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Adopted MAY 7, 1996

## **ENGLISH DEPARTMENT GOVERNANCE DOCUMENT**

### **Mission Statement**

The Department of English studies language, literature, and media. Our activities in teaching, scholarship, and service, within and beyond the university, focus on literature, writing and rhetoric, criticism and theory, linguistics, media, and creative writing. The research and teaching of the department connect these varied ways of understanding language, text, and discourse in a manner that enriches them all.

As scholar-teachers, the English faculty are committed to balancing teaching, mentoring, and research as mutually beneficial endeavors. Through research and teaching, our faculty work to expand knowledge of language, literature, and various expressive media in local, national, and global contexts. They regularly publish a range of scholarly and creative works for a broad, international constituency of readers, as well as present their work at professional meetings for audiences of their peers.

The faculty of the department are proud to lead the way for students who will be scholars of and discerning participants in the wider culture. As part of its teaching mission, the Department of English offers three well-established degree programs, while also contributing significantly to VCU's interdisciplinary PhD in Media, Art, and Text. The BA provides students with the necessary critical, expressive, and cultural skills to negotiate life in a competitive world: it constitutes a base for graduate study as well as for careers in a variety of professional fields. The MA in English and the MFA in Creative Writing provide nationally and internationally recognized graduate programs in the humanities. The PhD in Media, Art, and Text, one of the most innovative and interdisciplinary PhD programs of its kind, equips future generations of college teachers and researchers with the tools for taking leadership roles in a media-driven culture. The department also offers undergraduate minors in English, Writing, British Studies, and American Studies.

These broad and rigorous programs are dedicated to the advancement of ideas and values, as well as to a deeper understanding of the literary imagination in its multiple dimensions. We teach students to engage with the aesthetic features, rhetorical elements, and sociocultural functions of texts in both traditional and new media. Together with the study of literature from diverse historical periods and cultural contexts, our degree programs teach students to understand—and to master—the arts of expository and imaginative writing. As part of the university's urban mission, our degree programs address the needs of students from diverse backgrounds.

The Department of English promotes interdisciplinary study by offering courses highly

relevant to several cross-disciplinary programs: American Studies; African American Studies; Environmental Studies; Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies; Medical Humanities; the University Honors Program; and the Media, Art, and Text PhD. It also offers courses in linguistics and in advanced writing required by other majors, and provides general education courses in literature for all students in the university.

Members of the English department advance their profession through activities such as: editing scholarly and creative publications; refereeing articles and manuscripts; presenting work on and organizing panels and sessions at regional, national, and international conferences; giving readings and lecturing at academic and other venues; doing editorial, digital and collaborative work; serving on juries that evaluate the work of their peers; and acting in elected capacities for regional, national, and international professional organizations. They serve the university by running several established prize series, publishing digitally in-house, and doing administrative, committee, consulting, and other institutional work.

The department engages the community through public teaching activities, such as lectures, workshops, and continuing education courses in a variety of environments and provides expertise in many forms regarding the English language and written communication. The department also acts as an outreach center for the community's interest in literature, media, and creative writing, offering cultural events such as public lectures and readings by distinguished scholars, poets, fiction writers, playwrights, and new media experts.

As we continue to develop as a department, we plan to continue, as well, our involvement in research and creative endeavor, teaching, and service. In line with the university's Carnegie ranking and the English department's status as one of the foremost degree granting departments in the College of Humanities and Sciences, we are devoted to building our population of tenured faculty in future years to meet the needs of VCU students and to make the department a leader among English departments of peer research institutions in the state, the region, and the nation at large. We view ourselves as one of Virginia's and the Mid-Atlantic region's principal cultural institutions, we embrace innovative work across disciplines, and we are an important component of VCU's institutional and global vision. Our primary mission is to keep growing as a unit and as members of an increasingly sophisticated and active community of thinkers.

—Adopted March 9, 1994

—Revised May 5, 2011

## **Section 1 Administrative Faculty**

### **1. Chair**

The Chair of the Department of English is the central administrative agent in the department. The chair is the sole spokesperson for colleagues and the department, and the chief advocate and arbiter within the department. As provided by college guidelines, the chair shall be reviewed formally at the end of his/her third year. In addition to supervising the various directors and, consequently, all programs in the department, the chair's major duties include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- a. representing the department to the community (including local, regional, and national audiences);
- b. recommending for appointment, supervising and evaluating faculty; and making salary recommendations;
- c. arbitrating, alone or in consultation with others, student/faculty problems;
- d. appointing all administrative staff and directors; chairing Executive Committee;
- e. providing scholarly leadership through personal example and through individual guidance of faculty;
- f. supervising and coordinating curricular matters, including the scheduling of teaching assignments;
- g. negotiating and supervising the departmental budget;
- h. hiring and supervising secretaries and other administrative staff.

### **2. Associate Chair**

The Associate Chair is the second major administrative official of the department. His/her primary duties include the following:

- a. supervising student registration (including summer registration);
- b. scheduling the classes of all faculty members;
- c. recruiting and appointing all adjunct faculty in consultation with the chair and the Director of Creative Writing, where appropriate;
- d. supervising various day-to-day processes involved in running the department; and
- e. acting as the chief administrator of the department in the absence of the chair.

### 3. Directors

Each administrative officer is expected to consult with the chair and department members whenever appropriate. For specific matters of concern, the chair or a director may ask for *ad hoc* committees either elected by the faculty as a whole or appointed by the chair. Those performing administrative tasks receive appropriate recompense in released time and/or increased salary where justified. In addition to their annual reviews as faculty members, administrative personnel are formally reviewed by the faculty and the chair every two years. When necessary, the chair may make temporary changes in positions and duties for one year only; after that year all changes must be incorporated in the position descriptions in this document. The directors and their general responsibilities are:

#### a. Director of Undergraduate Studies

The Director of Undergraduate Studies is responsible for supervising the advising services offered by the department to undergraduate English majors and also serves as spokesperson and advocate for undergraduate interests and programs in the department. Duties include the following:

1. supervising advising, especially to determine policies regarding the satisfactory fulfillment of specific requirements for the major, and in regard to problems that may impact graduation; doing “back-up” advising when Coordinator of Undergraduate Advising is unavailable;
2. communicating with new and continuing English majors, especially in regard to academic honors and problems;
3. working with Coordinator of Undergraduate Advising (student advising files are maintained by Coordinator of Undergraduate Advising) to provide information on request for faculty, chair, and dean, such as data towards assessment of undergraduate programs;
4. overseeing undergraduate independent study applications and undergraduate internships;
5. identifying students eligible for scholarships and honors, collecting feedback from faculty, and coordinating nominations;
6. advising English majors on career and graduate school opportunities;
7. relaying matters of the undergraduate major structure and related curricular issues to the departmental undergraduate curriculum committee;
8. meeting with prospective students and their family members at VCU “Open House” and “Block Party” events; and
9. serving as faculty advisor for the student organization, Literati, and keeping faculty advised of Literati events.

## **b. Director of MA Program**

The Director of the MA Program oversees that graduate program, including:

1. in collaboration with the Graduate Programs Advisor, maintaining MA records, student files and statistics, and processing all student forms, including permission requests from special students, requests for graduate transfer credit, etc.;
2. chairing the MA Committee;
3. coordinating advising;
4. coordinating and administering comprehensive examinations for appropriate MA students;
5. in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee and the MA Committee, coordinating the courses offered for MA students;
6. presenting proposals for curricular change in the MA to the Graduate Studies Committee and department;
7. participating in the selection of GTAs and presenting to the Graduate Studies Committee the MA Committee's candidates for those posts;
8. coordinating the recruiting of students for the MA, including relevant public relations (admission decisions are made by the MA Committee); and
9. administering the policies and curriculum of the MA, in coordination with the MA Committee.

## **c. Director of Creative Writing/Director of MFA Program**

The Director of Creative Writing/the MFA Program acts as the central coordinator for creative writing matters in the department, most importantly by overseeing the operation of the MFA Program in Creative Writing. The director also represents the department in its role as a center for a variety of creative writing activities in the community. Among the director's major responsibilities are the following:

1. administering the policies of the MFA Program and acting as liaison between the creative writing faculty, the department, and the chair;
2. in collaboration with the Graduate Programs Advisor, maintaining MFA records, student files and statistics, processing all creative writing student forms, including permissions requests for workshops by special students, requests for transfer of graduate credit, requests for change from provisional status, etc.;
3. recruiting creative writing students, including relevant public relations (admissions decisions are made by the MFA Committee);
4. in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee and the MFA Committee, coordinating the MFA courses being taught and making

- certain that needed courses are offered;
- 5. directing, or overseeing, activities involving visiting writers;
- 6. coordinating MFA theses and defenses, with the thesis advisors;
- 7. presenting proposals for curricular change in the graduate program to the Graduate Studies Committee and, when appropriate, proposing changes in undergraduate creative writing courses to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee;
- 8. participating in the selection of Graduate Teaching Assistants; and
- 9. acting as liaison between the MFA Program and the department and the various community groups involved in creative writing activities, and encouraging creative writing faculty participation with such groups.

