

College of Science Faculty Association Constitution and Bylaws for Shared Governance

Article I. Name

The name of this organization is the “College of Science Faculty Association” at Virginia Tech, referred to as “COSFA” in these Bylaws.

Article II. Purpose and Functions

COSFA shall have the following general purposes and principal functions:

- o To inform and consult with College of Science (COS) faculty, to represent their interests to all officials and entities whose decisions affect the faculty, and to gather and disseminate to the faculty information on all relevant issues before such officials and entities (i.e., COS and University administration and the Faculty Senate).
- o To provide a mechanism for COS faculty to focus opinions, advocate collectively for beneficial change, and formulate recommendations to COS and university administrators regarding COS and university goals.
- o To facilitate open communication and shared governance in COS and at Virginia Tech while helping to ensure that the university continues to prioritize its core commitments to teaching, research, and service.
- o To encourage the development of, maintain contact with, coordinate its activities with, and form liaisons with parallel or similar organizations in other colleges at Virginia Tech.
- o To manage the selection of COS faculty members for specified college and university committees.
- o To encourage faculty members to engage in college- and university-level service.

Article III. Membership

Membership in COSFA is open to all of the following:

- o Members are COS faculty holding regular, unrestricted academic appointments.
- o Faculty members and research counterparts who have restricted appointments do not have membership/voting rights within the organization.

Article IV. Steering Committee and Officers

- o COSFA shall have a Steering Committee consisting of one elected member (named Officer hereafter) from each of the college’s Academic Units. Officers may not serve more than one consecutive term in the Steering Committee and thus are not eligible for re-election until a year has passed since the conclusion of his/her previous term. The term length is two years, except for a term that includes service as Chair and a term that includes service as the COSFA representative at the Faculty Senate. For the three-year term that includes Chair service, the first year is as Chair-Elect, the second as Chair, and the third as ordinary officer. The term of the officer, who also

serves as the COSFA representative at the Faculty Senate, is three-year. In the first two years of each Faculty Senate term, an officer will serve the dual role, for a total of 9 members on the Steering Committee. The last year of each Faculty Senate term requires an additional member (officer or chair-elect) to be elected to the Steering Committee as the primary representative for their department, for a total of 10 members. See Table I for the rotating schedule of Chair assignments and Faculty Senate appointments.

- A vacancy on the Steering Committee that results from an elected officer vacating his/her position should be filled by the officer's Academic Unit before the next COSFA meeting. The new appointee will remain as officer in the Steering Committee for the remaining time of the officer's predecessor's term.
- The annual elections for the Steering Committee shall be conducted at the discretion of each Academic Unit and before the first day of a new Academic year. Elections should be by secret ballot of the members in good standing in the officer's department.
- The offices of Chair and Chair-Elect are intended to be served consecutively, by a single individual, for a term of one year for each office (a total of two years of service).
- The Chair and Chair-elect positions are determined by the rotation system as indicated in **Table I**.
- A faculty member who has served for one year as Chair-Elect automatically becomes the Chair the following year.
- The terms of the Chair-Elect and the Chair begin on the first day of class in the Fall academic term.
- If the Chair's position is vacated for any reason, the Immediate Past Chair will assume the Chair's duties for the remainder of the year.
- The *Executive Committee* comprises the Chair and the Chair-Elect.

Article IV-1. Duties of the Chair and Chair-Elect

- The Chair shall preside over meetings of COSFA and of the Steering Committee, and shall issue the call for such meetings, and shall prepare the agenda.
- The Chair shall maintain COSFA archives of Executive and Steering Committee meetings.
- The Chair shall serve as a liaison between COSFA, and the administrations of the COS and the University.
- The Chair-Elect shall assist the Chair in performing duties of the Chair. The Chair-Elect shall act in the Chair's stead at COSFA and Steering Committee meetings that the Chair is unable to attend.
- The Chair shall schedule at least one Steering Committee meeting during each of the fall and spring semesters of the academic year. Additional meetings will occur at the request of a majority of officers of the Steering Committee. A majority of officers shall constitute a quorum for conducting business.

