BYLAWS

Department of Comparative and World Literature
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Adopted by the Comparative and World Literature Faculty, April 1987
Amended, April 2007; Revised, April 2018; Amended March 2026

Article I: Name

The name of this department is "Department of Comparative and World Literature"

Article II: Mission Statement

The Department of Comparative and World Literature offers both undergraduate and graduate programs leading to the degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, and Doctor of Philosophy, and is designed to provide a systematic study of subjects and problems common to several literatures and cultures. Its purpose is to enable students with the appropriate linguistic competence and preparation to explore individual national literatures as well as world literature; the theory of literature and criticism; the theory and practice of cross-cultural comparison; the interrelations of several literatures; the main currents, periods, and movements in literary history; the development of literary themes and types; and the relations between literature and the other arts.

Article III: Membership

There are three kinds of members in the Department: core faculty, specialized faculty, and affiliate faculty:

A. The core faculty of this department shall be all those persons at the rank of assistant professor and above (whether tenure-track or tenured) who hold either a fractional or a full-time appointment in the Department. These faculty members are voting members of the Department and shall be called upon to serve on its committees. There shall be one vote per faculty member, whether the appointment is fractional or full-time.
B. The specialized faculty of this department shall consist of those members who are not on the tenure stream but who contribute to curricular instruction as instructors, lecturers, teaching professors, and visiting professors. Full-time, non-visiting specialized faculty members are voting members of the Department and may be called upon to serve on its committees. There shall be one vote per full-time specialized faculty member. Fractional specialized faculty shall not have a vote but, at the invitation of the Head, may serve on departmental committees and teach in the Department's curriculum.
C. The affiliate faculty of this department shall consist of those members who have zero-time appointments. Such faculty may serve on departmental committees and teach in the Department's curriculum at the invitation of the Head. Affiliate faculty are non-voting members of the Department.

Article IV: Administration

A. The Department shall be administered by a Head as Chief Executive Officer whose duties and responsibilities are those defined in the Statutes of the University of Illinois, in the LAS rules/guidelines, and in these bylaws.
B. The Head shall be appointed by the Dean of the College, after consultation with core and specialized faculty. The term of the appointment is for five years. This appointment is renewable upon the recommendation of the faculty and the Dean. No later than February 1st of the fifth year of the Head's tenure, the faculty shall meet in the absence of the Head to evaluate the Head's performance and to make a recommendation to the Dean regarding his or her reappointment.
C. In consultation with the core and specialized faculty, the Head shall appoint to a three-year renewable term both a Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and a Director of Undergraduate Studies (UGS). Normally these positions are filled by two different faculty members.
D. The DGS shall meet with each of the graduate students at least once a semester to discuss their course selection and monitor their progress. The DUS shall meet with each of the undergraduate students at least once a semester for advising.
E. The Head has principal oversight over the progress of the graduate students in their program of study. The Head shall meet once a year with each graduate student and shall monitor the student's progress, in consultation with the DGS and – when the student is at the dissertation stage – with the student's Major Advisor. While the DGS is the principal liaison between the Department and the Graduate College, the Head has direct responsibility for deciding on the appropriate level of financial support (fellowships, teaching assistantships, research assistantships, and tuition and fee waivers) for each student. The Department Head and the DGS work together to obtain teaching assistantships from other departments. In addition, the Head makes recommendations of graduate student support to the Graduate College.
F. Each spring, there shall be an annual review of the current graduate students by the core and specialized faculty to evaluate progress and determine the level of support for those students continuing in the Department.
G. The Head shall ensure that the policies of the Department concerning the graduate students are carried out as stipulated in the Department's Graduate Student Handbook.
H. The Head shall make salary recommendations concerning each core faculty member to the Dean of the College.

Article V: Committees

A. Service on the Department's committees is reserved for core-faculty members and specialized faculty except in unusual circumstances as determined by the Department Head.
B. The standing committees of the Department are: the Advisory Committee, the Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid, the Capricious Grading Committee, the Committee on Curriculum and Program Development, and the Grievance Committee.
C. The principal committee of the Department shall be the **Advisory Committee**. This committee shall consist of the DGS and UGS plus two core or specialized faculty members elected by the faculty for a period of two years. The Head serves as the

chair of the committee and shall meet with the committee at least once per semester. Meetings may also be called by the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee shall advise the Head on all matters except those relating to Promotion and Tenure.

D. The **Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid** shall consist of three core faculty members appointed by the Head. Committee members are appointed to staggered two-year terms and may be reappointed. The Director of Graduate Studies shall be an ex-officio member of this committee. The committee shall make recommendations on admissions and financial aid concerning applicants to the Head.

E. The **Capricious Grading Committee** shall be appointed by the Head. It shall consist of three faculty members (core or specialized). A graduate student should lodge a complaint first with the DGS, who shall advise the Head in writing of the nature of the complaint. An undergraduate student should lodge a complaint first with the UGS, who shall advise the Head in writing of the nature of the complaint. The procedure to be followed by the Capricious Grading Committee, whether the student is a graduate or an undergraduate, is specified by LAS (regulation § 3-107): **http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article3_part1_3-107.html**

F. The **Committee on Curriculum and Program Development**. This committee of three faculty members, who may be a mix of core and specialized faculty, is appointed by the Head. The committee shall review the curricula on both the graduate and undergraduate level and shall make recommendations as needed to the Head and to the faculty at large. This committee shall also keep abreast of the national and international developments in the field of Comparative and World Literature and shall make such recommendations as will maintain the Department's strengths and will enhance its standing both nationally and internationally.

