

BYLAWS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES, UNL

Revised November 2011; adopted January 2012

- 1.0 The Department of Modern Languages and Literatures at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln has a three-fold mission. As part of its commitment to teaching, the Department provides basic instruction in Arabic, Chinese, Czech, French, German,, Japanese, , Russian, and Spanish; provides advanced language instruction and courses in linguistics, literature, and culture; offers undergraduate minors in Czech, French, German,, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish; offers undergraduate majors in French, German, Russian, and Spanish; and encourages study abroad. As part of its commitment to research, the department offers the M.A. and Ph.D. in French and Spanish, an MA in German, and a double MA with the college of Education and Human Sciences in German and Teaching/Learning/Teacher Education. It engages actively in appropriate research, promotes creative activity and involvement in interdisciplinary programs, and prepares graduate students for a variety of careers. As a department with a global perspective and one committed to the College and University focus on globalization and on internationalization of the curriculum, it is engaged in developing programs that promote the understanding of cultures other than our own, and in institutional and outreach initiatives that encourage and support K-16 learners in developing inter-cultural competency. The Department is created by action of the Board of Regents and functions under the rules and regulations approved by the Board.
- 1.1 The Department shall meet at least once in each semester of every academic year and may meet as often as business requires. All teaching staff are invited to attend and participate. The quorum for any meeting of the Department or any department committee at which business is to be transacted shall be 51% of the voting membership as defined below excluding those officially absent from Lincoln. Issues shall be decided by secret ballot on request of the Chair or any person eligible to vote. Agenda shall be posted or circulated by the chair to all the voting members of the department at least three working days in advance of a meeting at which a vote is to be taken. Minutes pending approval shall be posted or circulated to all the voting members of the department [see section 2.1] within two weeks of the meeting having taken place, and approved minutes shall accompany the agenda for a subsequent meeting.
- 1.1.1 The Department shall meet at the request of the Chair, the Dean of the College, or any five voting members.
- 2.0 Voting Membership in the Department
- .  
2.1 On the general business of the Department, including recommendations on the hiring of new members of the regular faculty, the voting constituency shall consist of all full-time or part-time members holding the rank of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor, Assistant Professor of Practice, Associate Professor of Practice, or Professor of Practice, subject to specific provisions regarding membership on standing committees. In what follows , all references to “faculty” include both the tenure track ranks and the corresponding practice ranks [College Handbook, 11.Section 1], In addition, an elected representative of the Lecturers shall also enjoy full voting status, as long as that person is not working for an advanced degree at UNL.
- 2.2 On a recommendation for the reappointment or continuous appointment of tenure-track faculty: faculty who hold tenured appointments in the Department.

- 2.3 On a recommendation for promotion: faculty who hold rank higher than the faculty member being considered.
- 2.4 On matters concerning the graduate program: All graduate faculty.
- 3.0 Language Sections
- 3.1 There shall be four language sections, each comprised of all staff teaching the languages assigned to that section: French, German, Spanish, and Other Languages and Disciplines.
- 3.2 Each section shall meet at least once a semester. Agenda and minutes shall be posted or circulated by the section head to all the voting members of the department and the section as per Bylaws 1.1 & 2.1]
- 3.3 Voting membership in each section shall include all faculty as defined in Section 2.1 above whose primary area of specialization is in one of the languages assigned to the section, and one representative each of the GTAs and lecturers teaching in the section, elected annually by their constituencies.
- 3.4 When matters affecting the appointment, reappointment, or evaluation of graduate students or lecturers are to be discussed, the voting members of the section will meet as a personnel committee of the section, and will consist of only the faculty as defined in Section 2.1 above. Such meetings must be called in advance by the section head.
- 3.5 The duties and functions of each section shall include recommending to the chair and/or appropriate Department committees all changes in the curriculum of the section and the desirable rotation sequence of graduate and undergraduate courses in the section; recommending to the Graduate Committee admission and ranking for GTAs of students applying for graduate work in the section; recommending to the chair and/or the appropriate review committee the appointment and reappointment of lecturers in the section and the ranking of candidates for fellowships, scholarships, study abroad, and awards in the section; and bringing to the attention of the Chair or other appropriate persons or groups any matters affecting the work or well-being of the section.
- 3.6 The Chair is an ex-officio member of each section and shall receive agenda and minutes of all meetings.
- 4.0 Officers
- 4.1 The Chair is the presiding officer primarily charged with administering the department and serving as chief adviser to the Dean on matters concerning the department. The chair may make recommendations to the Dean and faculty of the College concerning the welfare of the department and its relationship to other departments, after consultation with the appropriate faculty in the department. Administrative duties of the chair are not rigidly prescribed, but responsibilities include budgetary and personnel matters, teaching schedule, recruitment of new staff, and the business affairs of the department. The chair should also be aware of the teaching and research activities of the staff members and of their service as advisers and committee members, both within and outside the department. The Chair may delegate some of the work involved in meeting these responsibilities, but is responsible for the decisions made. The Chair shall report annually to the Department her/his views on the state of the Department and general plans for the immediate future. The Chair shall