Article IV-2. Responsibilities of the Executive and Steering Committees

- o The Executive and Steering Committee shall oversee any necessary committee assignments in the Spring academic term, ensuring that representation from COSFA meets college- and university-level obligations.
- o During each Fall academic term, the Executive and Steering Committee shall re-certify the distribution of committee assignments among Academic Units (**Table II** shows an initial distribution with projections). In consultation with individual department Heads and Chairs and the SON director, the Executive Committee may modify this distribution at the request of a given Unit* and/or at the discretion of the Executive and Steering Committee but is charged to maintain a similar balance, maximizing the number of participating Units and ensuring a rotation of assignments among all Units.
- o In the Spring academic term, the Executive Committee solicits appointments for all committees, councils, and commissions that require new membership from the Heads/Chairs/Directors of all COS Academic Units.
- o Before the end of each Spring academic term, the Executive Committee, with approval of the Steering Committee, shall transmit the names of new appointees to their respective committees.
- o Before the end of each Spring academic term, the Executive Committee will announce appointments to COSFA members using email and by posting the appointments on the COSFA web site (<http://www.science.vt.edu/about/cosfa.html>).
- o Throughout the year, the Executive Committee, in agreement with the Steering Committee, solicits interim appointments to fill committee vacancies as they arise in accordance with Article IV of the Bylaws. If no replacement is nominated by the specified Unit, the Executive Committee may seek appointees from other Units.
*(The Executive Committee will consider requests by Units to “trade off” specific committee assignments)

Article V. Voting

- o Except as otherwise specified in these Bylaws, those eligible to participate in any vote must be members in good standing (see Article III) as of one month prior to either the date of the vote or the return date of the electronic ballot.
- o Except as otherwise specified in these Bylaws, matters submitted to a vote shall require for adoption only a majority of valid votes cast.

Article VI. Amendment of these Bylaws

- o These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the voting membership in good standing. Proposed amendments may be brought to a vote of the membership (i) by majority vote of the Steering Committee, or (ii) by petition of one-third of the membership in good standing.

Article VII. Effective Date

- o Amendments to these Bylaws shall take effect immediately upon certification of the vote, unless otherwise specified.

Article VIII. COSFA Representation on College and University Level Committees and Commissions .

COSFA shall oversee appointments and/or nominees of its members to the committees and commissions specified in Article VIII-2 below. Throughout Article VIII, these committees and commissions are collectively referred to as “COSFA committees.”

Article VIII-1. The Role of Academic Units in Composing COSFA Committees.

- o All Academic Units in COS shall have representation on at least one COSFA committee.
- o Each Unit’s representation level shall be based on its respective faculty population. Units with fifty or more COSFA members shall fill up to three positions. Units with thirty to forty-nine members shall fill up to two positions. Units with fewer than thirty members shall fill one position. Membership counts are made in spring of each year, and shall apply for determining Unit representation for the year beginning with the following fall semester.
- o Units are strongly encouraged to assign representatives when called upon unless they do not have eligible faculty members or they perceive an undue service burden.
- o The COSFA members within each Unit shall decide how their COSFA committee representatives are elected. Each Unit determines the logistics of its voting procedures, subject to being open to equal participation by all COSFA members within the Unit.
- o All COS Academic Units eventually place faculty members into every College- and University-level committee whose membership is overseen by COSFA.

Article VIII-2 College and University Committees and Commissions with COSFA Representation.