G. The **Grievance Committee** shall be composed of the members of the Advisory Committee except in those instances where a conflict of interest is present. In such instances, an election is held to fill the vacancy or vacancies. The Chair of the Grievance Committee shall be elected by the Advisory Committee on a case-by-case basis.

The Department strongly encourages potential grievants to use all appropriate avenues for informal resolution before initiating a formal grievance. The deliberations of the Grievance Committee shall remain confidential.

Procedures for faculty: a faculty member may choose to present a formal grievance to the Grievance Committee. The grievance shall be in writing, explicit, and supported by evidence. The respondent(s) shall be given the opportunity to reply in writing to the written grievance. The Grievance Committee shall then decide whether or not to accept the case for further investigation. Once a case is accepted, the Grievance Committee's decision on it shall be transmitted in writing to the Head or, if the Head is the object of the grievance, to the appropriate official. The Head or the official shall respond in writing within ten working days and give reasons for the decision and the course of action to be taken. That document shall be transmitted to both the grievant and the respondent. If a majority of the Grievance Committee remains dissatisfied with the decision of the Head or the official and the recommended course of action, the Committee shall inform the Dean or another appropriate official of that dissatisfaction and request further consideration of the matter.

Both the grievant and the respondent have the right to appeal to the next level the decision and recommended course of action. Such an appeal shall be made within twenty-one working days of the decision.

Both the grievant and the respondent have the right to review relevant documentation provided that the anonymity of the sources is preserved.

Procedures for graduate students: a graduate student with a grievance should present it through the DGS who shall then function as that student's advocate in the procedure and shall recuse himself or herself from the Grievance Committee. If the DGS is the object of the grievance, or should the DGS not be able to serve as the student's advocate, the student may ask another core faculty member to serve in that capacity. In other respects, the procedures for graduate student grievances are the same as those for the core faculty.

Procedures for undergraduate students: an undergraduate student with a grievance should present it through the UGS who shall then function as that student's advocate in the procedure and shall recuse himself or herself from the Grievance Committee. If the UGS is the object of the grievance, or should the UGS not be able to serve as the student's advocate, the student may ask another faculty member (not necessarily affiliated with CWL) to serve in that capacity. In other respects, the procedures for undergraduate student grievances are the same as those for faculty and graduate students.

H. Ad hoc committees. The Head shall appoint committees as needed to decide on such matters as special awards on the graduate or undergraduate level, library materials, graduate student life, and other issues that may arise.

Article VI: Meetings

The Head shall call two general faculty meetings per semester. Other meetings may also be called as needed. The agenda for the meetings shall be distributed three full working days beforehand.

A copy of these bylaws shall be distributed before the first general faculty meeting of the fall semester.

The Head shall meet regularly with the Advisory Committee as stipulated under Article V, Section C, concerning the business of the Department. The Advisory Committee, upon the recommendation of the majority of its members, may request additional meetings with the Head.

Any three faculty members may, in extraordinary circumstances, call a special meeting of the core faculty. Such a call shall be made in writing and reasons shall be given.

Article VII: Promotion and Tenure

A. The Head shall annually review the progress of all core and specialized faculty in the department. Each faculty member shall keep his or her documentation in order and up to date. Such documentation includes a curriculum vitae, offprints or other publications, teaching evaluations, course syllabi, professional recognitions, and the annual review of activities (May letters).

B. Each tenure-track assistant professor shall receive a formal third-year review no later than the spring semester of the third year at UIUC. The procedure to be followed is specified in Office of the Provost Communication no. 13 (Probationary Period Tenure Track).

C. No later than the spring semester of each tenure-track assistant professor's fifth year, the Head shall begin to gather materials for the promotion and tenure decision in the fall of the sixth year. The procedure to be followed is specified in the Office of the Provost Communication no. 9 (Promotion and Tenure).
D. The **Committee on Promotion and Tenure** consists of all the members of the core faculty above the rank of the faculty member being evaluated. The Head serves as the chair of the committee.
E. All deliberations of Promotion and Tenure committees shall be confidential.
F. Affiliate faculty with an appropriate overlap in specialization may, at the discretion of the Head, take part in the Department's promotion and tenure discussions but shall not have a vote.
G. The recommendation to grant tenure and promotion shall be based on substantial achievements in research, teaching, and service. Evidence of excellence in research and teaching must be documented.
H. Promotion to full professor shall be initiated by Head at the request of the individual faculty member at the rank of associate professor with indefinite tenure. A majority vote by the core faculty at the rank of full professor is required for the promotion to move forward. The procedure to be followed is specified in the Office of the Provost Communication no. 9 (Promotion and Tenure).
I. The recommendation to grant promotion to full shall be based on substantial achievements in research, teaching, and service. Evidence of excellence in research and teaching must be documented.

Article VIII: Amendments to these Bylaws

Amendments may be proposed by any two faculty members and shall be submitted in writing to the Head who shall then circulate the proposed amendment(s) at least two full weeks prior to their consideration at the next appropriate faculty meeting.

In order for an amendment to be adopted, a quorum of the faculty shall be present at the meeting in which it is discussed and voted upon. Approval requires a two-thirds majority vote of the core faculty in attendance. Absentee voting is not permitted.