Bylaws, Department of Physics and Astronomy

Purpose: To define the rules and regulate the affairs of the Department of Physics and Astronomy

Applies to: Faculty and staff within the Department of Physics and Astronomy

Procedures Statement:

1. Faculty Definition, Rights, and Responsibilities

   (a) Core Faculty are persons with tenured or tenure-track appointments in the Department of Physics and Astronomy. Core Faculty are able to serve on committees and provide input to, as well as vote on, Department issues.

   (b) Courtesy Faculty are faculty with formal, salaried appointments at the University of Kansas, but not in the Department of Physics and Astronomy. These positions have no formal duties and they also carry no voting privileges in our Department, except as members of Dissertation Committees. The positions are designed primarily to facilitate interdisciplinary interactions between faculty with common interests and goals. The initial appointment is subject to approval by the Core Faculty and is for a one-year period with annual review.

   (c) Adjunct Faculty. This category is very similar to that of Courtesy Faculty except that the individuals do not hold formal salaried positions at the University of Kansas. These positions have no formal duties and they also carry no voting privileges in our Department, except as members of Dissertation Committees. Adjunct appointments carry no provisions for salary, tenure, or sabbatical leave. The initial appointment is subject to approval by the Core Faculty and is for a one-year period with annual review.

   (d) Emeritus Faculty. In recognition of many years of service to the Department of Physics and Astronomy, a retired tenured Core Faculty member can be appointed as Professor Emeritus through normal University procedures. Emeritus Faculty status is for life and these individuals have the same rights and privileges as Courtesy Faculty.

2. Department of Physics and Astronomy Officers

3. Department of Physics and Astronomy Standing Committees

   All members of any standing committee or ad hoc committee, except student members of search committees, have full voting rights in that committee. The chair of a committee only votes to make or break a tied vote by other members of the committee.
(a) **Promotion and Tenure Committee.** This consists entirely of core faculty members who are tenured. In cases involving promotions to the rank of Full Professor, Committee membership is restricted to core faculty who are Full Professors. The Committee is responsible for evaluating candidates for pre-tenure, tenure, and promotion in rank. For each such candidate, the Department Chair appoints an *ad hoc* committee of core faculty which gathers and evaluates relevant material on the candidate, including input gathered from students within the Department, and presents its report to the Promotion and Tenure Committee. In the event of a favorable decision the *ad hoc* committee assists in the preparation of materials to be submitted to the College.

(b) **Undergraduate Studies Committee.** This committee is responsible for overseeing undergraduate programs in the Department. It consists of six faculty appointed by the Department Chair, plus the Associate Chair and the Laboratory Director. In addition there are two undergraduates elected by our undergraduate majors to represent programs within the Department. Recommendations of the committee are submitted to the Department Assembly or Faculty Meeting where they are debated and voted upon.

(c) **Graduate Studies Committee.** This consists of seven faculty appointed by the Department Chair, plus two Physics graduate students elected by graduate students in the Department. The committee is charged with overseeing all aspects of the graduate program in the Department. As above, recommendations of the committee are submitted to the Department Assembly or Faculty Meeting where they are debated and voted upon.

(d) **Engineering Physics Committee.** This consists of faculty appointed by the Department Chair in consultation with the Director of the Engineering Physics Program. The Director of the Engineering Physics Program serves as chair of this committee and there are, typically, four other members. The committee is charged with overseeing all aspects of the engineering physics program in the Department and it serves as the primary interface between the Department and the Engineering School. Recommendations of the committee are submitted to the Undergraduate Studies Committee.

(e) **Other Committees.** There may be other committees appointed by the Department Chair as the need arises. The number and nature of most of these committees are not specified in these Bylaws. They may be long-lived committees or those of brief duration such as *ad hoc* committees for promotion and tenure, and search committees. The makeup of search committees should include at least one student, but students have no voting rights within the committee.

4. **Conduct of Department Business**

4.1 **Definition of Deliberative Bodies**

The Department’s Standing Committees have already been discussed in Section 3. These committees usually initiate the discussion of issues requiring attention. Except as noted above, the recommendations of these committees are then presented to the Department for further discussion and a final vote. There are two possible forums for this:

(a) **Department Assembly.** This body consists of Core faculty plus student representatives. The student representatives consist of the current members of the Undergraduate Studies and Graduate Studies committees, plus one student elected at large. On special occasions other people may be invited to attend and participate in discussions, but without voting rights.

(b) **Faculty Meeting.** This is a meeting of the Core Faculty who are the only ones with voting privileges. As in the case of the Department Assembly, there may be occasions when visitors are invited to attend and participate in discussions, but such people do not have voting rights. Personnel matters are referred to this body rather than to the Department Assembly. Personnel matters include, but are not limited to, the
following: student issues (petitions, admission to candidacy, etc.), and faculty issues (promotion and tenure, hiring, Department planning, etc.).