#### **d. Director of the PhD Program in Media, Art, and Text**

Drawn from one of the participating units, the Director of the interdisciplinary PhD Program in Media, Art, and Text oversees the enrollment, advising, and progress of MATX students. The MATX Director is responsible for the daily operations of the MATX Program and serves as spokesperson and advocate for the interests of the program in the participating units, in the college, and in the university. The director represents the program in its role as a focus for a variety of interdisciplinary scholarly and creative activities in the university and in the community. When the directorship resides in the English department, the MATX Director, together with the department's Graduate Programs Advisor, discharges the following responsibilities:

- 1. chairing and working closely with the MATX Committee in administering the policies and curriculum of the MATX Program; acting as liaison among the English department, the School of Mass Communications, the School of the Arts, and their faculty members teaching in the program;
- 2. coordinating the recruiting of students for the MATX Program, including relevant public relations (admissions decisions are made by the MATX Committee);
- 3. coordinating the selection of candidates for Graduate Teaching Assistantships, fellowships and grants (assignment decisions are made by the MATX Committee);
- 4. advising every MATX student initially and coordinating the matriculation, coursework, and the selection of dissertation committees;
- 5. in collaboration with the Graduate Programs Advisor, maintaining MATX records, student files and statistics, processing PhD student forms, including requests for independent studies (to be approved also by the MATX Committee) and internships, requests for transfer of graduate credit, requests for change from part-time to full-time status;
- 6. in consultation with the MATX Committee and the chairs/deans of the participating units and Schools, coordinating the MATX courses being

7. taught and attracting and orienting faculty to the MATX Program; presenting proposals for curricular change to the MATX Committee and to the administration of the participating units;
8. coordinating and scheduling the demonstration of competencies and the qualifying examination;
9. approving dissertation projects in consultation with the MATX Committee and scheduling MATX dissertation defenses in coordination with the dissertation advisors;
10. acting as liaison between the MATX Program and various community groups involved in interdisciplinary scholarly and creative activities, and encouraging MATX faculty participation with such groups.

—Adopted May 2007

—Revised April 2010

—Revised May 2011

## Section 2 Committees

### 1. Standing Committees

#### a. Executive Committee

1. The Executive Committee advises the chair on matters of policy and decision-making. It is concerned with matters related to curriculum, personnel, budget, scheduling, staffing, faculty development, and other matters as the chair and representatives see appropriate.
2. The Executive Committee is elected/appointed annually and shall be composed of:
  - 2 full professors (elected by peers)
  - 2 associate professors (elected by peers)
  - 1 assistant professor (elected by peers)
  - 1 full-time instructor or lecturer (elected by peers)
  - 2 faculty members (appointed by chair)
  - Director of MA Program (*ex officio*)
  - Director of Creative Writing (*ex officio*)
  - Director of PhD Program in Media, Art, and Text (*ex officio*)
  - Director of Undergraduate Studies (*ex officio*)
  - Associate Chair (*ex officio*)
  - Chair (*ex officio* chair of committee)

3. The Executive Committee is advisory and consultative, although the chair may poll the members or call for a vote on certain issues.
4. As representatives of the faculty, members of the Executive Committee should discuss with their colleagues policy issues not related to specific personnel. Issues related to specific personnel should be treated as confidential. Members of the Executive Committee should bring to the chair and committee the concerns and suggestions of their colleagues.
5. The chair will inform the faculty of policy decisions and present the rationale underlying those decisions.
6. The composition of the Executive Committee will be re-examined periodically to reflect changing ratios in faculty ranks and changes in administrative structure.

—Revised April 2010

All elected and appointed members of standing committees serve two-year terms. The committees include:

#### **b. Graduate Studies**

(Membership: Directors of MA Program [*ex officio*], MFA Program [*ex officio*], PhD Program in Media, Art, and Text [*ex officio*], Associate Chair [*ex officio*], Chair [*ex officio* chair], Graduate Programs Advisor [*ex officio*, non-voting member], Graduate Academic Committee representative, 2 elected [1 MA faculty, 1 MFA faculty])

The Graduate Studies Committee coordinates the activities of the department's graduate programs. The Committee makes recommendations to the Chair of the department for action. It initiates and recommends general policies and procedures common to both programs. As representative of the MA Committee, the MA Director brings policies and procedures related to that program to the Graduate Studies Committee for review. As representative of the MFA Committee, the MFA Director brings policies and procedures related to that program to the Graduate Studies Committee for review. The GSC will:

1. establish guidelines for recruitment, encourage and coordinate the recruitment efforts of both programs;
2. review admissions policies and procedures for both programs as needed;
3. establish written guidelines for awarding GTAs, new and continuing, and review GTA awards for both programs;
4. investigate opportunities for other forms of financial aid and establish

- 5. guidelines for awarding such aid; encourage curricular interaction among MA, MFA and PhD programs, including reviewing major changes in programs;
- 6. consider and recommend to the department new course proposals;
- 7. establish short- and long-range plans for graduate scheduling and recommend to the chair each semester's course offerings; and
- 8. update and approve the Graduate Bulletin copy.

—Revised May 2007

—Revised February 2010

—Revised April 2010

### **c. PhD (MATX) Program Committee**

(Membership when the directorship resides in the English department: Director of the MATX program [*ex officio* chair], Graduate Programs Advisor in the English department [as a non-voting member], three faculty from each of the participating units [the Department of English, the School of Mass Communications, and the School of the Arts])

This committee exercises general oversight responsibility for the PhD Program in Media, Art, and Text, including:

- 1. evaluating applications for admission to the program and selecting the incoming class;
- 2. selecting candidates for Graduate Teaching Assistantships, fellowships, and other funding;
- 3. investigating opportunities for forms of financial aid and establishing guidelines for awarding such aid;
- 4. establishing policies concerning curriculum, graduate students, student recruitment, admission and program requirements, student and program assessment, and other pertinent curricular and programmatic matters;
- 5. considering and recommending new course proposals, as well as graduate MATX course additions, deletions or changes;
- 6. writing and evaluating qualifying examinations;
- 7. evaluating and approving dissertation proposals;
- 8. reviewing student requests for special action (e.g., waivers of rules and requirements for the program, requests for change from provisional status, etc.);
- 9. assessing student progress and success of the program.

—Adopted May 2007

—Revised May 2011

#### **d. MFA Program**

(Membership: Director of Creative Writing [*ex officio* chair], all MFA faculty, Graduate Programs Advisor [*ex officio*, non-voting member], 1 additional graduate faculty member elected by graduate faculty)

This committee exercises general oversight responsibility for the department's MFA in Creative Writing Program, including:

1. evaluating applications for admission to the program;
2. recommending candidates for Graduate Teaching Assistantships to the Graduate Studies Committee;
3. bringing to the graduate faculty formal proposals for changes in program requirements, as well as graduate creative writing course additions, deletions or changes; and
4. identifying appropriate candidates for graduate fellowship awards.

#### **e. MA Program**

(Membership: MA Director [*ex officio* chair], Graduate Programs Advisor [*ex officio*, non-voting member], three members of the graduate faculty elected by graduate faculty)

This committee exercises general oversight responsibility for the department's MA in English Program, including:

1. evaluating applications for admission to the program;
2. recommending candidates for Graduate Teaching Assistantships to the Graduate Studies Committee;
3. bringing to the graduate faculty formal proposals for changes in program requirements, as well as graduate course additions, deletions or changes (exclusive of creative writing courses);
4. setting comprehensive examinations;
5. approving thesis proposals;
6. presenting proposals to the Graduate Studies Committee and chair regarding scheduling and staffing; and
7. acting upon special requests from graduate students in the program (e.g. waivers of rules and requirements for the program).

—Revised April 2010

—Revised October 2011

## **f. Undergraduate Studies**

(Membership: Director of Undergraduate Studies [*ex officio* chair], Coordinator of Undergraduate Advising [*ex officio*, non-voting member], representative for the College's Undergraduate Academic Committee [*ex officio*], 3 elected, 1 appointed)

This committee exercises general oversight responsibility for the undergraduate curriculum, including:

1. reviewing faculty recommendations for changes in the degree requirements for the department's undergraduate programs (major and minors) and forwarding the same to the department;
2. reviewing faculty recommendations for all course additions, deletions or changes and forwarding formal proposals to the department;
3. forwarding all curricular changes approved by the department to the appropriate College committee(s);
4. reviewing proposals from faculty for topics courses; and
5. conducting appropriate assessment activities.

—Revised February 2010

—Revised April 2010

## **g. Adjunct Issues Committee**

(Membership: Chair [*ex officio*], Associate Chair [*ex officio*], volunteers from adjunct faculty)

This committee is responsible for addressing issues of direct concern to the adjunct faculty, including compensation, working conditions, evaluation of adjunct faculty, and the like. It shall meet as needed.

