

**Bylaws of the Program in Interdisciplinary Humanities (College of  
Arts & Sciences) at Florida State University**

## **Record of Substantive Revisions and Amendments to these Bylaws**

These bylaws were revised in September 2015, and in May 2022. On all occasions, they were revalidated by the faculty via secret ballot.

## **Sunset/Renewal Provision**

Without revision, the bylaws must be revalidated by a two-thirds majority of the voting members five years from the date of the previous approval.

*These are the bylaws for the Program in Interdisciplinary Humanities (College of Arts & Sciences) at Florida State University. These bylaws were last approved on 05/02/2022 by a majority of the applicable voting members of the Program in Interdisciplinary Humanities and on 05/05/2022 by the College of Arts & Sciences and the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement.*

## **Preamble**

The Program in Interdisciplinary Humanities was founded in 1956 as the Program in Humanities. According to an early description of the program, its underlying purpose was “to study [humans] as creative being[s] in all [their] various objective and subjective roles.” A report on the program from 1976 details further reasons for the program’s inception, including the need for a program that would “complement, not compete with, existing or to-be-developed departmental programs,” and that would develop “interrelationships and integration” among the various humanities disciplines. The program was the institutional home for a popular three-semester great-books course for undergraduates, and a humanities major that allowed students to take classes offered in several different departments. It was also the degree-granting unit for master’s-degree and doctoral students whose academic interests were in those fields which at that time did not yet have graduate programs at FSU.

At present, the program in Interdisciplinary Humanities (PIH) is a degree-granting unit that supervises the undergraduate major and minor in Interdisciplinary Humanities. Its mission is to promote the production and construction of knowledge from an interdisciplinary perspective, by offering courses and curricula that answer questions that humanists have long asked—about WHAT artifacts and texts mean, and about HOW artifacts and texts function for the communities that use them—and that give students the critical-thinking and technological skills to answer these questions in compelling ways.

## **I. Bylaws**

**A. Adherence with Other Governing Documents.** At all times, PIH policy shall adhere to and be consistent with all university policies found in the FSU Constitution, the BOT-UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement, and the Annual Memorandum on the Promotion and Tenure Process issued by the Office Faculty Development and Advancement.

**B. Bylaws Revision.** These bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the PIH voting membership called by the program director where a quorum exists. A two-thirds majority vote is necessary to enact an amendment to the bylaws. Voting on amendments to these bylaws shall be by secret ballot. Where possible, proposed amendments shall be provided to each member of the PIH voting membership at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which voting is to occur. This advance notice requirement may be waived by a two-thirds majority vote.

**C. Substantive Change Statement.** Faculty and staff members are expected to be familiar with and follow the Florida State University Substantive Change policy as found on the university website <https://sacs.fsu.edu/substantive-change-policy/>.

## II. Membership and Voting Rights

**A. Faculty Membership.** The faculty of PIH shall consist of the director, those persons holding full-time appointments at any rank of specialized teaching faculty (Teaching Faculty I, II, III)—including visiting teaching faculty—and faculty serving on the PIH steering committee.

**B. Program Membership.** In addition to the faculty defined in II.A above, the following are members of PIH: postdoctoral faculty assigned to PIH, adjuncts teaching courses administered by PIH, staff who have more than a 30% assignment in PIH, and OPS employees including but not limited to graduate students assigned as instructors or teaching assistants in PIH's curricular offerings.

**C. Faculty Voting Rights.** The voting membership consists of all faculty assigned to PIH in a full-time capacity by the Deans of FSU Colleges.

**D. Non-faculty Voting Rights.** Non-faculty do not have voting rights.

## III. Organization and Governance

**A. Faculty Meetings.** The director shall schedule faculty meetings as needed, or by request of a faculty member, to discuss and vote on curriculum recommendations, faculty recruitment, criteria for promotion, criteria for merit, program review, and other issues. Minutes shall be kept and shall be made available to members. At the request of any voting member, Robert's Rules of Order shall be invoked.

