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**Department of Public Policy and Administration Governance Handbook BYLAWS**  
**California State University, Sacramento**

**Adopted on October 1, 2025**

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## Introduction

This Governance Handbook outlines the principles, structures, and procedures that guide the internal operations of the Department of Public Policy and Administration (PPA) at Sacramento State. It is designed to promote transparency, equity, and shared governance among faculty, staff, and students.

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## Department Mission

The Capital Campus's graduate programs in Public Policy and Administration prepare future leaders to address the complex issues that face California. We serve the State and the region by developing leaders with strong analytical tools and a deep commitment to public service.

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## Authority and Scope of Governance

The department operates under the policies of Sacramento State and the California State University system. These bylaws are subordinate to university-wide faculty governance structures and collective bargaining agreements.

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## Membership and Voting Rights

All probationary and tenured faculty, including the department chair, are voting members of the department. Provided that they have attended the meetings in which the issue was discussed, lecturers are able to vote according to their workload assignment. If a temporary faculty member's assignment is 50% or less, they get a ½ vote; if the assignment is higher than 50%, they get a full vote. Staff and student representatives may participate in discussions but do not vote, unless they are explicitly granted voting rights by policy. Unless otherwise specified, faculty members in the Faculty Early Retirement Program are also voting members of the department. Emeritus faculty may attend meetings in a non-voting advisory capacity.

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## Department Meetings

- **Regular Meetings:** Regular faculty meetings of the department will be held at least monthly during the academic year. Upon majority approval of the faculty at the beginning of the academic year, they can be scheduled more frequently. All departmental faculty, regardless of appointment status, are invited to attend departmental meetings.
  - **Special Meetings:** Special meetings may be called by the Department Chair or by petition of one-third of voting members.
  - **Agenda:** The agenda for faculty meetings will be distributed at least 48 hours in advance.
  - **Minutes:** Meeting minutes will be recorded and archived by the department coordinator or designated faculty member. Meeting minutes will be approved by the faculty at the following meeting.
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## Decision-Making Procedures

All motions on department actions are subject to debate. The department has a culture which encourages operating by consensus. When possible, the department chair will work to achieve a consensus decision. Absent consensus, decisions are made by majority vote unless otherwise specified by policy. Acceptable voting methods include voice vote, show of hands, or secret ballot. If a vote results in a tie, the motion fails. Votes on substantial changes to departmental policy will only take place after a second reading and require a 2/3 majority rather than a simple majority. Substantial changes are defined as those that materially affect the department's governance, significant curricular changes, or promotion and tenure processes. A faculty member can make a motion to advance a document to second reading which would require a majority vote to proceed.

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## Department Chair Responsibilities

Per university policy, the department chair is a teaching faculty member of the department, and as such has all the rights and responsibilities of a faculty member. In addition, the primary function of a chair is to carry out the business of the department. They are responsible for communicating the Department's needs to the College or University administration. They are also responsible for communicating University and College policies and administrative procedures to the Department faculty and staff.

The responsibilities of the chair are detailed in university policy. The chair is responsible for discharging the duties in accordance with the established policies and procedures of the Department, College, University, and the CSU System.

The Department Chair should consult with the Department faculty in making administrative decisions regarding such matters as workload, scheduling, curriculum, and budget. After careful consideration of faculty concerns and thoughts on these administrative matters, and consultation with the College Dean as needed, the Department Chair has the authority to make timely decisions to accomplish the administration of the Department. Faculty have the right to appeal or request review of any administrative decisions affecting them.

The Department Chair should consult periodically with Department faculty, other department chairs with whom they interact, and the College Dean regarding pertinent aspects of departmental administration.

#### Department Chair Selection

According to University Policy, only full-time tenure-track or tenured faculty shall be eligible to serve as department chairs. Department chairs shall be nominated by secret ballot by a majority of the votes cast in an election, in which at least all tenured and tenure-track Unit 3 faculty members of the Department including temporary faculty, those on the Faculty Early Retirement Program (FERP), and those on leave, are eligible to vote.

Temporary faculty\*, both full-time and part-time, are included in chair elections subject to apportionments of vote based on workload. If a temporary faculty member's assignment is 50% or less, they get a ½ vote; if the assignment is higher than 50%, they get a full vote.