—Revised April 2010

—Revised October 2011

## **h. Honors and Awards**

(Membership: at least 3 appointed)

This committee collaborates with the Chair to identify appropriate faculty for College, university and other special awards and honors. It prepares nominations and materials in support of those nominations.

—Revised April 2010

—Revised October 2011

### **i. Technology Committee**

(Membership: Technology Coordinator [*ex officio*]; Associate Technologist [*ex officio*]; 2 faculty elected to a two-year term; 1 faculty appointed to a two-year term; 3 graduate student members and 3 alternates elected annually by their constituents in the MA, MFA and MATX programs; committee chair elected by full committee at committee's first meeting in the fall to a one-year term)

This committee is responsible for advising the department on matters of policy regarding departmental technology and for soliciting information and submitting requests for the purchase or maintenance of technological resources for the department. Annual duties include:

1. preparing a HEETF request for eligible equipment and advising the departmental chair on priorities;
2. advising a student committee on the preparation of a Student Technology Fee funding request for equipment or software; the final request must be ranked and approved by the student committee;
3. coordinating HEETF and Student Technology Fee funding requests to avoid conflict or duplication before submission to the H&S Technology Committee;
4. providing advice to the department regarding policies, procedures, and standards of electronic publishing, especially as they relate to departmental web sites or any other digital representation of an office or program of the department on the open web or on servers external to the university such as video or audio distribution sites, social media sites, blogs, wikis, or proprietary systems.

—Approved November 2011

—Amended December 2011

### **j. *Blackbird* Advisory Board**

(Membership: Department chair [*ex officio*], MFA Director [*ex officio*], Associate Technologist [*ex officio*], 3 faculty appointed to a two-year term; representative of *New Virginia Review* appointed to a two-year term; 2 MFA faculty representatives appointed to a two-year term; 2 at-large department faculty elected to a two-year term)

This committee acts as an advocate for *Blackbird* in the university and in the broader community and provides advice as needed in support of *Blackbird's* mission to demonstrate excellence in contemporary literary publishing.

--Approved December 2011

## **2. Ad Hoc Committees**

All other committees may be elected and/or appointed *ad hoc*.

## **3. Student and Adjunct Representation**

Student representatives and representatives of the Adjunct Faculty may be added to departmental committees as appropriate.

# **Section 3 Departmental Meetings**

## **1. Meetings**

- a. The faculty will meet at least once a month during each semester, on the first Tuesday of the month (or other date selected in advance), and whenever necessary to conduct department business. The chair will plan and distribute agendas, but any faculty member may request a meeting and may include any item in the agenda by consulting with the chair.
- b. Each faculty member (elected or appointed) responsible for specific areas will bring to the department meetings matters for consultation. These faculty members include, but are not limited to, department directors and representatives on college and university committees (including the Faculty Senate).
- c. When necessary, the department may call for the election of *ad hoc* committees to deliberate specific issues and report back to the department.
- d. It is the responsibility of each faculty member to attend department meetings.
- e. The adjunct faculty will send volunteer representative(s) and the graduate teaching assistants one (1) elected non-voting representative each year to department meetings.

—Revised October 2011

## 2. Voting, Canvassing, and Voters

- a. Formal canvassing occurs for hiring priorities and for hiring decisions regarding new full-time faculty. Voting occurs for the selection of the chair, changes to the Governance Document, membership on committees and curricular changes.
- b. Tenured and tenure-eligible faculty and term faculty at the assistant professor rank and above are canvassed about hiring priorities and about hiring decisions regarding candidates for full-time faculty positions.
- c. Tenured faculty and all faculty in the English department at the associate professor rank and above are eligible to vote on changes to the Governance Document [cf. 3.3.d]. All faculty in the English department at the assistant professor rank and above are eligible to vote on the selection of the chair, membership on committees, and undergraduate curricular changes that directly concern them [cf. 3.3.e]. Instructors are eligible to vote on committee memberships that directly concern them and on curricular issues that directly concern them. Adjunct representatives are eligible to vote on curricular issues that directly concern them. The graduate faculty are eligible to vote on graduate curricular issues.
- d. Specific voting procedures apply in each instance, as set out in the following section.

## 3. Voting Procedures

### a. Selection of the Chair:

#### 1. Eligibility and Term of Service:

Any tenured faculty member may serve for a term of no more than three years beginning at the date that the chair becomes vacant. He or she may be re-elected once, and shall become eligible again after vacating office for at least one term.

#### 2. Nominating Procedure, Documents, and Open Forum:

A meeting of the faculty shall be called to receive nominations for the election of a chair. The quorum shall be one-half plus one of the full-time faculty. Nominees shall have granted permission to have their names placed in nomination. At this meeting candidates shall provide a *vita* and

a one-page statement of their goals and qualifications for the post of chair. Following reception of nominations there will be a candidates' forum, open to all who wish to ask questions of prospective chairs. If there are several nominees, more than one forum may be scheduled.

### 3. Election Procedure:

Faculty shall vote by mail ballot, ballots being due by 4:30 p.m. one week from the date of the last scheduled candidates' forum. Faculty shall place ballots in a sealed envelope, signed across the seal, and deliver them to the department's executive secretary. The quorum will be two-thirds plus one of all faculty eligible to vote. If there are more than three candidates on the first ballot, all candidates except the top three will be eliminated before the second ballot. If there are three candidates (or the field has been reduced to three), the candidate with the fewest votes shall be eliminated and a new ballot held. Should more than one ballot be required to obtain a majority, faculty will have seven days to receive and return any additional ballot.

### 4. Declaration of Election:

If on a ballot with two candidates, one candidate receives a majority of all possible and valid votes, that candidate's name shall be forwarded to the dean of the College of Humanities & Sciences, who may appoint or refuse to appoint the candidate. If the dean refuses, or the candidate declines to serve after negotiations with the dean, the nomination and election process will be repeated immediately. If on a ballot with two candidates neither candidate receives a majority of all possible and valid votes, the candidate with fewer votes shall be eliminated and a final ballot held between the remaining candidate and "None." If the candidate receives a majority of all possible and valid votes, the name will be forwarded to the dean for appointment or non-appointment as above. If on any ballot "None" receives a majority of all possible and valid votes, the dean shall meet with the faculty concerning opening a search for an outside candidate, and shall nominate an interim chair to serve for one year during the search.

## **b. Graduate Faculty**

In matters relating to the graduate programs and curricula, only graduate faculty are eligible to vote. The department defines graduate faculty as those full-time members at the rank of assistant professor and above.

### **c. Election to Committees**

Votes on committee membership shall occur by secret ballot at a department meeting. A quorum shall be two-thirds plus one of the faculty eligible to vote and election will be by the majority of those present.

### **d. Governance Document**

Changes to the Governance Document shall be by mail ballot, ballots being due by 4:30 pm one week from the final discussion of proposed changes at a department meeting. Faculty shall place ballots in a sealed envelope, signed across the seal, and deliver them to the department's executive secretary. A quorum shall be two-thirds plus one of faculty eligible to vote. Proposed changes must be approved by a majority of all possible and valid votes [*cf.* 3.2.c]. If, by unanimous consent, it is moved and approved to suspend the rules, Governance Document changes may be approved by a vote at a department meeting, as long as a quorum is present and the proposed change is approved or defeated by a majority of all possible and valid votes.

—Revised December 2012

### **e. Course Changes and Degree Requirement Changes**

Curriculum changes and program requirement changes must be introduced at a department or graduate faculty meeting, but may not be voted upon until a subsequent meeting (“two-meeting rule”). For both curriculum and program requirement changes, if by unanimous consent it is moved and approved to suspend the two-meeting rule, voting may take place at the meeting where introduced.

Curriculum changes shall be approved by vote at a department meeting as long as a quorum is present and the proposed change is approved by a majority of all possible and valid votes. Alternatively, voting may be by mail ballot if a majority thinks that the significance of these changes so warrants.

Program requirement changes shall be approved by mail ballot according to the procedure specified above for governance document revisions. If, by unanimous consent, it is moved and approved to suspend the mail ballot rule, program requirement changes may be approved by a vote at a meeting, as long as a quorum is present and the suspension is approved by a majority of all possible and valid votes.

A quorum shall be two-thirds plus one of faculty eligible to vote. Proposed changes must be approved by a majority of all possible and valid votes [*cf.* 3.2.c].

—Revised December 2012

#### **f. Hiring Priorities**

The chair will formally and regularly consult with faculty regarding departmental needs and hiring priorities. At least every two years, the chair will discuss departmental staffing needs with the Executive Committee, and formulate a prioritized list of such needs to be distributed to the entire faculty. Whenever specific vacancies or new positions occur or are likely, s/he will canvass all full-time faculty above the rank of instructor for their written response, and then forward all responses to the Executive Committee for discussion and ultimate recommendation in the form of a prioritized list of several fields. The chair will forward his/her recommendation to the dean together with the Executive Committee's list of priorities. Both will be distributed to the faculty. The chair will also consult with the Executive Committee regarding the wording of specific job announcements.