provide an annual report to the Executive Committee on budgetary matters and on the business affairs of the department.

- 4.2 The Vice Chair shall assist the Chair in whatever capacity the Chair deems necessary; duties normally include the preparation and supervision of the schedule of classes, coordination of curricular development, and of registration and drop/add processes. The Vice Chair shall serve as Acting Chair during absences of the chair of less than one semester.
- 4.3 Major Undergraduate Advisor(s) shall be appointed by the Chair to act as advisers to majors in the Department. The major undergraduate advisors shall also as necessary advise on applications for department-wide undergraduate scholarships and nominations for undergraduate awards.
- 4.4 Language Coordinators shall be appointed by the Chair to supervise coordination of multi-section courses in the Department. Language coordinators shall discharge the duties specified in guidelines approved by the Department [see Department Handbook].
- 4.5 Section Heads shall be elected in April by each section, for a one-year term. They shall be responsible for calling meetings, presiding at meetings, preparing agenda, and circulating minutes. Each section head shall also recommend to the Chair and Vice Chair the teaching assignments of members of the section.
- 4.6 Coordinators for Study Abroad shall be appointed by the Chair to develop such programs as are in the interest of the Department and its students, to advise students interested in study abroad, and to work with appropriate college and university advisors to inform students of study abroad opportunities.
- 5.0 Standing Committees
  - 5.0.1 The standing committees of the Department shall include the Executive Committee, the Graduate Committee, the Curriculum Committee, and the Salary /Merit Advisory Committee.. The chairs of all committees except the Executive Committee and the Graduate Committee shall be appointed by the Chair from among the membership; the Chair of the Department shall chair the Executive Committee and shall recommend the Chair of the Graduate Committee from among the membership for appointment by the Dean of the Graduate College for a three-year term.
  - 5.0.2 Elections to committees shall be by secret ballot, in April. Voting members shall be asked to sign and seal the envelope in which the ballot is placed; ballots in unsigned envelopes shall not be counted. All ties shall be decided by run-off elections.
  - 5.0.3 Ex-officio members of committees shall not vote.
  - 5.0.4 Issues shall be decided by secret ballot on request of the Chair or any person eligible to vote.
  - 5.0.5 No one shall serve simultaneously on both the Executive Committee and the Salary/Merit Advisory Committee.
  - 5.0.6 No one shall serve more than four years consecutively on either the Executive Committee or the Salary/Merit Advisory Committee.