Except where these bylaws specify a different procedure, decisions made by the faculty will be by a vote conducted at a faculty meeting, by letter ballot, or by email ballot. For a faculty meeting, a majority of the voting membership that is eligible to vote on the measure under consideration constitutes a quorum, and passage of a measure requires a majority of the voting membership that is present and eligible to vote on the measure. Passage of a letter or email ballot requires a majority of the voting membership that is eligible to vote on the measure; except where these bylaws specify differently, all the voting membership is eligible to vote.

**B. Director Selection.** The program director is the chief executive officer of the program and is appointed by the Dean of the College or Arts and Sciences. The program director reports to, and is evaluated by, the Dean of Arts and Sciences. PIH voting faculty may provide input on the appointment to the Dean or to a representative of the Dean.

The program director is responsible for annually making Assignments of Responsibilities, and writing annual calendar-year evaluation letters, for specialized faculty in PIH. The annual evaluation by the director will take into account the results of peer evaluations offered to the director by other voting members of the unit. For faculty members who have not reached the highest rank in a promotional ladder, the Annual Evaluation letter shall include an appraisal of progress toward promotion.

**C. Leadership and Committees.** All other program administrative positions and committees will be appointed by the program director. The program director will ensure that the voting membership is involved and informed on matters of policy.

### **1. Director of Undergraduate Studies**

The Director of Undergraduate Studies is appointed by the program director. They are responsible for answering all inquiries concerning the undergraduate major, advising prospective and actual undergraduate majors and minors in Interdisciplinary Humanities, and supervising the clearance of undergraduate students for receiving degrees. In consultation with the program director, with other PIH specialized faculty, and PIH staff, the director of undergraduate studies will prepare the schedule of undergraduate offerings each term, and will serve as the liaison to the Career Services office on campus.

### **2. Other supervisory offices**

When PIH offers a large-enrollment undergraduate class, across multiple sections, the program director will appoint a full-time specialized teaching faculty member in PIH as supervisor of the various instructors in that class. She or he is responsible for the training of those instructors, and also for resolving conflicts between instructors and students in those classes on the rare occasions that they should arise.

### **3. Faculty Recruitment and Selection Committee.** See III.D.

**4. Faculty Evaluation Committee (FEC).** This “committee of the whole” of voting members in PIH is assembled annually to review all faculty candidates eligible for promotion (regardless of rank), to make recommendations on promotion to the director, and to make recommendations on the distribution of merit raises (when available) to the director, who forwards them to the dean. If the director’s recommendation on merit differs from that of the FEC, both recommendations are provided to the Dean.

### **5. PIH Steering Committee (PIHSC)**

The PIHSC consists of faculty appointed by the director of PIH, drawn from a broad range of academic units at Florida State University. The PIHSC shall support the mission of PIH by:

1. Proposing activities, initiatives, and events to foster cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary engagement around the humanities;
2. Advising the PIH program director on curricula, faculty recruitment, procedures, and other matters as appropriate for PIH operations;
3. Executing *ad hoc* duties as necessary to maintain the PIH program’s operations.

**D. Faculty Recruitment.** When a PIH faculty line is added or becomes available, or whenever PIH is authorized to hire a postdoctoral scholar, a committee shall be formed which shall be composed of the director and a minimum of two additional members, at least one of whom must be drawn from the PIH voting members and one of whom must be drawn from the PIHSC. The committee works to determine and recruit attractive candidates to fill needs within the program and selects candidates for interview once the application period closes. After the interview process concludes, the committee identifies the best candidates for the position in the form of an ordered list, and makes a recommendation to the director. The director recommends the agreed-upon candidate to the dean.

**E. Unit Reorganization.** Unit reorganization would be addressed through a bylaws revision. (See section I.B. of these bylaws.)

## IV. Curriculum

The “committee of the whole” of voting members in PIH regularly reviews the undergraduate curriculum in the Humanities major and minor and recommends to the program director and the program’s director of undergraduate studies such changes as it deems appropriate.