#### **g. Candidates for Hire**

The chair will formally canvass all faculty and all students who participated in the on-campus interview of candidates for tenure-track faculty positions. The chair will then formulate a recommendation for hire to the dean, and put the recommendation to the department for a vote. Voting shall be by mail ballot according to the procedure specified above for governance document changes, with ballots being due by a deadline identified by the chair. If a majority of full-time faculty above the rank of instructor approve the recommendation, the chair will then forward it to the dean. If it does not approve, the chair will either make another recommendation to the department, or forward the matter to the Executive Committee. After consulting with the Search Committee, the Executive Committee will vote by secret ballot on which candidate to put forward. The chair will then forward that name to the dean as the department's choice.

—Revised December 2012

## **Section 4 Departmental Policies**

### **1. Departmental Tenure and/or Promotion Policies**

We recognize that tenure and/or promotion are covered by the procedures described in the university guidelines, *Faculty Promotion and Tenure: Policies and Procedures*, May 10, 2013, and in the "Tenure and Promotion Guidelines for the College of Humanities and Sciences," January 31, 2014. This English Department document will be periodically reviewed by the Department Executive Committee.

In addition to a mandatory third-year review, probationary appointments at the rank of assistant professor will be reviewed with regard to their progress towards tenure and promotion through the formal annual faculty evaluations conducted by the chair, using the criteria outlined in this document as well as relevant college and university guidelines. Through consultation with the faculty member, an individual work plan developed in accordance with Faculty Roles and Rewards Policy shall be part of these annual evaluations. (University guidelines 3.2.3 para 1.)

The college guidelines (2.1.1.1) state that two patterns may be acceptable for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure: 1) *Excellent* in teaching, *Very Good* or above in scholarship, *Satisfactory* or above in service; and 2) *Excellent* in scholarship, *Very Good* or above in teaching, *Satisfactory* or above in service. Either pattern is acceptable for promotion with tenure in the department.

Tenure-eligible faculty will undergo a "Third Year Review," following the process detailed in the college guidelines (3.2). As stated in that document, this review ordinarily takes place during the second semester of the tenure-eligible faculty member's third academic year of appointment. The review will include a careful consideration of the faculty member's performance in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. The purpose of this review is to provide the faculty member with a timely assessment of performance and constructive suggestions for improvement. A review that identifies serious deficiencies will result in a recommendation that the appointment not be continued beyond the fourth year.

The department has its own procedure to advise a candidate—either tenure-eligible/tenured or term—for non-mandatory promotion before he or she makes the final decision to request a peer review committee:

a. Excepting in the case of the mandatory review as stipulated by contract, a faculty member wishing to be promoted is encouraged, but not required, to request advice from the department Executive Committee about seeking a promotion review. This request should be accompanied by current *curriculum vitae*.

b. The Executive Committee will discuss all such requests and if needed meet individually with each potential candidate to offer its advice. Candidates for promotion serving on the Executive Committee will absent themselves from discussion

of their own cases. Members of the Executive Committee who are below the candidate in rank will absent themselves from the discussion.

c. Whatever the advice of the Executive Committee, the faculty member has the right to initiate the promotion process by requesting that the chair appoint a peer review committee.

d. If denied promotion and tenure, assistant professors who have initiated a promotion and tenure review prior to their mandatory review year may not request a second early review, but must wait until the mandatory review.

e. Associate Professors who are denied a promotion to Professor must wait a minimum of two years before another request to be promoted.

f. Term faculty who are denied a promotion must wait a minimum of three years before initiating another request to be considered for promotion.

All full-time faculty are canvassed (but they do not vote) concerning all formal reviews involving promotion and/or tenure.

—Revised November 2006

—Revised May 2007

---Revised February 2010

---Revised April 2014

## **A. Tenure-Eligible Faculty**

### **General**

1. The chair, in consultation with the dean, will appoint a separate peer review committee for each candidate. Ordinarily, a committee will consist of three faculty members from the English department, one faculty member from outside the department, and one student, all with voting privileges. In special circumstances, such as a joint appointment, the committee makeup may vary. All faculty members serving on the committee will be tenured. The candidate has the right to challenge the makeup of the committee as detailed in the college guidelines (7.1.1 [d]).

In a situation in which a review is required to hire with tenure, or so that a retention counter-offer with promotion and/or tenure might be made, the department may conduct an expedited review in accordance with the college guidelines (7.1.5).

2. Given the range of disciplines in the English department and the variety of teaching, research, and service activities within these disciplines, it is impossible to set

out specific criteria that would apply in all cases. The work of all candidates for tenure and/or promotion in all three areas will be judged according to the basic criteria of quality, consistency, and impact. Moreover, the college guidelines require that, in the area of scholarship and creative work, units must articulate more specific guidelines appropriate to their fields. Ours follow in sections A.3-12.

3. Guidelines cannot account for every form that legitimate scholarly and creative work might take in a field as diverse as English studies. Faculty in the VCU English department, for example, are involved in a number of sub-fields of English studies, including literary studies, textual studies, composition studies, linguistics, film studies, media studies, cultural studies and creative writing. The diversity of our sub-disciplines notwithstanding, accomplishments in the area of scholarship and creative work generally fall into one of three categories: publications; conference presentations and readings; and grants, fellowships, residencies, and other awards. Evaluators should judge all scholarly and creative work according to the general criteria of quality, impact, and relationship to the candidate's research or creative program as a whole. In this regard, national and international venues are generally more significant than regional ones, and regional venues more significant than local ones.

4. The typical path to tenure and promotion, at VCU as at other English departments with graduate programs, is publication of a book-length work. Of commensurate weight is an authoritatively-vetted critical edition of a literary text. For promotion to full professor, the typical path is the completion of a second major study or its equivalent in other scholarly projects. University presses with strong reputations in the candidate's field of study will continue to carry the greatest weight in tenure and promotion decisions. Non-university academic presses are equally credible venues for scholarly publication. Trade publishers also issue important scholarly books, even if the books are subject to editorial rather than peer review.

A series of related peer-reviewed articles may also be sufficient to earn tenure and promotion. These articles should present a sustained and coherent argument or methodology. In all cases, evaluators should judge the importance of a journal itself according to such criteria as the nature of its review process, its acceptance rate, where its contents are indexed, its sponsorship by a recognized scholarly organization, and, for electronic journals, how it is archived. There should be some evidence of the impact of the articles on the field, although given the vagaries of citation indexes in the humanities citation counts are rarely used in English studies to assess the importance of publications.

Chapters or essays contributed to collections will be evaluated according to their publisher, the importance of the collection, and the substance of the article. Other publications that contribute to scholarship in the field of English studies include, but are not limited to, edited volumes (collections of essays), translations, reference works,

reference articles, and text books.

5. Publications in teaching methods and approaches which draw upon sustained research and are meant for broad dissemination in the scholarly community may qualify as scholarship or as teaching. Editorial work that includes significant research, results in coherently structured thematic volumes or special issues, and has a significant impact on the scholarly and creative discourse may also be considered as scholarship. Professional activities and accomplishments used as evidence for any rating in the category of Scholarship and Creative Work may not also be used as evidence for a rating in either of the Teaching or Service categories; this is unlike the relationship between the categories of Teaching and Service, where there is obvious overlap.

6. Both linguistics and composition studies are fields in which journal articles and book chapters, not monographs, are the primary venue for publication. A candidate for tenure and/or promotion in these fields should expect to have a number of substantial peer-reviewed articles in press or in print. In composition studies, textbooks and edited readers are often legitimate scholarly publications and can count as research (where not also counted in the Teaching category in the promotion and tenure report). Their impact might be measured by how widely they have been adopted by other institutions, among other factors.

7. Creative writing is primarily a book-oriented field, but the concept of formal peer review does not apply to literary publication. Generally the expectation for tenure is a book publication (beyond any published at the time of hire) in fiction, poetry, or creative nonfiction. Produced or optioned dramatic scripts or screenplays and completed films may also be appropriate creative work considered the equivalent of significant publications. Publication may be with a trade, academic, or literary press. In many instances (particularly in poetry), publication by a literary press will have greater impact on the field than by a large house with a relatively small list. The reputation of the press can be determined by its history and its author roster. Although chapbook publications often reflect serious work within the field, full length collections of verse, fiction, or creative nonfiction are generally expected as a minimum requirement for tenure. The candidate should also have a regular record of publication in literary journals or other periodicals which publish creative work. Regardless of whether publication is in print or electronic versions, a journal's reputation within the field, and the distinction of its editor or the roster of other writers it has published, will be relevant information in determining impact.

8. In the event of co-authored or multi-authored work of any kind, a candidate should submit a statement that details his or her individual contributions to the whole. In the humanities, the first author listed is not necessarily the principal contributor.

9. Whatever publications or other achievements a faculty member may have

produced prior to beginning work at VCU should be considered in tenure and promotion decisions, but candidates must follow such achievements with significant additional work that attests to their continuing scholarly activity and productivity. In fields of literary studies a first book presented for tenure consideration might evolve from a dissertation followed by significant revision. In such a case, a candidate for tenure should also show evidence of additional scholarly activity and publication. Such evidence could include substantial new work beyond the book, presentations at conferences or invited talks on a new project, or early publication from a new project.