- 5.0.7 The Chair is an ex-officio member of all Department committees.
- 5.0.8 The Chair shall make available annually a list of departmental committees and their membership.
- 5.1 The Executive Committee
- 5.1.1 Composition: the department chair, the elected section heads, and the Vice Chair who shall be an ex-officio member of the committee.
- 5.1.2 Duties and Functions: to advise the Chair; to recommend hiring priorities for the Department; to recommend budgetary priorities for state, revolving, and Foundation accounts) to advise the Chair about appointments to major committees; to advise the Chair about the membership of any ad-hoc committee that may be needed; ; to advise the Chair on apportioning available funds for the acquisition of books and periodicals. The Executive Committee will meet as necessary; meetings will be called by the Chair, or when any member wishes to raise a matter effecting the general well-being of the department. It will be the responsibility of the Section Heads to consult with the voting membership of their respective language sections on all matters on the committee agenda. The agenda and minutes of Executive Committee meetings shall be posted or circulated by the Chair to all the voting members of the department as per Bylaws 1.1 and 2.1.
- 5.2 The Graduate Committee
- 5.2.1 Composition: Four Graduate Faculty, two from Spanish and one each from French and German appointed for three-year staggered terms by the Dean of the Graduate college on the recommendation of the Chair of the Department; one graduate student in good standing in a degree program in the Department, appointed by the Chair for a one-year term. In case of a tie within the Committee, the Department Chair will cast the deciding vote. Agenda and minutes shall be posted or circulated by the Graduate Committee Chair to all the voting members of the department as per Bylaws 1.1 & 2.1.
- 5.2.2 Duties and Functions: to supervise the graduate programs of the Department. Specific functions include: (a) deciding on and applying criteria for admission; (b) setting and monitoring standards for progress toward a degree; (c) advising graduate students, each Committee member to serve as graduate advisor for the section s/he represents, until the formation of a student's supervisory committees; (d) advising graduate students on the formation of supervisory committees and serving as ex officio members of all supervisory committees in the language each member represents; (e) recommending, after consulting with the appropriate sections, candidates for Graduate Teaching Assistantships and scholarships or fellowships; (f) setting and periodically revising reading lists, formats, and schedules for comprehensive examinations; (g) setting, in cooperation with the Chair and Vice Chair and after consulting with the appropriate sections, the rotation of graduate courses; (h) acting on petitions from students and faculty requesting exceptions to established policies or procedures of the graduate program; (i) selecting, after consulting the appropriate sections, students for exchange programs; (j) bringing to the graduate faculty of the Department matters of policy or procedure, either on behalf of the Committee or of any Graduate Faculty Member; (k) serving as a grade appeals committee for graduate students.
- 5.3 The Curriculum Committee
- 5.3.1 Composition: five members of the tenured or tenure-track faculty, one the Vice Chair of the Department, and one from each section appointed by the Chair for staggered two-year terms; one

graduate student, one lecturer, and one undergraduate appointed by the Chair for one or two-year terms. The Vice-Chair of the Department shall serve as Chair of the Committee. Agenda and minutes shall be posted or circulated by the Curriculum Committee chair to all the voting members of the department as per Bylaws 1.1 & 2.1.

5.3.2 Duties and Functions:

- (a) to evaluate and act on all proposals for changes in, or additions to, the undergraduate curriculum of the Department, including changes in the requirements, prerequisites, and catalog descriptions of the departmental general education (ACE) courses, undergraduate degrees, majors, minors, the sequence or level of courses, and programs offered in the Department (including Study Abroad or Winterim programs). and to grant or deny final approval for all honors theses submitted for graduation with distinction in the College of Arts and Sciences produced under the aegis of the Department. (See Appendix H). The Committee shall also periodically evaluate the results of such changes, and shall respond to requests from the Chair or the Executive Committee for the review of curriculum. Ad hoc committees reporting to the Committee may be created if the Committee lacks the expertise necessary to make an informed decision. The Committee shall ask for a vote of the Department on recommendations for changes in the College language requirement or in the requirements for majors and minors in the Department, and on the creation of new programs or sequences of courses. The Committee's recommendations on these matters shall constitute motions for departmental action.
- (b) Two faculty members serving on the Curriculum Committee or selected by the chair of the Curriculum Committee [one faculty member from the language of the course grade being appealed, one from outside that language], will be appointed by the Chair of the committee to hear student grade appeals. A grade appeal must be filed no later than the end of the regular semester following the semester or summer session in which the grade was recorded.

5.4 The Salary/Merit Advisory Committee

- 5.4.1 Composition: five members of the tenure-track faculty, one from each section and one at large, elected for staggered two-year terms by the entire voting faculty as defined in 2.1. The Chair of the Department shall chair the Committee.
- 5.4.2 Duties and Functions: to evaluate annually for merit the work of the department faculty; to advise the Chair on the allocation of merit money available to the Department; to recommend to the Chair, in accordance with College and University policy, recipients of Faculty Development Fellowships.
- 5.4.3 The Chair shall inform each salaried member of the staff of the result of merit review processes including the Chair's salary recommendations and their rationale, and shall transmit to each professional staff member the Committee's evaluations in each area of responsibility.

