Department of Physics

Operations

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Department of Physics.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSES

SECTION 1

The purposes of the faculty of the Department of Physics shall be to exercise jurisdiction in instruction, research, and service in the physics programs at the University of North Florida (UNF). Jurisdictional areas shall include the broader contexts of physics, astronomy, geology and earth science regarding:

A. Maintenance of stability and continuity in the orderly conduct of the department’s function;
B. academic curricula, organization and program standards;
C. participation in the governance of the department, including advising and recommending to the department chairperson on all appropriate matters, and in the development and fulfillment of the department’s mission as set forth in the UNF Constitution.
D. Such other matters as are customarily the province of a departmental faculty, including, but not limited to, those matters pertaining directly to instruction, research and service programs in the physical sciences at UNF except for chemistry.

SECTION 2

In addition to the foregoing responsibilities, the Department faculty shall cooperate in the overall governance of the College of Arts and Sciences as established by the bylaws of the College, and in the overall governance of the University as established by the University Constitution.

SECTION 3

Compliance with Collective Bargaining Law

These operational procedures are not intended to address wages, hours, or terms and conditions of employment, which are governed by the Florida collective bargaining law. Any provisions that speak to such matters are intended to function pursuant to and in compliance with appropriate collective bargaining agreements and Chapter 447, Part II, Florida Statutes.
ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1

Any person, with the exception of adjuncts and visiting faculty, who holds the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Instructor or Laboratory Lecturer in the Department, shall be a member of the Department faculty, with the right to participate in the governance and administration of the Department as prescribed herein. Non-tenure earning members of the faculty may be excluded from voting on matters that do not directly pertain to their assigned duties.

SECTION 2

The Department faculty shall be the judge of its own membership where questions of eligibility arise, except as provided in the University Constitution.

ARTICLE IV: DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSON

SECTION 1

A. The Department shall be administered by a principal officer, the chairperson, who shall have general administrative responsibility for its policies and programs.

B. Nomination, appointment and retention of the Department chairperson shall be governed by the provisions of the UNF Constitution.

C. The duties of the Department chairperson shall include:
   1. acting as the faculty’s presiding officer except as herein provided;
   2. providing leadership in the development and evaluation of instruction, research, and service programs;
   3. developing appropriate teaching schedules in consultation with the faculty;
   4. presenting the views of the Department faculty to higher-level administrators;
   5. presenting the views of the higher-level administrators to the Department faculty;
   6. conducting periodic evaluations of the Department faculty in accordance with department, college and university policies;
   7. assuring compliance with department and university policies and guidelines with regard to faculty participation in matters of appointment, retention, promotion and tenure;
   8. representing the Department at meetings, conferences, and other occasions except as herein provided;
   9. keeping the Department membership advised concerning needs, programs and accomplishments of the Department;
   10. recommending to the college dean appointments, promotions and award of tenure;
11. preparing the departmental budget for review by the Departmental faculty;
12. serving as an ex-officio, non-voting member of all departmental committees except the Promotion and Tenure Committee, of which the chairperson shall not be a member;
13. appointing such committees as the departmental faculty deems necessary to conduct business (Exception: memberships of standing committees are elected by the department faculty, Section 4.d.)
14. providing advocacy for the faculty, students and the programs of the Department;
15. administering the conditions of employment;
16. coordinating the interviewing and hiring of new personnel in consultation with the faculty;
17. performing other duties as are usual for the office;
18. performing any and all duties required by State Law, Board of Governors and University rules, the Administrative Procedures Act, and the appropriate collective bargaining agreements.

D. In performing all of these duties, the chairperson shall consult with faculty when appropriate and shall practice a philosophy of shared decision making with a spirit of collegiality.

SECTION 2

A. The normal term for department chairs is four years. An extensive review will be conducted in the third year of the term to inform future planning. Should the need arise, a majority of the faculty or the Dean may request a review of the Chair at any time.