10. Although external funding is not ordinarily expected of faculty in the humanities, any awards or external fellowships, grants or residencies a candidate receives do offer evidence of the candidate's impact on the field and excellence of his or her work.

11. The English department typically asks for three or four confidential external reviews, and will ask such external reviewers to provide thorough assessments of the significance and impact of the candidate's work, and not simple testimonials. External reviewers will be chosen according to the criteria and procedures outlined in university (7.1.1) and college guidelines (7.1.1), and shall be of a professional standing equal to or higher than the rank for which the candidate is being reviewed. The candidate shall provide a list of at least six possible outside reviewers well qualified to review impartially the candidate's scholarship; the peer committee will also provide a list of at least six potential reviewers. Any personal or professional connections with the candidate that might influence the review must be stated on the lists. The candidate shall review the combined list prior to any potential reviewer being contacted, and may submit a written challenge for cause to the chair of the peer committee within five working days of receiving the list. The peer committee chair, having consulted the peer committee, will respond within five working days to explain why the names challenged have been left off the list or retained. The exchange will become part of the tenure file.

12. The following guidelines apply to the burgeoning area of digital scholarship and creative work:

a. Digital scholarship in English studies currently takes many forms: book-length projects published exclusively electronically; journals distributed electronically without a print version; and published multi-media work with demonstrated impact on the field, such as hypertexts, digital scholarly editions, and databases most prominently. Scholarly or professional websites in English studies typically fall into one of the following categories: archives, electronic essays or exhibits, teaching resources, gateways, journals or scholarly/professional blogs, and organizational sites. Other forms may develop in the future.

b. The general criteria for evaluating digital scholarship involve its content, form, audience or purpose, and effective use of new media. Consequently, the best way

to evaluate a candidate's work in a digital medium is to do so in the medium in which it was produced. Print-outs or other hard copies are poor substitutes for evaluating web pages online.

c. Digital scholarship, whenever practicable, will be evaluated according to the same standards as print scholarship. For example, criteria for an electronic journal would include the nature of the peer review process, submission acceptance rates, the stature of the editorial board and/or publisher, and judgments of the journal's quality and its impact or influence on the field.

d. Faculty members who work in non-print media and for which there is not a print analog should have their work assessed in two areas: 1) the intellectual content and impact of the work; and 2) the efficacy of its use of the media (usability, appearance, innovation, and the like). The second area should also be evaluated by those knowledgeable in such media.

e. Frequently digital scholarship is collaborative. As with such collaborative work in the print medium, faculty presenting such collaborative digital work as evidence of scholarship should be able to document the nature and extent of their individual contributions to such projects.

f. Postings to professional list-serves or discussion groups, e-mail, blogs, and unpublished articles posted on personal or other websites, may be considered evidence of scholarly *activity* but will not be considered scholarly *publication*.

g. The stature of funding sources and the composition of advisory/editorial boards can provide evidence of the significance and potential impact of large scale digital projects such as extensive digital archives, databases or scholarly editions.

—Approved April 2008

---Amended April 2014

### **Ratings for Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor**

#### 1. Scholarship:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have presented a record of substantial scholarly and publication activity. That work will have been judged of superior quality and will promise to have a tangible impact on the candidate's field.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have been consistently active in their research or creative work, resulting in significant publication and suggesting the likelihood of future accomplishments and enhanced professional standing.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have demonstrated an aptitude for scholarship and publication that has as yet attained minimal recognition in terms of publications (either in print or in press) or grant support.

## 2. Teaching:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have demonstrated a high level of performance in the classroom and presented evidence of commitment to improving educational practices, such as course and curriculum development, pedagogical presentations, and other appropriate activity.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have demonstrated a clear commitment to and a consistent record of effective performance in the instructional role.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have demonstrated dutiful and reasonably effective performance of their teaching responsibilities.

## 3. Service:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category will present a record of superior performance in and leadership potential for significant service activities in more than one arena (departmental, institutional, academically related community, and professional).

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have demonstrated conscientious and effective work in appropriate service activities.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have demonstrated basic competence in the performance of service obligations.

—Approved April 2008

## **Ratings for Promotion to Full Professor**

### 1. Scholarship:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have an extensive record of achievement as manifested in published books, scholarly articles and creative works, and other types of scholarly and/or nationally recognized publications and presentations as appropriate to the candidate's discipline. Candidates should possess a positive reputation in their discipline. Evidence of such may include citations of the

candidate's work, positive reviews, the favorable opinions of prominent scholars, republication in works edited by others, the presentation of papers at major conferences, significant honors and awards, and successful applications for competitive grants.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have a record of achievement as evidenced by published books, scholarly articles and creative works, and other types of scholarly publications and/or nationally recognized publications and presentations, as appropriate to the candidate's discipline, and indicative of significant progress toward the attainment of a positive reputation in their discipline.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have presented a record which reflects an ongoing commitment to scholarly research or creative work and some significant accomplishments.

## 2. Teaching:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have a sustained record of distinguished classroom performance. In addition, candidates should have presented a record of successful efforts to support and improve teaching through such endeavors as the introduction of new courses and curricula, the preparation of instructional materials, pedagogically oriented publications, and the performance of leadership roles in organizations for the advancement of education in English studies.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good in this category shall have a sustained record of effective classroom performance as evidenced by student evaluation results, peer assessments, and contributions toward the ongoing success of the department's instructional mission.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have demonstrated competent, professional, and reasonably effective performance of their teaching responsibilities.

## 3. Service:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall possess a sustained and superior record of departmental, College, university, professional, and/or academically-related community service. It is expected that a candidate shall have been active in a number (but not all) of these arenas. It is further expected that a candidate should have demonstrated effective leadership and individual initiative at a variety of service levels in order to attain this rating.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have an ongoing record of effective service in the department, to the university, and to the larger professional community.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have a record of willing and competent performance of assigned service obligations within the university, and evidence of service to the professional community outside the university. (College guidelines 2.2.3.)

- Adopted May, 1997
- Amended November, 1997
- Amended April 1998
- Amended October 2001
- Amended November 2004
- Revised April 2014

## **B. Term Faculty**

The department's term faculty members are comprised of those whose major responsibility is teaching (herein referred to as "teaching term faculty") for whom academic promotion guidelines and criteria follow in B.2., and those whose sole or primary responsibility is administrative (including but not limited to those term faculty formally designated by the university as "Administrative and Professional Faculty"). For those in this second group whose responsibilities are *solely* administrative, professional advancement will occur through annual salary adjustments and through promotions that are attached to significant new responsibilities and carry increased remuneration. For those in this group whose responsibilities are *primarily* administrative but also include significant teaching activities, and who possess the appropriate academic credentials (herein referred to as "administrative term faculty"), academic promotion guidelines and criteria follow in B.1.

### **General**

1. The chair, in consultation with the dean, will appoint a separate peer review committee for each candidate who has requested to be considered for promotion. Peer review committees will ordinarily consist of three faculty members from the English department, one VCU faculty member from outside the department, and one English department student, all with full voting privileges. All faculty members serving on the committee will be at the rank of assistant professor or above. The committee must include at least two tenured faculty members and must include at least one term faculty member at the promotion rank or above. The candidate has the right to challenge for cause the makeup of the committee as detailed in the university guidelines. (College guidelines 7.1.1.)
2. Given the range of disciplines in the English department and the variety of Teaching, Service, and Research activities within these disciplines, it is impossible to

set out specific criteria that would apply in each case. As a general principle, though, the department has determined that the work of term candidates for promotion will be judged according to the same basic criteria of consistency, quality and impact that tenure-eligible candidates are.

The promotion review will be based on the job descriptions and assigned duties of the term appointments in the usual categories of Service, Teaching and Research, as appropriate.

3. The performance of all term faculty will be reviewed annually, as per university requirements and departmental practice. Term administrative faculty at the rank of assistant professor and above are expected to achieve a minimum rating of very good in Service each year. Two consecutive annual overall ratings below very good will automatically result in non-renewal.

—Adopted May 2007

—Approved April 2008

---Amended April 2014

### **B.1. Service Term Faculty**

For those service term faculty who possess the appropriate academic credentials and whose formal responsibilities also include teaching, the department provides the following promotion policy.

#### **Promotion Requirements for Service Term Faculty**

1. The primary criteria for the promotion of term service faculty at all ranks are a rating of excellent in Service and, at a minimum, a rating of very good in either Teaching or Scholarship (and at least satisfactory in the other). This will be true regardless of what duties are detailed in the job description of the service position; specifically, a record in teaching will be required even if the service job position does not include teaching a certain number of classes per semester or year.
2. For promotion to professor, in addition to a rating of excellent in Service, candidates must achieve, at a minimum, a rating of very good in both Teaching and Scholarship.
3. A minimum of three reviewers external to the university will assess the record in Scholarship for promotion to associate professor and to professor. Such external evaluations will not be a part of the review for promotion to assistant professor.