6.0 Appointment, Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion of Faculty

6.1 Initial Appointment.

- 6.1.1 The Chair, subsequent to hiring priorities recommended by the executive committee based upon section faculty input, shall constitute a search committee for each position authorized by the Dean, following standard procedures, and shall advertise the positions appropriately.

- 6.1.2 The search committee shall evaluate the applications for each vacant position and present to the Chair, for each position advertised, a list of candidates acceptable for preliminary interview. The Chair shall examine the credentials of these candidates, and those of other candidates at her/his discretion, and shall approve the preliminary interview list in consultation with the search committee.
- 6.1.3 Representatives of the Department (including the Chair and the chair of the search committee, if possible) shall interview the candidates. The Chair, consulting with those who have interviewed the candidates, shall draw up a final unranked list of acceptable candidates for each vacant position.
- 6.1.4 The Chair shall then determine, subject to the Dean's approval, which candidate or candidates to invite for on-campus interviews, and in what order, and shall supervise the necessary arrangements. Those arrangements shall include a presentation to the entire Department, an opportunity for the members of the appropriate language section to interview the candidate in the target language, an opportunity for as many interested parties to meet the candidate as time permits, and an interview with the Chair.
- 6.1.5 Following the on-campus interviews, the Chair shall convene a Department meeting to vote on the candidates. The vote of the Department is advisory to the Chair, who is responsible for the decision. If the Chair does not endorse the recommendation of the Department, the Chair shall present to the Dean of the College both his/her recommendations and the recommendations of the Department.
- 6.16 If no suitable candidate can be found, the Chair shall cancel the search and initiate a new search as soon as is possible and practical.
- 6.2 Reappointment, Continuous Appointment, and Promotion
- 6.2.1 The Department shall follow the policies, procedures, and criteria set out in the UNL Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion, and Tenure (May 1989; revised 2001) and in College guidelines. Faculty shall be evaluated on their teaching, research, and service records, and are responsible for providing the information necessary to these evaluations, consulting the Chair as necessary.
- 6.2.2 The Chair shall call the necessary meetings and preside at them, but shall not vote.
- 6.2.3 Faculty eligible to vote are encouraged to examine the file of the candidate before voting. Absentee ballots are acceptable provided that the eligible voter gives or sends the Chair a written ballot in advance of the meeting. The Chair shall announce the ballot results at the meeting, indicating the number of absentee ballots.
- 6.2.4 Following the meeting, the Chair shall write a letter to the Dean which shall indicate the vote and shall fairly summarize the discussion which preceded it. The Chair shall make a draft of the letter available to the candidate and to the voting members for review, and shall revise the letter as may be necessary to make it accurate with respect to fact and congruent with the vote. If the Chair agrees with the majority, s/he shall so indicate. If the Chair disagrees with the majority, s/he may write a separate letter to the Dean, copies of which shall go to the candidate and to the voting members in time for the candidate to respond. If the Chair disagrees with the majority, s/he shall offer a senior faculty member representing the majority opinion the opportunity to write the letter of transmittal;

copies of this letter shall also go to the candidate, the Chair, and the voting members in time for the candidate to respond.

7.0 Appointment and Review of office/service and managerial professional staff

The Chair shall follow the policies and procedures established by the UNL Office of Human Resources. In determining salary increases, the Chair shall follow the announced UNL guidelines transmitted through the Dean of the College, consulting with the Salary/Merit Advisory Committee as necessary.

8.0 Appointment, Review, and Reappointment of GTAs and Lecturers

Appointment and reappointment of GTAs shall be made according to the policies and procedures set forth in the “Guidelines for the Appointment and Reappointment as a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures” [See Department Handbook].

Appointment and reappointment of lecturers shall be made according to the policies and procedures set forth in the “Appointment and Reappointment as a Lecturer in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures” [See Department Handbook].

Appointment to summer sessions teaching shall be made according to the policies and procedures set forth in “Summer Teaching for GTAs and Lecturers in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures,” [See Department Handbook].