## V. Annual Evaluation of Faculty on Performance and Merit.

**A. Peer Involvement in Annual Performance and Merit Evaluation.** Each faculty member’s performance will be evaluated relative to their assigned duties. Each faculty member’s performance will be rated annually using the following university rating scale: Substantially Exceeds FSU’s High Expectations; Exceeds FSU’s High Expectations; Meets FSU’s High Expectations; Official Concern; Does Not Meet FSU’s High Expectations.

For other details on faculty involvement in the annual evaluation process, see section III.C.4 of these bylaws. Based on annual evaluations, and with input from the FEC, the program director shall recommend faculty to the Dean for merit raises when available. (As noted in III.C.4, if the director’s recommendation on merit differs from that of the FEC, both recommendations are provided to the Dean.)

**B. Criteria for Evaluation of Specialized Faculty.** PIH faculty members are evaluated based on their performance of their assignments as specified by the Assignment of Responsibilities (AOR). The calendar-year annual evaluations are performed by the director, in consultation with the voting members of the unit.

Faculty Annual Evaluations will occur during the spring semester of each year and will take into account the weighted performance based on the assigned duties (AOR) over the past year. The director will review each faculty member’s responsibilities for the year—including supervisory/advising duties as well as teaching duties—in consultation with each faculty member. In addition, the director will use pertinent information from other sources as applicable, including the FEC (see section III.C.4 of these bylaws), peer review, and Student Perception of Courses and Instructors (SPCI) results. The director will complete the Annual Evaluation Summary Form, and will attach the required annual evaluation narrative, indicating one of the five performance rating categories below. For faculty who are meeting expectations, there are three categories:

**Meets FSU’s High Expectations** – This describes an individual who demonstrates the requisite knowledge and skills in his/her field of specialty and completes assigned responsibilities in a manner that is both timely and consistent with the high expectations of the university.

**Exceeds FSU’s High Expectations** – This describes an individual who exceeds expectations during the evaluation period by virtue of demonstrating noted achievements in teaching, research (when specialized faculty in PIH have a research component to their AORs), and service, which may include several of the following: high level of research/creative activity, professional recognitions, willingness to accept additional responsibilities, high level of commitment to serving students and the overall mission of the Department, involvement/leadership in professional associations, initiative in solving problems or developing new ideas.

**Substantially Exceeds High Expectations** – This describes a faculty member who far exceeds performance expectations during the evaluation period and achieves an extraordinary

accomplishment or recognition in teaching, research (when specialized faculty in PIH have a research component to their AORs), and service, which may include several of the following: highly significant research or creative activities; demonstrated recognition of the individual by peers as an authority in his/her field; securing significant external funding; attaining significant national or international achievements, awards, and recognition.

If an individual's overall performance rating falls below "Meets FSU's High Expectations," specific suggestions for improvement should be provided to the employee. There are two performance rating categories for individuals who are not meeting expectations:

**Official Concern** – This describes an individual who demonstrates the requisite knowledge and skills in his/her field of specialty but is not completing assigned responsibilities in a manner that is consistent with the high standards of the university.

**Does Not Meet FSU's High Expectations** – This describes an individual who fails to demonstrate with consistency the knowledge, skills, or abilities required in his/her field of specialty and/or in completing assigned responsibilities.

A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is required when a non-tenured faculty member receives a "Does Not Meet FSU's High Expectations" rating.

In the process of evaluating performance in accordance with the faculty member's assignment of responsibilities during the evaluation period, the following criteria shall be utilized.

*For teaching:* Did the candidate meet their obligations, in terms of the assignment of responsibilities negotiated with the director the previous year? What were the contributions of the candidate, in terms of the Program's performance in the College re: student credit hours? What do student evaluations indicate about the candidate's performance? What do peer evaluations, if any exist, indicate about the candidate's performance? Did the candidate contribute to the teaching mission of PIH by helping to review and build our curricular offerings? Did the candidate perform any tasks above and beyond the assignment of responsibilities? In what regard, if any, did the candidate improve the quality of teaching of other instructors of classes administered by PIH (e.g., through discussions of teaching, visiting others' classrooms and making comments, contributing ideas concerning the curriculum, designing new courses, substantially revising existing courses, etc.)?