- o *COSFA Executive Committee.* (See description in Article IV).
- o *COS Teaching Excellence Committee.* The Teaching Excellence Committee is comprised of up to seven members, each serving two-year terms. The COS Dean may appoint one member directly. The three recipients of the Certificate of Teaching Excellence shall be automatically made Teaching Excellence Committee members for the following two years. Thus, the Teaching Excellence Committee is comprised of three members who served on the committee the previous year and up to four new members.
- o *COS Curriculum Committee.* The thirteen-member COS Curriculum Committee (COSCUR) is comprised of one faculty representative from each of the college’s nine Academic Units, one faculty member representing the Academy of Integrated Science, one faculty member representing the Academy of Data Science, and a representative from University Libraries. The COS Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs, or other representative of the College of Science Dean’s office as appointed by the Dean, serves as an additional, non-voting member. COSCUR is concerned with graduate and undergraduate advising, degree programs, curricula, student awards as assigned by the Dean, and academic standards. Units are encouraged but not required to assign either their graduate or undergraduate studies director to COSCUR. COSCUR elects its own chair from among its voting members, typically in the first meeting of the fall term every year. COSCUR also selects one of its own voting members to serve concurrently on the University Curriculum Committee for General Education (UCCGE). Members of this committee are COS faculty. Staff members may serve with approval of the Dean’s representative.

- o *COS Diversity Committee.* The 10-member Diversity Committee includes one representative from each of the college's nine Academic Units; each is a voting member. The COS Director of Inclusion and Diversity, or other representative of the College of Science Dean's office as appointed by the Dean, serves as an additional, non-voting member responsible for calling and leading committee meetings. The Diversity Committee works to increase inclusion and diversity for all the stakeholders in the College. It supports initiatives that aim at recruiting and retaining a diverse student body, and a diverse faculty and staff. Membership on this committee is open to all COS faculty, staff, and emeritus faculty.
- o *COS Honorifics Committee.* The 10-member Honorifics Committee includes one representative from each of the college's nine Academic Units; each is a voting member. The Associate Dean for Strategic Initiatives, or other representative of the College of Science Dean's office as appointed by the Dean, serves as an additional, non-voting member responsible for calling and leading committee meetings. The Honorifics Committee makes recommendations on distinguished professorships, chaired professorships, faculty fellow positions, leave requests, and other faculty honors on an as-needed basis. Membership on this committee is restricted to tenured full professors.
- o *University Council.* One COSFA member shall be elected to represent COS on the University Council for a three-year term, and is not eligible for re-election to a consecutive term.
- o *University Commissions on Graduate Studies and Policies (UCGSP), Undergraduate Studies and Policies (UCUSP), Research (UCR), and Outreach and International Affairs (UCOIA).* One COSFA member shall be elected to represent COS on each of these four Commissions, each for a three-year term. No COSFA member may serve more than two full consecutive terms on any given commission. The four Commissions report to the University Council.
- o *University Faculty Senate.* One or more COSFA members from each COS Unit shall be elected to the Faculty Senate for a three-year term in agreement with the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws. One COSFA steering committee member will be appointed or elected to represent the college at the Faculty Senate.
- o *University Committees* shall be filled by appointment from the University President. For each of the following University Committees, *University Committee on Academic Support, University Athletics Committee, University Commencement Committee, and University Library Committee,* COSFA shall provide one nominee from among its members to the Office of the President. All members of these committees serve three-year terms. After a COSFA member has served two full consecutive terms on any given University Committee, he/she is not eligible to serve in a similar position until a year has passed since the conclusion of his/her second consecutive term.
- o *University Advisory Council on Strategic Budgeting and Planning.* The University President shall appoint one COSFA member to this council.
- o *Pathways General Education Curriculum Review Committee.* One COSFA member shall be elected to represent COS on the Pathways General Education Curriculum Review Committee, for a three-year term, and is not eligible for re-election to a consecutive term.

- Chair is indicated as “C”, Chair-elect is indicated as “C-E”, Officer is indicated as “O”
- Orange shaded boxes with “FS” indicate the three-year Faculty Senate appointment with the third year indicating an additional O or C-E committee member
- Fall and Spring semesters are indicated as “f” and “s” respectively. All appointments extend through the trailing summer.
- Blue shaded boxes indicate a three-year appointment beginning with the Chair-elect year.

