process of recruitment and admission of graduate students. Members include one tenure track faculty each from OIMB, IEE, ION, and IMB of institute representatives. Each institute has the option to appoint other faculty to aid in admissions evaluations. Committee works closely with the Graduate Coordinator, an administrative staff person. This is a decision making body; records are kept in the Biology office by the Graduate Coordinator.

GTF Applications: Oversees the review of all GTF application materials submitted to the Department of Biology and recommends GTF appointments to the Department Head. Members include the Curriculum Coordinator (non-tenure track faculty member), one additional non-tenure track faculty member, and one tenure track faculty member. This is a decision making body; records are kept in the Biology office by the Curriculum Coordinator.

Instructional Technology: Keeps informed on technological advances and options and seeks way to incorporate relevant technology in department programs. Sets criteria for the use of technical resources. Prioritizes departmental and instructional equipment needs within the equipment allocation budget. Members typically include 1 tenure track faculty member, 2 non-tenure track faculty members, 2 laboratory prep staff people, and the departmental IT staff person. This is a decision making body; records are kept in the Biology office by the Business Manager.

Personnel: This is an advisory committee that considers promotion and tenure cases during fall term, and conducts annual and third-year reviews of non-tenured faculty, and post-tenure review of senior faculty, during the spring term. The committee advises the Department Head on salary issues and issues related to development of individual faculty; presents promotion cases at faculty meetings; Committee is elected yearly, typically with two year appointments, and includes one tenure track faculty member each from OIMB, IEE, ION, and IMB, and one non-tenure track faculty member **at or above the rank sought by any promotion candidates.** **Department Head reserves the option to appoint an interim representative in the event the elected representative is not at or**

above the rank sought by any promotion candidates. One departmental staff person is assigned to organize meetings and collect information.

Planning: This is an advisory committee that coordinates departmental planning activities and leads the effort to produce a planning document. Process started Winter 2011. Final report produced in 2012/13. This committee has now been directed toward planning the annual Departmental Retreat, with the first retreat occurring on March 11, 2014. See section below for details. Members include one tenure track faculty each from OIMB, IEE, ION, and IMB.

Teaching Awards: Reviews nominations for department faculty, GTF, and lab assistant awards and chooses yearly winners. Composed of last three winners (can be non-tenure or tenure track faculty) and the Curriculum Coordinator (non-tenure track). This is a decision making body; records are kept in the Biology office by the Curriculum Coordinator.

Undergraduate Affairs: Oversees the activities of the Biology Undergraduate Advising office. Oversees advertising, nominations and awarding of internal and external fellowships, scholarships and awards. Reviews student concerns or complaints regarding biology faculty, staff, or facilities. Helps to develop programs to enhance the undergraduate experience within the department. Develops and implements plan for coordinating undergraduate research efforts within the department. Supervises undergraduate theses and the honors program. Members include one non-tenure track faculty member, two tenure track faculty members, and the Curriculum Coordinator (non-tenure track). One undergraduate advisor serves an advisory role, and one departmental staff person organizes meetings and collects information. This is a decision making body; records are kept in the Biology office by the Curriculum Coordinator.

Representatives to external groups:

Library: One non-tenure track faculty member acts as a liaison between the department and the library, keeping the department informed about important library developments. Processes requests from faculty for acquisition of new library materials, and makes recommendations to the department regarding departmental action in response to any major changes in our library budget.

Malheur: One tenure-track faculty member acts as liaison between the department and the Malheur Field Station, with administrative help from one departmental staff person.

III. Department Meetings Protocols and Membership

Department meetings. Faculty meetings are held at least once per quarter but do not occur on a regular schedule. More meetings are held as the need arises, with additional meetings typically held to consider tenure track faculty search committee recommendations and other concerns. Attendance is not required but is recorded and noted in the Meeting Minutes that are distributed to all faculty shortly after the meetings are held. The Biology Business Manager attends nearly all faculty meetings and is responsible for recording minutes. In the absence of the Business Manager the department head or another appointed faculty member record minutes. The department head reviews and approves the minutes prior to distribution to all faculty and staff.