#### **Ratings for Promotion to Service Assistant Professor**

### 1. Service:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category will present a record of superior performance and substantial accomplishment of the duties specified in their service job descriptions. They will also present a record of participation in at least one arena of service activity (departmental, institutional, academically-related community and professional) beyond that required of their service position at a superior level of performance in both quality and quantity.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good in this category will present a record of effective performance of the duties specified in their service job descriptions. They will also present a record of participation in at least one arena of service activity (departmental, institutional, academically-related community and professional) beyond that required of their service position at a high level of performance in both quality and quantity.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory in this category will present a record of willing and competent performance of the duties specified in their service job descriptions.

### 2. Teaching:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have demonstrated a superior level of performance in the classroom and other instructional settings (including sustained support to other teaching faculty), and have presented evidence of continued development of teaching effectiveness and of contributions to the overall teaching mission of the department.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have demonstrated a clear commitment to and a consistent record of effective performance in the instructional role and presented some evidence of commitment to teaching effectiveness in the department.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have demonstrated a dutiful and reasonably effective performance of their teaching responsibilities.

### 3. Scholarship:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have presented a significant pattern of scholarly and/or publication activity at a superior level of performance. That work will have been judged to have potential for recognition in the candidate's field.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good in this category shall have been consistently active in scholarship and/or creative work at a high level of performance.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have been active in scholarship and/or creative work at an effective level of performance. A rating of satisfactory in scholarship could also be earned by completion of a terminal degree (MFA or PhD).

### **Ratings for Promotion to Service Associate Professor**

#### 1. Service:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category will present a record of superior performance and significant accomplishment in relation to the duties specified in their service job descriptions. They will also present a record of participation in more than one arena of service activity (departmental, institutional, academically-related community and professional) beyond that required of their service position at a superior level of performance

Candidates achieving a rating of very good in this category will present a record of effective performance of the duties specified in their service job descriptions. They will also present a record of service activities beyond those required of their service position at a high level of performance in both quality and quantity.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory in this category will present a record of conscientious performance of the duties specified in their service job descriptions. They will also present a record of service activities beyond those required of their service position at a competent level of performance in both quality and quantity.

#### 2. Teaching:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have demonstrated a superior level of performance in the classroom and other instructional settings, and have presented evidence of having improved educational practices, such as course and curriculum development, pedagogical presentations and other appropriate activities at VCU and beyond.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have demonstrated a clear commitment to and a consistent record of effective performance in the instructional role and presented some evidence of commitment to improving educational practices such as course and curriculum development, pedagogical presentations and other appropriate activities.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have demonstrated a dutiful and

reasonably effective performance of their teaching responsibilities.

### 3. Scholarship:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have presented a record of substantial scholarly and publication activity. That work will have been judged of superior quality and will promise to have a tangible impact on the candidate's field.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have been consistently active in their research or creative work, suggesting the likelihood of significant future accomplishments and enhanced professional standing.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have demonstrated an aptitude for scholarship and publication that has as yet attained minimal recognition in terms of publications (either in print or in press) or grant support.

## **Ratings for Promotion to Service Professor**

### 1. Service:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category will present a record of sustained superior performance and significant accomplishment of the duties specified in their service job descriptions. Their performance will have had a significant positive impact on the effectiveness of the department. They will also present a record of participation in several service activities beyond that required of their service position at a superior level of performance, having demonstrated leadership and individual initiative in a variety of service activities beyond the department level.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good in this category will present a record of effective performance of the duties specified in their service job descriptions. Their performance will have had a positive impact on the department as it fulfills its mission. Additionally, they will present a record of participation in service activities beyond that required of their service position at a high level of performance, having demonstrated leadership and individual initiative in a variety of service activities.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory in this category will present a record of conscientious and competent performance of the duties specified in their job service descriptions. Their performance will have had a positive impact on the department as it fulfills its mission. They will also present a record of participation in service activities beyond that required of their service position at a high level of performance, having demonstrated leadership and individual initiative in a variety of service activities.

### 2. Teaching:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have sustained a record of distinguished instructional performance. In addition, candidates should have a record of successful efforts to support and improve teaching at their own institution and beyond.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have a sustained record of effective classroom performance as evidenced by student evaluation results, peer assessments, and contributions toward the ongoing success of the department's instructional mission.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have demonstrated competent, professional, and reasonably effective performance of their teaching responsibilities.

### 3. Scholarship:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have an extensive record of achievement as manifested in published books, scholarly articles and creative works, and other types of scholarly and/or nationally recognized publications and presentations as appropriate to the candidate's discipline. Candidates should possess a positive reputation in their discipline. Evidence of such may include citations of the candidate's work, positive reviews, the favorable opinions of prominent scholars, republication in works edited by others, the presentation of papers at major conferences, significant honors and awards, and successful applications for competitive grants.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have a record of achievement as evidenced by published books, scholarly articles and creative works, and other types of scholarly publications and/or nationally recognized publications and presentations, as appropriate to the candidate's discipline, and indicative of significant progress toward the attainment of a positive reputation in their discipline.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have presented a record which reflects an ongoing commitment to scholarly research or creative work and some significant accomplishments.

—Adopted May 2007

—Approved April 2008

## **B.2. Promotion Requirements for Teaching Term Faculty**

1. The primary criteria for the promotion of teaching term faculty at all ranks are a rating of excellent in Teaching and, at a minimum, very good in Service. If Scholarship is formally evaluated as part of the candidate's annual effort, a minimum ranking of

satisfactory is required.

2. For promotion to assistant professor, a term faculty member will be formally rated in Teaching (primary emphasis) and Service (secondary emphasis). For promotion at this level, scholarship or creative work related to teaching or to areas of English and/or composition studies should be considered as valued professional contributions. In most cases, Scholarship will not be formally rated.

For promotion to associate professor and professor, a term faculty member will be formally rated in all three categories, Teaching being primary, Service being secondary, and Scholarship being tertiary.

3. A minimum of three reviewers external to the university will assess the record in Scholarship for promotion to associate professor and to professor. Procedures for selecting the external evaluators are the same as for the department's tenure-track appointments. Such external evaluations will not be a part of the review for promotion to assistant professor. (College guidelines 2.1.2.)

—Revised May 2007

---Revised April 2014

### **Ratings for Promotion to Teaching Assistant Professor**

#### 1. Teaching:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have demonstrated a superior level of performance in the classroom and other instructional settings, and have presented evidence of continued development of teaching effectiveness, such as course and curriculum development, pedagogical presentations and other appropriate activities. Candidates shall have presented evidence of participation in the collective pedagogical practices of the department.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have demonstrated a clear commitment to and a consistent record of effective performance in the instructional role and presented some evidence of commitment to teaching effectiveness such as course and curriculum development, pedagogical presentations and other appropriate activities.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have demonstrated a dutiful and reasonably effective performance of their teaching responsibilities.

#### 2. Service:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category will present a record of participation in at least one arena of service activity (departmental, institutional, academically-related community and professional) at a superior level of performance in both quality and quantity.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good in this category will present a record of participation in at least one departmental service activity at a high level of performance.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory in this category will present a record of participation in at least one departmental service activity at an effective level of performance.

### 3. Scholarship:

Performance in scholarship shall be considered to the extent that scholarship is part of the agreed upon departmental responsibilities of the candidate as set forth in annual reviews.

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have presented a significant pattern of scholarly and/or publication activity at a superior level of performance. That work will have been judged to have potential for recognition in the candidate's field.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good in this category shall have been consistently active in scholarship and/or creative work at a high level of performance.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have been active in scholarship and/or creative work at an effective level of performance.

## **Ratings for Promotion to Teaching Associate Professor**

### 1. Teaching:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have demonstrated a superior level of performance in the classroom and other instructional settings, and have presented evidence of having improved educational practices, such as course and curriculum development, pedagogical presentations and other appropriate activities at VCU and beyond. Candidates shall have demonstrated effective leadership in the department's teaching mission.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have demonstrated a clear commitment to and a consistent record of effective performance in the instructional role and presented some evidence of commitment to improving educational practices such

as course and curriculum development, pedagogical presentations and other appropriate activities.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have demonstrated a dutiful and reasonably effective performance of their teaching responsibilities.

## 2. Service:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category will present a record of superior performance in and leadership potential for significant service activities in more than one arena of service activities.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good in this category will present a record of conscientious and effective work in appropriate service activities.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory in this category will present a record of competence in the performance of basic service activities.

## 3. Scholarship:

Performance in scholarship shall be considered to the extent that scholarship is a part of the agreed upon departmental responsibilities of the candidate as set forth in annual reviews.

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have presented a record of substantial scholarly and publication activity. That work will have been judged of superior quality and will promise to have a tangible impact on the candidate's field.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have been consistently active in their research or creative work, suggesting the likelihood of significant future accomplishments and enhanced professional standing.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have demonstrated an aptitude for scholarship and publication that has as yet attained minimal recognition in terms of publications (either in print or in press) or grant support.