B. The review of a chair will be informed by any written evaluations conducted by the administration, and by a meeting of the Dean with the faculty of the department. The Dean may also seek additional input from departmental faculty and others who might have relevant perspectives to share. The Department faculty shall vote by anonymous ballot on the question of retaining the Department Chair. The Dean will receive the vote and report the result to the Department faculty. In the event the result is negative, the Dean will meet with the Department faculty and explain any action other than replacement of the Department Chair. If there is strong and consistent support for the chair, the Dean will reappoint the chair to a term of up to four years, though fewer years might also be designated.

C. If, following a review, there is insufficient support for retention of the chair; or, if the chair does not seek reappointment, or if a vacancy occurs in the chairmanship for any other reason, the following procedures will be initiated:

The Dean will consider whether an internal or external search is feasible and appropriate based upon the budget and input from the department.
If the search is to be internal, the Dean will query the faculty of the department for nominations of potential chairs. Once the list is assembled, the Dean will determine whether each nominee is willing to serve, meet with each willing nominee, and send a list of the interested candidates to the department faculty. The department may ask each candidate to distribute a resume, statement with goals, and schedule a meeting with the faculty at large if they believe this will clarify what each candidate would bring to the position. Whether or not a departmental meeting is held, each faculty member will be asked to comment in writing on the strengths of each candidate, and challenges each might face. In case a departmental meeting is held with the candidates, during this process, the department will select a facilitator to conduct the meetings and generate a narrative of strengths and weaknesses for each candidate to be approved by the department and submitted to the Dean. Once this input is collected, the dean will assess which candidate will best meet the needs of the department and provide the leadership sought by fellow chairs and the Dean’s office. If the Dean requires additional information in making this selection, a meeting may be scheduled with department faculty and staff to gain further input.

In case of an external search the dean will ask the department faculty for nominations and/or names of volunteers to serve on the search committee. From these names, the Dean will constitute a committee that provides the best representation across academic ranks, gender and minority status, and potentially also of sub-disciplines within the department. An outside chair will also be appointed to the search committee.

The search committee will generate the position announcement and submit it to the Dean’s office for approval. After the search closes, the search committee will forward a short list of candidates to the Dean for approval before they are brought to campus to interview. At the end of the interview process, the search committee will seek input from the department, generate a narrative of strengths and weaknesses for each candidate, note any unacceptable candidates in the pool, and submit this information to the Dean. The Dean will meet with the faculty to gain further input and discuss the merits of each candidate with the whole department. Thereafter, the Dean will proceed to hire the candidate viewed to offer the best skill set for the position.

ARTICLE V: MEETINGS

SECTION 1

A. The Department Chairperson shall act as presiding officer for departmental meetings except as herein provided. The Chairperson’s principal duties as presiding officer are specified in the Department’s Parliamentary authority.

B. The Department Chairperson shall convene the faculty for regular meetings as
necessary, but at least twice during the fall semester and at least twice during the spring semester; meetings to be held on weekdays at a time convenient to the majority of the faculty.

C. At the request of five faculty members, the Chairperson shall call a special meeting. If the Chairperson fails to respond to such a request, a designated member of the Department faculty may convene such a special meeting. Actions at special meetings are limited to the single issue for which the meeting is convened.

D. When possible, the Chairperson shall appraise the full membership of the meeting agenda at least two working days prior to the meeting. The opening and closing time of the meeting shall be specified.

E. A majority of the voting faculty in residence shall constitute a quorum. Proxy or absentee votes are allowed if a majority of attending faculty permit or by request of a faculty member absent on official university business. Situations where absentee ballots are appropriate are cited in Section V.1.G.

F. Decisions on department matters shall, when possible, be determined by consensus of the membership. If consensus cannot be achieved, decisions shall be determined by majority vote of the faculty members present and voting.

G. The Chairperson is not to be present at faculty members convened for the purpose of considering retention or removal of the Chairperson. These two situations are the only conditions for which provisions will be made for the acceptance of written absentee ballots. Proxy votes are not acceptable for these two situations.

H. Any member may without prejudice request a secret ballot on any matter or issue. Votes on sensitive matters shall be by secret ballot.