4.2 Rules Governing Conduct of Faculty Meetings & The Department Assembly
Except as provided here in Section 4.2, conduct of Faculty Meetings and of the Department Assembly shall be governed by Robert’s Rules of Order. The chair of the meeting only votes to make or break a tie. An exception occurs in the event that there is a vote to amend the Bylaws, in which case the chair’s vote may be used to provide or to deny the required two-thirds majority.

(a) Voting Eligibility of Absent Faculty. Faculty on leave retain their full voting rights. This includes those on Sabbatical leave or on any other temporary leave. It also includes those whose KU obligations have been temporarily relieved via the use of external funds. Faculty on phased retirement are eligible to vote only during the semester of their KU appointment.

(b) Quorum Definition. A quorum consisting of more than 50% of those eligible to vote must be physically present for any votes held to be binding. A record of attendance at meetings is usually incorporated into the Minutes of the meeting, but the number in attendance may change as people come and go. A quorum call may therefore be used to determine the actual number of people present at the time a vote is to be taken, otherwise the attendance recorded in the Minutes shall be binding. If there is no quorum, then anyone who is eligible to vote may request that the vote be conducted via e-mail and the request shall be granted.

(c) Proxy Votes. A majority of those present and eligible to vote must approve the acceptance of Proxy Votes. A prerequisite for this is that the motion under consideration be previously circulated and remains either unchanged or only changed by friendly amendments. The decision on whether to accept Proxy Votes on a given motion must be made before a vote on that motion. If Proxy Votes are disqualified, then a majority of those present and eligible to vote may request that a vote on the motion in question be conducted by an e-mail ballot and the request shall be granted.

(d) E-Mail Ballot. In the event a motion is referred to an e-mail ballot, those eligible to vote are the same as those who would have been eligible to vote on the original motion. The e-mail ballot must include the motion and brief statements pro and con and allow a reasonable time period for responses. Unreturned ballots will be counted as abstentions.

(e) Secret Ballots. If any person who is eligible to vote shall ask that a vote be conducted by secret ballot then the vote shall be so conducted.

(f) Visitors at Meetings. The voting membership for Faculty Meetings and the Department Assembly has been clearly defined in Section 4.1. However, it is sometimes necessary to have visitors present at certain meetings to provide important input. Such visitors may participate in a discussion of the issues that prompted their invitation, but they do not acquire the right to vote.

5. Faculty Performance Evaluation
Details on the Department’s faculty performance evaluation procedures may be found in a separate document entitled “Faculty Performance Evaluation Plan.”

6. Grievance Procedures
The Department’s grievance procedures may be found in a separate document entitled “Department of Physics & Astronomy Grievance Procedures.” This document is located in the Policy Library at http://www.policy.ku.edu/CLAS/grievance-procedure-physics.
7. Promotion and Tenure Procedures
   The Department’s promotion and tenure procedures may be found in a separate document entitled “Department of Physics & Astronomy Promotion and Tenure Procedures.” This document is located in the Policy Library at http://www.policy.ku.edu/CLAS/promotion-tenure-physics-astronomy.

8. Post-tenure Review Procedures
   The Department’s post-tenure review procedures may be found in a separate document entitled “Department of Physics & Astronomy Post-tenure Review Criteria and Procedure.” This document is located in the Policy Library at http://www.policy.ku.edu/CLAS/post-tenure-review-physics.

9. Amendments to the Department of Physics and Astronomy Bylaws
   The bylaws of the Department of Physics and Astronomy can be amended if a clear need arises. Proposed amendments to these bylaws shall be circulated at least one week before any scheduled Departmental Assembly meeting in which the proposed amendments will be formally presented. In order to approve the amendments there must be a favorable vote of more than two-thirds of those eligible to vote.

Contact:
Department of Physics and Astronomy
University of Kansas
1082 Malott, 1251 Wescoe Hall Dr.
Lawrence, KS 66045-7582
Phone: 785-864-4626

Approved by:
The faculty of the Department of Physics & Astronomy

Approved on:
Wednesday, March 28, 2007

Effective on:
Wednesday, March 28, 2007

Review Cycle:
Annual (As Needed)

Related Procedures:
Physics & Astronomy Grievance Procedures
Physics & Astronomy Promotion and Tenure Procedures
Physics & Astronomy Post-tenure Review Procedures

Review, Approval & Change History:
08/25/2014: Updated unit policy links and added Post-tenure Review information

Pre-Policy Library Updates:
12/10/2008: Revised December 10, 2008
   Adopted March 28, 2007