Voting policies and procedures. Department of Biology policy and practice has been to allow any faculty member to attend the faculty meetings and participate in discussion. However, only tenured, tenure track, and career NTTF faculty who are appointed at .50 FTE or greater during the quarter in which a vote is held, and all retired faculty members whenever on the University payroll and serving actively in an instructional or research capacity, are eligible to vote. If the department wishes, it may grant such rights to retired faculty at other times. Eligible career NTTF may vote on all program matters with the exception of promotion and tenure of professorial rank faculty. Voting on NTTF promotion cases by Career Instructors, and voting on TTF promotion cases by TTF, are restricted to those in the same rank to be attained or higher.

Annual department retreat. Based on the recommendation of a 10 Year External Review Committee report obtained in the Spring of 2013, the Department of Biology held its first annual department-wide retreat on March 11, 2014. The retreat was held on campus, in the Papé Room at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, from 9am to 4pm, with a 1.5 hour catered lunch. In the past, all retreats have been Institute-based with very little department-wide discussion of overall research priorities and curriculum goals, outside of occasional faculty meeting discussions of future searches and curriculum changes. The retreat took place one year after the College of Arts and Sciences began to require departments to submit 5-year strategic plans each spring that articulate priorities in maintenance and growth of the departments' research missions.

The format and content of the annual retreat were flexible and may change substantially from year to year, but the general goals of improving curriculum and planning for future research priorities were key components of the content. The goals are (i) to integrate and synergize research interests not only within the department but among multiple departments on campus, and (ii) generate a much more comprehensive and integrated understanding of our curriculum by all faculty and enable

our department to update and improve our curriculum more efficiently and consistently.

IV. Ad Hoc Committees

Ad Hoc committees are appointed as the needs arise, can be composed of either or both non-tenure track and tenure track faculty, and vary in size. Ad hoc committees are fairly rare; fewer than one per year are generally assembled. They typically report to the Department Head or to the entire faculty at a Faculty Meeting to make recommendations.

V. Search Committees

Tenure track faculty search committees. These search committees are typically organized within affiliated research institutes and can consist entirely of Biology tenure track faculty or a mix of TTF from Biology and other affiliated departments. The search committees then report to the entire faculty (TTF and NTTF) at a faculty meeting, and the faculty (TTF and NTTF) votes as a whole to support or oppose the recommendation. If the faculty vote to support, an offer is made. If searches are done for joint appointments with another department (such as the currently ongoing Math-Bio search for three positions), the committee members are appointed by the respective department heads and individual or joint faculty meetings are held to consider recommendations from the search committee.

Non-tenure track faculty and staff search committees. These search committees are typically organized by the Department Head in consultation with faculty and the business manager and can consist of non-tenure track and tenure track faculty members and staff. Recommendations are typically made to the Department Head and offers made, sometimes after consulting with the faculty as a whole at Faculty Meetings.

VI. Department Head Nomination.

Meeting with the Dean and Associate Dean. The College of Arts and Sciences Dean and Associate Dean will attend a Biology faculty meeting to discuss the department headship. This meeting is generally scheduled before February 15th during the final year of the current department head's tenure. This meeting is to start the process of department head nomination by discussing how it works. The meeting is basically to alert faculty to the procedures, job duties, terms of service, etc., but not (yet) to engage discussion of possible candidates. The tradition has been to do this face-to-face in a meeting with all faculty in the department, though no discussion of actual candidates or departmental preferences or polling occurs at that time. These meetings do turn out to be opportunities for

discussion about departmental issues and future direction, which the Dean finds useful.

Soliciting recommendations. After the meeting with the Dean, the Biology Executive Committee solicits names of faculty interested in serving as the department head. The Executive Committee asks the Institute directors to send out a request to their faculty soliciting recommendations. When one or more members of the Executive Committee are in a position to potentially become Department Head, the make up of the committee requesting recommendations is constituted to include some more junior faculty who are not in a position to potentially become Department Head.

Department discussion. Based on the recommendations received from the Institutes, the nominating committee communicates the list of recommendations to the Biology faculty and initiates a departmental conversation about the headship and surveys faculty sentiments. This is a confidential conversation and possible department head candidates should not attend the discussion.