*For service:* As with teaching, the first question will be whether the candidate has met their obligations as indicated by the assignment of responsibilities. Excellence in meeting these obligations would entail efficiency and accuracy in course scheduling, expertise and availability to advise undergraduate majors as needed, expertise and availability to advise other instructors of record in PIH-administered courses (including graduate students and adjuncts), and development of effective means to recruit majors. Further questions will involve contribution to the Department's mission and to its reputation in the College, University, or discipline. Any supererogatory contributions will be considered as well.

*Minimum contributions* (necessary for a rating of "meets FSU's high expectations" or higher): For teaching and service, this will usually mean that one has met their obligations under the assignment of responsibilities.

## **VI. Promotion of Faculty**

**A. Progress Toward Promotion Letter.** Each year, every faculty member who is not yet at the highest rank for their position will receive a letter that outlines progress toward promotion.

**B. Peer Involvement in Evaluation of Promotion of Faculty.** See section III.C.4 of these bylaws.

**C. Criteria for Promotion of Specialized Faculty.** PIH Specialized Teaching Faculty may be promoted through three levels based on meritorious performance of assigned duties. Promotion decisions shall take into account the following considerations, in accord with the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the FSU board of trustees and the FSU branch of the United Faculty of Florida (see Appendix J):

- i. Annual evaluations
- ii. Annual assignments
- iii. Evidence of sustained effectiveness
  - a. Evidence of well-planned and delivered courses
  - b. Summaries of data from Student Perception of Courses and Instructors (SPCI) questionnaires
  - c. letters from faculty members who have conducted peer evaluations of the candidate's teaching
  - d. ability to teach multiple courses within a discipline/major
  - e. other teaching-related activities, such as instructional innovation, involvement in curriculum development, authorship of educational materials, and participation in professional organizations related to the area of instruction

Although the period of time in a given rank is normally five years, demonstrated merit, not years of service, shall be the guiding factor. Promotion shall not be automatic, nor may it be regarded as guaranteed upon completion of a given term of service. Early promotion is possible where there is sufficient justification.

Faculty members seeking promotion shall work with the program director to prepare a promotion binder to submit through the approval process ending with the President or designee. The promotion binder shall include:

- i. professional vita;
- ii. assignment of responsibilities (AOR) for all years either since the faculty member's start date or since the faculty member's last promotion;
- iii. annual evaluations for all years either since the faculty member's start date or since the faculty member's last promotion;
- iv. annual letters of appraisal of progress toward promotion from the director, for all years either since the faculty member's start date or since the faculty member's last promotion;
- v. letters of recommendation;



- vi. a list of courses taught since appointment to the rank from which being considered for promotion, with the percentage of effort assigned, enrollment, and grade distribution for each course;
- vii. a summary of the results of the polls of student perceptions of teaching shall also be included for each course;
- viii. up to three letters from faculty members, besides the director, who have conducted a peer evaluation of the candidate's teaching;
- ix. and evidence of other considerations as needed or applicable.

The director will forward all binders to the Dean.

For promotion from teaching faculty **I** to **II**, the candidate must show demonstrated effectiveness in teaching and in the areas of assigned duties. This includes but is not limited to: well-planned and delivered courses; consistently positive responses from students in the Student Perceptions of Courses and Instructors (SPCI) questionnaires; strong assessments from faculty members who have conducted peer evaluations of the candidate's teaching; effectiveness in teaching multiple courses in the major; instructional innovation; and involvement in curriculum development.

For promotion from teaching faculty **II** to **III**, the candidate must show superior performance in the areas of assigned duties. In addition to the criteria listed above, this could also include (but is not limited to): university teaching awards; involvement in undergraduate research; involvement in helping other **PIH** instructors with pedagogical development; and innovative contributions to **PIH**'s undergraduate teaching mission.