## **Ratings for Promotion to Teaching Professor**

### 1. Teaching:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have sustained a record of distinguished instructional performance. In addition, candidates should have a record of successful efforts to support and improve teaching through such endeavors

as the introduction of new courses and curricula, the preparation of instructional materials, pedagogically oriented publications, and the performance of leadership roles in regional and/or national organizations for the advancement of education in English and/or composition studies.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have a sustained record of effective classroom performance as evidenced by student evaluation results, peer assessments, and contributions toward the ongoing success of the department's instructional mission.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have demonstrated competent, professional, and reasonably effective performance of their teaching responsibilities.

## 2. Service:

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category will present a record of sustained, superior performance in more than one service arena, having demonstrated leadership and individual initiative in a variety of service activities.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good in this category will present a record of on-going effective performance within the department and elsewhere.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory in this category will present a record of willing and competent performance of assigned duties within the department.

## 3. Scholarship:

Performance in scholarship shall be considered to the extent that scholarship is a part of the agreed upon departmental responsibilities of the candidate as set forth in annual reviews.

Candidates achieving a rating of excellent in this category shall have an extensive record of achievement as manifested in published books, scholarly articles and creative works, and other types of scholarly and/or nationally recognized publications and presentations as appropriate to the candidate's discipline. Candidates should possess a positive reputation in their discipline. Evidence of such may include citations of the candidate's work, positive reviews, the favorable opinions of prominent scholars, republication in works edited by others, the presentation of papers at major conferences, significant honors and awards, and successful applications for competitive grants.

Candidates achieving a rating of very good shall have a record of achievement as evidenced by published books, scholarly articles and creative works, and other types of scholarly publications and/or nationally recognized publications and presentations, as

appropriate to the candidate's discipline, and indicative of significant progress toward the attainment of a positive reputation in their discipline.

Candidates achieving a rating of satisfactory shall have presented a record which reflects an ongoing commitment to scholarly research or creative work and some significant accomplishments.

- Approved May 2005
- Revised November 2006
- Amended April 2014

## **2. Term Faculty**

The primary responsibility for faculty in term teaching positions will be the teaching of undergraduate courses.

- Adopted May 1997
- Amended October 2001
- Amended November 2004
- Revised November 2006
- Approved April 2008
- Amended April 2014

## **3. Adjunct Faculty**

Adjunct appointments are made to teach specific courses when a need arises. In addition to serving on the Adjunct Issues Committee, adjunct faculty may be asked to serve voluntarily on other committees. Representatives of the adjunct faculty attend department meetings, and these representatives may vote on curricular issues that directly concern adjunct faculty.

- Approved April 2014

## **4. Honorary Professors and Professors Emeriti (University Guidelines 3.5)**

The President and/or board of visitors may designate persons as university professor, commonwealth professor, or emeritus professor. Persons holding these appointments but not subject to annual evaluation by the department chair do not have general voting rights within the department. However, should they serve on department committees, they shall have the same voting rights as other committee members.

- Approved April 2014

## 5. Faculty Teaching Load Policy

Within the maximum teaching loads stipulated in this document the department may vary workloads among teachers in order to best meet the needs and abilities of individual faculty and the range of the department's responsibilities. At the discretion of the chair, different teaching loads may be assigned in connection with such matters as class size, total student load, new course development, special projects, individually negotiated teaching loads necessary to hire or retain key faculty, on an ad hoc basis.

Faculty accepting administrative responsibilities in the department including Chair, Associate Chair, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Director of the MA Program, Director of the MFA Program and the Director of the PhD Program are given appropriate reductions in teaching loads to provide time for these additional duties. Further reductions to give time for research and publishing activities may also be warranted and may be granted where appropriate.

In light of MLA national standards and of VCU's "Roles and Rewards" policy, typically faculty will agree with the chair on a three- to five-year plan that will involve a number of factors including teaching load for that period. The agreement may be revised or extended upon satisfactory evidence presented at the annual review and upon the discretion of the chair (in consultation with the faculty member) according to the following guidelines:

- a. The base teaching load for **research-active members of the graduate faculty** in the Department of English is four courses per year (2-2). Research-active faculty on a 2-2 base teaching load are expected to have achieved the following at each annual review:
  - i. Demonstrated, continuous engagement in research, including on-going book projects, scholarly articles or creative projects, invited lectures/readings, conference papers and presentations; internal and external funding applications for fellowships and grants;
  - ii. Demonstrated impact of a national or international stature of published research, scholarship or creative expression or significant innovation in one's field of expertise.

Tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to publish and need lower teaching loads to provide time for scholarly and/or creative work. This is especially important for junior faculty hired for creative and research expertise in critical areas. Satisfactory evidence of continuing scholarly and/or creative work must be presented at each annual review.

- b. The base teaching load for **full-time members of the faculty with teaching, research, and service responsibilities** is five course assignments per year (3-2 or 2-3). Within this maximum, at the discretion of the chair, reductions can be made for the following circumstances:
- i. Sustained, effective teaching of large numbers of students above departmental norms (see guidelines on course size in English classes);
  - ii. Heavy thesis/dissertation direction, graduate directed study or undergraduate independent study or other substantial student mentorship including graduate and undergraduate research projects, conference presentations, etc.;
  - iii. Significant course or curriculum development or other significant programmatic contributions to teaching;
  - iv. Service duties that involve a heavy administrative component including chair, associate chair, directors of programs.
- c. The base teaching load for **full-time faculty members involved in undergraduate instruction exclusively** in the Department of English is twelve credit hours (four courses) per semester.

Teaching loads in this document are set according to the Association of Departments of English/Modern Language Association standards in ADE Guidelines for Class Size and Workload for College and University Teachers of English: A Statement of Policy (revised 1992) <http://www.ade.org/policy/index.html>; MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Teaching: Final Report (2001); Report of the MLA Task Force on Evaluating Scholarship for Tenure and Promotion (2006); and the AWP Official Guide to Writing Programs.

—Revised November 2006

—Revised April 2010

---Revised April 2012

---Revised March 2015

## 6. Class Size Policy

Class sizes in this document are set according to the Association of Departments of English/Modern Language Association standards in *Guidelines for Class Size and Workload for College and University Teachers of English* (1992), which reaffirm policy statements of the National Council of Teachers of English (1966), the National Junior College Committee (1968), and the American Association of University Professors (1969). Emphasizing the correlation between limited class sizes and student

engagement, the ADE/MLA guidelines specify maximum allowable sizes, not most appropriate sizes.

### Writing Courses

1. Advanced Undergraduate Writing—classes such as advanced composition, business and technical writing, and creative writing are set from fifteen to eighteen.
2. Graduate Writing Workshops—MFA writing workshops are set at twelve.

—Revised April 2010

—Revised May 1, 2012

### Literature Courses

1. The maximum size for any literature class is thirty-five, except for certain large sections where Graduate Teaching Assistants are assigned to help professors.\*
2. The maximum size for any Writing Intensive literature class is twenty-five.
3. The maximum size for advanced undergraduate literature classes that are taught as seminars requiring students to conduct research and to produce sustained critical essays is fifteen.
4. Class sizes for graduate classes in literature, linguistics, and pedagogy are set appropriately to facilitate the shared, active participation vital to advanced study.

\*For large literature sections, the ADE/MLA standards call for a qualified assistant "for each additional thirty-five students."

—Approved February 5, 1991

—Revised May 1, 2012

## **7. Statement of Goals for the Undergraduate English Major**

The goal of the English department is to teach our students to see their worlds with clarity and respond to them with sensitivity--through reading and writing well. English majors should learn to write clearly, persuasively, and gracefully and to respond to a range of texts with understanding and discernment. In order to accomplish this goal, students should:

- read and explore a diversity of texts created in different times and in a variety of voices;
- engage texts using various critical approaches;
- express themselves clearly through written texts;

- employ appropriate research tools.

—Approved February 5, 1991

—Revised November 6, 2007

## 8. Statement Regarding Online Instruction

While the English department currently offers no exclusively online courses, its sustained engagement with digital media and information technologies is implicit in the instructional missions of developing students' "skills to negotiate life in a competitive world" and preparing doctoral graduates for "leadership roles in a media-driven culture." For example, students in our undergraduate and graduate programs participate in the production of *Blackbird*, the department's online journal of literature and the arts. Likewise, ostensibly traditional, face-to-face courses deploy methods typically associated with online instruction.