9.0 Evaluation of Teaching

9.1 All members of the teaching staff must allow students to evaluate their classes every semester. Staff are expected to use the evaluation form approved by the Department (See Department Handbook); the Department will provide a data analysis sheet for each section taught. Student evaluations and data analysis sheets for multi-section courses shall be discussed with the appropriate coordinator; together with syllabi for courses not coordinated, they shall be furnished to the Chair and to other authorized persons and committees in connection with such matters as appointment, reappointment, merit, continuous appointment, promotion, and special awards or fellowships. Teachers are encouraged to provide materials in addition to student evaluations and syllabi which they deem relevant to an evaluation of their teaching.

9.1.1 All members of the teaching staff must include with the teaching evaluation packet for each course taught a copy of the syllabus for that course, except that, in coordinated courses, only the course coordinator need include the syllabus. Candidates for reappointment, tenure, and promotion must also include a cover sheet indicating the courses taught by year and semester, giving the course number, title, and enrollment; for each course taught, the tabular summaries of the teaching evaluation data for each course each semester; a self-assessment of the course summarizing strengths, weaknesses and problems, with action proposed and subsequent results; other teaching materials for each course; student grade distribution in each course; a description of involvement in curriculum development and course design.

9.1.2 All student evaluation materials are the property of the teacher, who must keep them for five years and make them available to the Chair on request.

- 9.2.1 The Salary/Merit Advisory Committee, as a part of the annual merit review, shall evaluate the teaching record of the faculty in accordance with the policies and procedures adopted by the Department, basing its judgment on the materials in the file, and taking into account the faculty member's apportionment of responsibilities.
- 9.3.1 In considering reappointment, continuous appointment, or promotion: the appropriate voting faculty shall evaluate the teaching record of the faculty in accordance with the policies and procedures of the documents listed in 6.2.1 above and of the Department.
- 9.3.2 In considering the promotion of faculty who are assistant professors of practice, the Chair shall solicit a minimum of three letters from referees from the department, college, and/or University; In considering the promotion of faculty who are associate professors of practice, the Chair shall solicit a minimum of three outside letters from reviewers. All reviewers must be qualified to evaluate the candidate's teaching record, and the candidate and the appropriate voting faculty shall be consulted in the process of constituting the review panel, which shall include at least six names. The candidate shall be given the list of names comprising the panel before letters are solicited.
- 9.3.3 Peer Review Process for candidates for reappointment beyond the first year, tenure, and promotion: The Chair of the Department shall consult with the candidate and the appropriate voting faculty in the candidate's section in the process of constituting an appropriate tenured group of at least two faculty members who will serve as peer reviewers of the candidate's teaching performance. Peer reviewers will be appointed annually at the earliest possible date, but at least one semester prior to the scheduled meeting on reappointment, tenure or promotion. They shall conduct a peer review of the candidate's teaching performance and teaching materials, as per the guidelines included in the Department Handbook. The candidate will have the option to invite the members of the group to visit his or her classes and report on the classes.
- 9.4.1 The faculty member is responsible for including in the file the information necessary to permit an informed judgment of her/his teaching record.
- 10.0 Evaluation of Research
- 10.1 The Salary/Merit Advisory Committee, as a part of the annual merit review, shall evaluate the research record of the faculty, basing its judgment on materials in the file and taking into account the faculty member's apportionment of responsibilities.
- 10.2 In considering reappointment, the appropriate voting faculty shall evaluate the research record of faculty in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Department and of the document listed in 6.2.1 above, basing its judgment on materials in the file and taking into account the faculty member's apportionment of responsibilities.
- 10.3 To aid the appropriate voting faculty in considering continuous appointment or promotion, the Chair shall solicit five outside letters from referees qualified to evaluate the candidate's research record, consulting the candidate and the appropriate voting faculty in the process of constituting the review panel, which shall include at least ten names. Every reasonable effort shall be made to assure that the referees represent an appropriate subset of peers. The candidate shall be given the list of names



comprising the panel before letters are solicited.