I. The Chairperson may not vote except in the event of a tie.

J. The faculty may reorder by majority vote the agenda at the outset of a meeting.

K. A faculty member may add an item to the meeting agenda before the agenda is sent to the faculty or at the outset of a meeting.

SECTION 2

A. In the Department Chairperson’s absence, the Acting Chairperson will assume the duties of the Chairperson for day-to-day operations, including convening meetings of the faculty.

B. The individual convening a meeting of the faculty shall make provisions for a
recording secretary for department meetings. The recording secretary shall submit a record of the meeting proceedings and minutes to the Department Office Manager. With the exception of records pertaining to departmental personnel matters, the departmental office manager shall make department records and minutes available to department members upon request.

C. The Department Office Manager shall notify the departmental faculty of the meeting time and place; make physical arrangements for meetings, maintain the records of the Department, the Chairperson and the Department committees, and Department members in coordinating their work.

SECTION 3

The annual meeting of the Department shall be in March of each year. The agenda for the annual meeting shall include the election of members to the Department committees and recruit Department members as candidates to seek election on college and university committees and boards. The budget request for the next year will be considered, if not already reviewed at an earlier meeting.

SECTION 4

The Department faculty shall:

a. Adopt and amend standing rules and these operations;

b. review and recommend an annual budget request;

c. adopt an annual budget for the Department upon determination of the Department’s budget allocation from the university but only budgetary matters outside of compensation are within the purview of the department faculty.

d. elect members to standing committees with open nominations and secret ballots;

e. adopt statements of policy and take actions appropriate to the purposes of the Department;

f. act as the final authority on all matters arising in this Department for which authority has not been given to some other officer or governing body.

ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES

SECTION 1: STANDING COMMITTEES

A. The Promotion and Tenure Committee:

1. The Promotion and Tenure (T&P) Committee shall be responsible for:
a. reviewing and recommending department tenure candidates to the Chairperson; and
b. advising the Chairperson in regard to the Chairperson’s promotion recommendations,
c. overseeing the mid-tenure review of tenure-track faculty in their third year.

2. Membership and the conduct of Promotion and Tenure Committee are governed by these Department of Physics’ Operations. Only tenured faculty of the department (minus the Department Chair) will be eligible to serve on the T&P committee. Only full professors of the department will be eligible to serve on the promotion committee of departmental faculty who are associate professors who are seeking promotion to full professor.

3. Membership of this committee is elected by the faculty at the annual March meeting.

SECTION 2: OTHER COMMITTEES

A. Search Committees:

The department chairperson shall appoint members of a search committee and the committee chair after soliciting expressions of interest from the faculty. The department chairperson is not eligible to serve on a search committee in the department.

Search Committees shall be responsible for:

a. initiating and coordinating searches for faculty to fill authorized positions in the Department;
b. advertising positions; reviewing, evaluating and screening all applicants meeting established time lines;
c. securing necessary dossiers, resumes, letters of reference, and other data;
d. implementing the Department’s and the university’s equal opportunity/Affirmative Action commitment;
e. identifying the candidates to invite for campus interviews;
f. making arrangements for carrying out campus interviews (including sharing logistical duties, transportation, meals with candidates, etc.);
g. appraising all department faculty of the candidates and their schedules and affording all department faculty opportunities to meet the candidates;
h. seeking and collecting evaluations from the department faculty;
i. recommending one or more candidates to the Chairperson for appointment, the candidates to be ranked or not at the committee’s discretion;
j. making available to the Dean the recommendations of the committee and all written faculty evaluations of the candidates proposed by the Chairperson for appointment.
B. Curriculum Committee:

The department chairperson shall appoint members of the curriculum committee and the committee chair after soliciting expressions of interest from the faculty. The department chairperson is not eligible to serve on the curriculum committee in the department but the chairperson will have input and final approval at the department level in all curricular matters with input from the department faculty.