The typical English course:

- uses Blackboard to facilitate basic communication outside the classroom; to distribute primary texts that are unavailable in print, as well as supplementary contextual and critical readings; and to provide feedback on and evaluation of assignments
- integrates as primary and secondary material film, video, and audio in digital form via YouTube and other online video providers
- encourages students to submit assignments in non-traditional forms such as web pages and other "built" projects

Many English courses also:

- enable students to generate and submit essays, tests, and other written assignments through Blackboard
- expand classroom discussion with discussion boards and video- and/or audio-sharing environments using Blackboard or other online tools, which include social media such as Twitter and Facebook
- incorporate texts in online or nontraditional formats, such as Google Books and/or Archive.org publications
- encourage and develop students' discernment in using and participating in the creation of nontraditional research resources, such as Wikipedia
- focus on new forms of hybrid and digital media, such as computer games, hybrid "new media" films, television, and radio programs

—Approved May 1, 2012

## Section 5 Staff Positions

### 1. Business and Human Resources Manager

The Business and Human Resources Manager, who reports directly to the chair, provides administrative expertise/ support for management of personnel, finance, and budget operations, hiring, graduate and undergraduate course scheduling, grant writing and administration, and other aspects of the department's operations, including special events. The Business and Human Resources Manager's duties include, but are not limited to:

1. determining the financial needs of the department and providing the chair with recommendations for items requiring special funding and capital acquisitions;
2. preparing fiscal budget requests to the Associate Dean of Administration (H&S) and managing the departmental budget with input from the chair;
3. monitoring and making distributions from the VCU Foundation, endowment and scholarship accounts established for the department;
4. managing external funds received by the department in conjunction with co-sponsored projects, and assisting responsible individuals with the management of same;
5. working closely with faculty on grant-funded projects to ensure compliance with the terms of the grant;
6. managing all administrative aspects of faculty/classified searches, with special attention to EEO/State guidelines;
7. preparing quarterly effort certification reports as well as faculty effort reports;
8. coordinating all aspects of department graduation ceremony and on-campus conferences;
9. recording minutes for Executive Committee and department meetings as needed;
10. assisting associate chair with scheduling;
11. arranging for GTAs and adjunct faculty to be placed on payroll and resolving related problems/disputes;
12. preparing course maintenance forms and working closely with Assistant Registrar and Records & Registration personnel to ensure cross-listed courses are accurate and deadlines for publication (web and print) are met;
13. overseeing the preparation of undergraduate and graduate course announcement bulletins;
14. placing textbook orders and arranging for desk copies;
15. assisting associate chair with adjunct hires; processing contract requests and serving as liaison for Human Resources, Payroll and the H&S Dean's

- office;
16. assisting chair with recruiting, training and supervising classified personnel and management of day-to-day office operations;
  17. recruiting, scheduling and supervision of student assistants;
  18. performing such other tasks as required by the chair.

—Revised April 2010

## **2. Technology Coordinator**

The Technology Coordinator, who reports to the chair of the Department of English, provides departmental support and coordination for technology-related matters ranging from facilities management to data storage and Web publishing.

Among the Technology Coordinator's major responsibilities are the following:

1. acting as senior online editor for *Blackbird*, the department's electronic journal of literature and the arts with primary responsibility for production, pagebuilds, and Web publication, as well as maintenance of archives; working with a special emphasis on gallery builds and documentation of the visual arts;
2. acting as senior Web Coordinator in tandem with the Associate Technologist and Graduate Programs Advisor on all Web publication and electronic distribution of materials, as well as matters of departmental data storage;
3. coordinating use and development of the department's computer-equipped facilities as the primary general site manager; carrying out yearly reviews of equipment and facilities in preparation for desktop design and upgrades, equipment upgrades, inventory, and funding requests; acting as secondary site manager for PhD-centric (MATX) equipment and specialty software;
4. coordinating technology support for faculty, staff, and students; placing a strong emphasis on "how-to" rather than "repair" in direct support and training;
5. advising committees, directors, and the chair on technological matters relating to teaching, research, and service;
6. teaching one course, or the equivalent, per semester; and
7. other duties as assigned by the chair.

## **3. Associate Technologist/Online Editor**

The Associate Technologist/Online Editor, who reports to the chair of the Department of English and who works in tandem with the Technology Coordinator, provides

technological and administrative expertise and support for the Media, Art, and Text PhD program and for the online journal *Blackbird*. The Associate Technologist/Online Editor's major responsibilities include the following:

1. providing lead technological support for the PhD program in Media, Art and Text, and coordinating that support inside and outside of the department with interdisciplinary partners;
2. working as an online editor for *Blackbird* with an emphasis on audio capture and editing, photography, photo editing, Flash, design, programming, and new media efforts;
3. providing design, maintenance, and support of Web efforts related to MATX in tandem with the Technology Coordinator and Graduate Program Coordinator, and with the advice of the MATX Director;
4. providing broader departmental support (beyond MATX student and faculty support) for media and new media production, particularly for faculty, with the advice of the MATX Director and Technology Coordinator and the approval of the Chair. Such departmental efforts range from design work in both electronic and print materials to advice, training, or support linked to approved faculty projects;
5. acting as primary site manager for the equipment and software purchased for MATX support and secondary general site manager for the departmental computer facilities; and
6. other duties as assigned by the chair.

#### **4. Coordinator of Undergraduate Advising**

The Coordinator of Undergraduate Advising, who reports to the chair of the department and works with the Director of Undergraduate Studies, performs administrative and analytical duties related to the department's advising of approximately 600 undergraduate English majors. S/He is responsible for the following duties:

1. oversees the advising of all undergraduate majors and minors in department Advising Center;
2. manages the duties and performance of GTAs or others assigned to work in the Center;
3. prepares all graduation applications;
4. maintains database of student majors;
5. prepares forms related to change of major and minors;
6. coordinates undergraduate internships and independent studies;
7. prepares and provides general information on the major to new students and responds to inquiries about the undergraduate program;
8. teaches a total of three courses, primarily at lower division level, during the fall and spring semesters and the summer session;

9. disseminates departmental communications to majors;
10. performs other tasks as required by the chair and program director.

—Revised April 2010

—Revised October 2011

## **5. Graduate Programs Advisor**

The Graduate Programs Advisor, who reports to the chair, is responsible for the following duties related to the department's three graduate programs:

1. supporting the MA, MFA, and PhD in Media, Art, and Text graduate program directors with the collection, maintenance and programmatic analysis of information and records;
2. serving as the public programmatic liaison for all three programs;
3. counseling all incoming and continuing graduate students;
4. directing the processing of admissions materials;
5. managing production and dissemination of promotional and informational materials, working in cooperation with the Technology Coordinator and Associate Technologist on Web publication and electronic distribution of materials;
6. coordinating the Visiting Writers Series, Levis Reading Prize, as well as assisting the First Novelist Award; communicating with participating authors, overseeing all necessary travel arrangements and bookings, and handling financial matters with the department's Business and Human Resource Manager;
7. facilitating graduate assistant offers and assignments, including support for the online journal *Blackbird* and coordinating other student internships and independent studies;
8. coordinating thesis and dissertation defenses in conjunction with the graduate program directors, administering comprehensive exams; and
9. other tasks as required by chair or program directors.

## **6. Assistant to the Chair**

The Assistant to the Chair, who reports directly to the chair, performs various administrative and analytical duties for the department chair, associate chair, and Business and Human Resource Manager:

1. typing and proofreading routine correspondence and department's annual reports and other documents;
2. compiling tenure & promotion and third year review materials;
3. recording minutes of staff, department and Executive Committee

- meetings;
4. compiling documentation for WEAVE and other departmental reports;
  5. keeping chair's calendar;
  6. making domestic and international travel arrangements for all faculty members, research assistants, and visiting dignitaries related to department programs, and processing appropriate forms;
  7. assisting the Business and Human Resource Manager with requisition preparation and processing, researching and resolving accounting and payroll discrepancies, and the preparation of other forms and documents;
  8. assisting various committees (Curriculum, Executive, etc.) in preparation of materials and documents;
  9. coordinating faculty and classified staff searches; making travel arrangements for job candidates; generating candidate itineraries;
  10. maintaining leave records on a bi-weekly basis; researching and correcting discrepancies;
  11. maintaining departmental files, including confidential personnel files;
  12. performing other duties as requested by chair, associate chair, or Business and Human Resource Manager.

## **7. Office Support Technician**

The Office Support Technician serves as receptionist for the English department and provides secretarial support to administrators and faculty. The Office Support Technician, who reports to the Business and Human Resource Manager, performs the following duties on a routine basis:

1. greeting visitors, answering phones, taking messages in a prompt and professional manner;
2. screening, monitoring and handling program inquiries and problems from students, instructors and others. Refers non-routine program inquiries to the appropriate program directors, coordinators (Graduate Programs and Advising) or faculty;
3. proofreading/editing correspondence, forms, handbooks, announcements, writing awards and publicity materials;
4. assisting the Business and Human Resource Manager with requisition preparation and processing and the preparation of other forms and documents;
5. recording class cancellations;
6. working with supervisor to prepare graduate and undergraduate course announcement bulletins;
7. assisting supervisor with course scheduling; providing teaching assignments, via email, to graduate assistants (MA, MFA and PhD), part- and full-time faculty;

8. scheduling office space, programming ProxLox, and distributing keys;
9. updating and maintaining the Non-Employee Database;
10. scheduling department conference rooms and computer labs;
11. monitoring fixed assets (including equipment check-out, etc.);
12. reporting maintenance problems to the appropriate departments;
13. performing other tasks, as assigned.

—Amended May 2004

—Approved April 2008