The candidate may waive the right of access to the reviews and the right to know the identity of the reviewers. Any such waiver shall be given in writing prior to the solicitation of the reviews, and shall become part of the review file. Any letter soliciting a review shall inform the potential reviewer of the extent to which the contents of the review or the identity of the reviewer is to be made known to the candidate. The candidate who has not executed a waiver of access may have a copy of any review received and may append a written response, which shall also be included in the file. A review may not be automatically discounted because a candidate does not execute a waiver of access or of the right to know the identity of the reviewer.

10. The faculty member is responsible for including in the file the information necessary to permit an informed judgment of her/his research accomplishments.
- 11.0 Evaluation of Service
- 11.1 The Salary/Merit Advisory Committee, as a part of the annual merit review, shall evaluate the service record of the faculty member, basing its judgment on materials in the file and taking into account the faculty member's apportionment of responsibilities.
- 11.2 In considering reappointment, continuous appointment, and promotion, the appropriate voting faculty shall evaluate the service record of the faculty member in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Department and of the document listed in 6.2.1 above, basing its judgment on materials in the file and taking into account the faculty member's apportionment of responsibilities.
- 11.3 The faculty member is responsible for including in the file the information necessary to permit an informed judgment of his/her service record.
- 12.0 Personnel Files and Related Matters
- 12.1 The Chair shall maintain a personnel file for each staff member which shall include personnel action forms and similar documents required by the University; documents related to appointment, work assignments, reappointment, continuous appointment, promotion, leaves, salary and merit recommendations, retirement or tenure buyout, awards, fellowships, grants, and contracts.
- 12.2 The main office shall maintain, for the Graduate Committee, similar official files related to graduate student admission and progress toward the degree.
- 12.3 Comparative data on teaching and syllabi for all courses shall be kept in the main office.
- 12.4 These files shall be accessible only to the staff member, the Chair, and to persons and committees authorized to consult them. Anyone who consults a file must record her/his name and reason.
- 12.5 Each staff member, upon request of the Chair, shall provide such additional information as is required for the various reviews mandated by the Department or the University.
- 12.5.1 Except as provided in 10.3.1, the candidate shall have access to all materials in her or his review file, shall be entitled to know the names of all who see it, and may respond in writing to anything in it.

- 12.5.2 Anyone with information relevant to the purpose for which a file is produced may proffer that information to the Chair, who, after consultation with the candidate, shall decide whether to include it. Should such material be included, the candidate shall have the right to respond to it and the response shall also be placed in the file.
- 12.6 Faculty shall create an annual merit review file containing materials relevant to an evaluation of teaching, research, and service for the period covered by the review. Materials not part of the permanent personnel file shall be returned to the staff member after the review.
- 12.7 Faculty shall create the files required by the Department or the University in connection with recommendations for reappointment, continuous appointment, promotion, and special awards and fellowships. Materials not part of the permanent personnel file shall be returned to the staff member after the review, except that the outside letters of review shall be retained by the Dean.
- 12.8 Complaints about a staff member shall not be made a part of the staff member's personnel file unless they result in formal action unfavorable to the staff member. The Chair may retain a separate and temporary complaint file if, in her/his judgment, it may be required in a formal proceeding or needed to document a history of inappropriate or unprofessional conduct. However, the Chair must investigate all serious complaints and, if they are found substantive, discuss them immediately with the staff member. Should the Chair decide that a complaint document must be retained, or that he or she should write the staff member about a particular problem, the staff member shall have the opportunity to respond, and his or her response shall be attached to the complaint document(s) or to the Chair's letter. Complaints more than three years old, unless part of a pattern that may require documentation, shall be destroyed.
- 12.9 Complaints about a staff member's teaching or service which, upon investigation, the Chair deems relevant to a mandated evaluation of the staff member, shall not be placed in a review file unless the staff member has had the opportunity to respond to them. Inaccurate, insubstantial, or anonymous complaints shall not be placed in a review file. If in doubt about a particular item, the Chair shall consult with the Executive Committee before making a decision.
- 13.0 Amendment of the Bylaws: A motion to change the Bylaws of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures requires a vote of two-thirds of the voting members as defined in section (2.1). Motions must be made and distributed at least two weeks before a Department meeting to discuss the motions.