Recommendation to the Dean. By the deadline provided by the Dean, generally one month after attending the Biology faculty meeting, the nominating committee presents a written summary of the results, including the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate recommended and/or nominated, to the Dean. The letter to the Dean is a confidential document. At this point, faculty members are invited to write directly to the Dean concerning their views and recommendations. (In instances where this procedure is inappropriate or cumbersome, the department should discuss possible alternative selection procedures with the Dean.) After receiving the departmental committee report and advice of individual faculty, the Dean usually interviews more than one candidate. In all cases, the final decision regarding the department head is made by the Dean, in consultation with the Provost and President.

VII. Department Faculty and Staff Organization

Tenure track faculty. Nearly all tenure track faculty are also members of research Institutes that provide pre- and post-award grants administration staff and oversee allocation and renovation of research space. The teaching course load for research active faculty is two courses per year, typically one lower level course and one upper level course, although exceptions are not unusual. Faculty can buy out of one course per year using research grant funds, at the rate of 20% of their 9-month salary. New Assistant Professors typically do not teach a course in their first year, teach one course in their second year, and assume the full load of two courses in their third year. If tenured faculty become research inactive (judged by external funding levels, research publications, and other

productivity indicators), they meet with the department head and begin to increase their teaching load until they teach five courses per year.

Non-tenure track faculty. The Department of Biology currently has ten Career non-tenure track faculty that teach a substantial portion of the core requirements for Biology majors, and also teach a variety of upper level courses for Biology majors, with a teaching load of **six** courses per year. Adjunct faculty also contribute to meeting curriculum needs. **For any funding contingent faculty, time spent on service to the University, including shared and internal governance, must comply with the terms and conditions of their sponsored project and all federal and state laws and regulations.**

Business Manager. The administrative staff in Biology is supervised by a Business Manager who also works closely with the Department Head to oversee the Department budget and manage departmental affairs.

Curriculum Coordinator. In consultation with the Department Head, a non-tenure track faculty member devotes 0.5 FTE to matching non-tenure and tenure track faculty with courses to fulfill curriculum needs and goals.

Graduate Program Manager. A departmental staff member works with the Graduate Recruitment Committee and the Graduate Affairs Committee to oversee the department's graduate program recruitment activities, admissions, program management, and progression of graduate students through their graduate education. The Graduate Program Manager position supervises and is assisted by a graduate program specialist staff position.

Undergraduate advising. Two non-tenure track faculty members provide all undergraduate advising and also supervise an extensive peer advisor group of undergraduate students. Our advising space is currently undergoing an extensive enlargement and renovation to accommodate increased enrollment numbers of Biology undergraduate majors. This space will likely be shared partly with the Department of Physics for some of their peer advising and the General Science Program.

Laboratory prep staff. Two laboratory prep staff members and one NTTF currently provide lab support for undergraduate courses that include lab sections.

Science Literacy Program. The Department of Biology is participating along with Physics, Chemistry, and Geology in a Science Literacy Program that is designed to encourage the implementation of learner-centered teaching methods. This program was initiated by Professors Judith Eisen and Michael Raymer in Biology and Physics, with funding from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and support from the College of Arts and Sciences, and is overseen by Associate Director Elly Vandegriff,

a non-tenure track faculty member in Biology. The program includes participation by senior Ph.D. students who receive partial FTE support and participate extensively in course development and execution, providing substantial teaching experience for PhD students who are interested in teaching careers. The Department provides one course release for faculty members to work with the Associate Director in developing a course. Participation has been limited to non-majors courses but is now being extended to courses for Biology majors. Discussion of these new teaching methods also will be a topic in our first annual department retreat.

Summer Program for Undergraduate Research (SPUR). The Department of Biology and affiliated Institutes have for over 15 years sponsored a summer program for undergraduate research that targets but is not limited to under-represented minority students. Participating undergraduates come from all over the US and spend a summer working in a research lab and participating in a weekly symposium where they learn about life sciences research at the University of Oregon and develop their own presentations on their summer research projects. This program has been directed by Peter O'Day, a non-tenure track faculty member who also attends annual conferences that focus on under-represented minority participation in life sciences research, teaches an Ethics course required for PhD students, and participates in other diversity programs within the Department. SPUR has been important for maintaining long-standing PhD Training Grants from the National Institutes of Health, which require efforts designed to improve under-represented minority participation in life sciences research.