The Curriculum Committee shall be responsible for:

a. overseeing the implementation of all new programs and courses and the
b. modification of all existing programs and courses in the department within
   the
   constraints of the college and university Academic Program Committees’
   procedures and with the consultation and final approval of the department
   chairperson.

C. Recruitment and Retention Committee:

The department chairperson shall appoint members of the recruitment and retention (RR) committee and the committee chair after soliciting expressions of interest from the faculty. The department chairperson will serve as a non-voting member on the RR committee as part of his or her responsibilities as chairperson.

The RR Committee shall be responsible for:

a. developing and implementing methods of attracting new physics majors to
   the
   department by recruiting new students to UNF from the Jacksonville
   region, the
   State of Florida and outside the State, and recruiting current UNF students
   to
   major in physics. The RR will manage, with participation by the
   department
   chairperson, all open house and similar events whose purpose is to recruit
   new
   majors.
   b. seeking methods to better improve the retention of physics majors (e.g.,
      managing
      the physics faculty student mentorship program.)

D. Student Awards Committee:
The committee will be composed of all faculty members in the department including the department chairperson. The department chairperson will be the chair of the student awards committee.

The Student Awards Committee shall be responsible for:

a. in the spring of each year identifying the outstanding calculus physics, research and graduate award winners according to the following procedure.

b. for the calculus physics award, the chairperson shall determine the UNF GPA and grades in Calculus Physics II of all the physics majors in the previous fall, summer and spring terms. Then the chairperson will determine the calculus physics I grades for these students. Based on these data the chair will suggest the calculus physics winner to the committee. If the committee does not concur with the chair’s recommendation, the majority of the committee will offer an alternative who will be the award winner.

c. For the outstanding graduate award the chairperson shall identify all physics graduates from the previous fall and summer terms in addition to all physics students cleared for graduation for the current spring term. The chairperson shall determine the UNF GPA and physics grades for this set of students. The committee will utilize these data in determining the outstanding graduate award winner. The winner will receive the most votes of the committee.

d. for the outstanding research award the chairperson will accept nominees from all tenure-track faculty of all current junior and senior physics majors so nominated. The chairperson shall determine the UNF GPA and physics grades for these students. Other considerations for this award will be student co-authorship of peer-reviewed publications, student poster presentations, and all other concrete evidence of research excellence. Based on these data the committee will vote on the outstanding research awardee; the student with the most faculty votes will be the winner.
SECTION 3: OTHER SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Each special committee formed shall have a written charge, which includes its organization, responsibilities, term of existence, and method of meeting and reporting. No special committee charge may subsume or be subsumed by charges to any standing committee of the Department. The faculty will interpret any correction required for overlapping of charges.

SECTION 4

Committee members who fail to execute faithfully the duties of their position may be removed by two-thirds majority of the committee. A vacancy in a committee position may be filled by appointment decided upon by the Department faculty.

ARTICLE VII: FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

SECTION 1

If faculty development funds are distributed to departments in a lump sum, the Department will distribute the funds within the department as follows:

Each faculty member will be allocated his or her per capita share to spend as each faculty member deems would best benefit his or her professional development.

Faculty development funds not spent or encumbered by March 1 will be reallocated according to the discretion of the Department Chairperson.

ARTICLE VIII: AUTHORITY

SECTION 1

The Department shall be governed by these operations and such other standing rules and committee guidelines as the Department sees fit to adopt, such as a Policy on Academic Integrity, Faculty Evaluation Guidelines, Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures, Laboratory Usage Policies, the Agreement to Volunteer for the Department of Physics; Waiver of Liability and the Hold Harmless Agreement for Field Trips, the
Laboratory Safety Agreement, the Final Examination Policy, the Policy on Class Syllabi, the Policy on Release Time and other appropriate documentation.

SECTION 2

If need arises for reference to a parliamentary authority, the Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised shall be that authority. The Department’s intent is that informality, good manners and good sense shall determine procedures at departmental meetings.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENT

These bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the Department faculty by two-thirds vote of members present and voting, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing to the membership at least seven days in advance of the meeting.