1. If a chair election is held between regular semesters (fall and spring), the above calculation shall be based on the workload of each temporary faculty member in the prior year.
2. Participation is voluntary.
3. If the outcome of voting is reported, no indication shall be made between those votes cast by tenured and tenure-track faculty and those cast by temporary faculty.

\* Not including guest lecturers, visiting scholars, graduate teaching assistants or other instructors who do not hold a Unit 3 appointment.

In order to minimize a potential conflict of interest, if the incumbent Chair or Acting Chair will be a nominee in the upcoming election, the nomination process and election should

be conducted by an appointee agreed upon by the Department as part of the nomination procedures.

The incumbent Chair or Acting Chair shall report the result of the nominating procedure to the President via the College Dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

## Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

The department has X standing committees, each of which will be filled at the fall departmental retreat or first faculty meeting of the academic year. Part-time faculty are also invited and encouraged to participate in committees unless otherwise noted or prohibited by university policy.

### Standing Committees

Committee Name	Purpose	Membership Guidelines
Curriculum Committee	Makes recommendations for the revision of core courses and degree programs to ensure curriculum alignment with institutional learning outcomes, accreditation standards, and disciplinary best practices. The committee will also consider student and workforce needs in evaluating disciplinary trends and program recommendations. The committee recommends approval or revision before forwarding proposals to college- or university-level curriculum bodies. The committee will also support accreditation efforts by documenting curricular decisions and ensuring compliance with external and accreditation standards.	2 faculty members + student representative
Assessment Committee	Coordinates program evaluation and outcomes, assists in the review of student artifacts and learning outcomes. The committee will also assist with the writing of the annual assessment report. The committee shall use data from	2-3 faculty members

<b>Committee Name</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Membership Guidelines</b>
	course evaluations, graduation rates, and external benchmarks to recommend program or policy improvements.	
Appointments Committee	Guidelines for the formation and conduct of this committee are provided in the departmental ARTP document.	Committee of the whole
Part-Time Faculty Evaluation Committee	Guidelines for the formation and conduct of this committee are provided in the departmental ARTP document.	2 faculty + Chair
RTP Committee	Guidelines for the formation and conduct of this committee are provided in the departmental ARTP document.	2 faculty + Chair
Admissions Committee	Reviews and scores program applications and makes admission decisions in December and March. Provides input to the chair about applicant pools and potential recruitment strategies.	Committee of the whole
Scholarship and Awards Committee	Reviews applications and selects scholarship and award recipients. Subcommittees may be formed for specific scholarships and awards as needed.	Committee of the whole plus a GASPAA representation on the DEI Scholarship Subcommittee

## Ad Hoc Committees

Ad Hoc Committees may be formed by the chair or majority vote of the faculty to accomplish specific tasks (e.g., accreditation, policy review). The committees will be dissolved upon completion of their charge.

## Committee Operations

Unless otherwise specified in their charge, committees will have a chair and will meet as needed to complete the tasks assigned to them. Unless they are committees of the whole, committees are required to report on activities during faculty meetings.

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## Senate Representation

The department will also elect one member of the faculty to serve as their senate representative each year and one faculty member to serve as the alternate representative. The Senator is expected to represent the department in person and be an informed member of the faculty senate. Senator expectations are governed by the Faculty Senate Bylaws. They are responsible for:

1. Attending all meetings of the Faculty Senate or, if unable to attend, advising the alternate;
2. Report back to the faculty the happenings and important decisions made in the Senate and consult with and consider the opinions/interest of the department while engaging in Faculty Senate business; and
3. Maintain a collegial, professional, and objective bearing during debate in the Faculty Senate.

## Student Representation

### **Role of Students**

Students shall have the opportunity to participate in departmental governance through GASPPA participation in departmental meetings and representation on standing committees where appropriate.

### **Rights and Responsibilities**

GASPPA representatives shall have the right to voice opinions, propose initiatives, and vote on matters where student input is deemed appropriate. They are expected to communicate regularly with their peers and uphold professional standards in their communication.

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## Amendment Procedures

Any faculty member may propose amendments to these bylaws. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the department chair and distributed to all voting members at least two weeks prior to a scheduled vote.

Amendments require a two-thirds majority vote of the voting membership present at a regular or special department meeting.

Approved amendments shall take effect immediately unless otherwise specified in the amendment text.