Table II. COSFA Rotating Schedule of Appointments 2007-2016

Committee	f2007 s2008	f2008 s2009	f2009 s2010	f2010 s2011	f2011 s2012	f2012 s2013	f2013 s2014	f2014 s2015	f2015 s2016	f2016 s2017
Academic Support	Chem			Geo			Econ			
Athletics	Econ			Bio			Geo		Econ	
Commencement	Math				Chem			Math		
Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies	Chem			Phys					Geo	
Commission on Outreach & International Affairs	Math		Econ			Psych			Phys	
Commission on Research	Phys		Math			Bio			Chem	
Commission on Undergraduate Studies & Policies	Bio			Psych			Chem			Math
Graduate Curriculum Committee	Geo		Chem			Geo			Bio	
Library	Stat		Math			Stat			Math	
Univ. Adv. Council Strategic Budgeting & Planning	Geo				Bio			Chem		
University Council	Psych				Stat			Math		
Chair COSFA	Geo	Bio	Math	Chem	Psych	Econ	Phys	Stat	Geo	Bio
Chair-elect COSFA	Bio	Math	Chem	Psych	Econ	Phys	Stat	Geo	Bio	Math
Appointment load per Unit per year	f2007 s2008	f2008 s2009	f2009 s2010	f2010 s2011	f2011 s2012	f2012 s2013	f2013 s2014	f2014 s2015	f2015 s2016	f2016 s2017
Biological Sciences (Bio)	2	2	1	1	2	4	3	2	2	2
Chemistry (Chem)	2	2	4	3	2	1	2	2	3	2
Economics (Econ)	1	1	2	1	2	1	0	1	1	2
Geosciences (Geo)	3	2	1	1	1	2	3	3	2	1

Mathematics (Math)	2	3	4	3	2	0	0	2	3	5
Physics (Phys)	2	2	0	1	1	2	2	1	3	2
Psychology (Psych)	1	1	2	4	3	2	1	1	0	0
Statistics (Stat)	1	1	0	0	1	2	3	2	0	0
School of Neuroscience (SoN)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table II (cont.). COSFA Rotating Schedule of Appointments 2017-2029

Committee	f2017 s2008	f2018 s2019	f2019 s2020	f2020 s2021	f2021 s2022	f2022 s2023	f2023 s2024	f2024 s2025	f2025 s2026	f2026 s2027
Academic Support	Chem		Math			Bio (SoN)			Math	
Athletics	Econ		Geo (SoN)			Stat		Math		
Commencement	Stat			Biol			Phys		Chem	
Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies	Geo			Math			Econ (SoN)		Bio	
Commission on Outreach & International Affairs	Phys	Stat			Psych			Bio		
Commission on Research	Chem	Biol			Chem			Econ (SoN)		
Commission on Undergraduate Studies & Policies	Math		Chem			Math			Geo	
Graduate Curriculum Committee	Bio	Psych			Geo			Chem		
Library	Math	Phys (SoN)			Bio			Math		
Univ. Adv. Council Strategic Budgeting & Planning	Psych			Chem			Math		Psych	
University Council	Bio			Math			Chem		Phys	
Chair COSFA	Math	Chem	Psych	Econ	Phys	Stat	Geo	SoN	Bio	Math
Chair-elect COSFA	Chem	Psych	Econ	Phys	Stat	Geo	SoN	Bio	Math	Chem

Table II (cont.). COSFA Rotating Schedule of Appointments 2027-2029

Committee	f2027 s2028	f2028 s2029	f2029 s2030
Academic Support	Math		Stat
Athletics	Math	Psych	
Commencement	Chem		Math
Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies	Bio	Math	
Commission on Outreach & International Affairs	Math		
Commission on Research	Chem		
Commission on Undergraduate Studies & Policies	Geo	Bio	
Graduate Curriculum Committee	Phys		
Library	Chem (SoN)		
Univ. Adv. Council Strategic Budgeting & Planning	Psych		
University Council	Phys		
Chair COSFA	Chem	Psych	Econ
Chair-elect COSFA	Psych	Econ	Phys

- The number of appointments to be filled by each Academic Unit for each cycle is dependent on the size of the COSFA membership of each Unit. Currently Mathematics will be required to fill up to three positions, Biological Sciences and Chemistry will be required to fill up to two positions each, and all other Units will be required to fill one position.
- Committee assignments rotate until all Units have served on all committees.
- The School of Neuroscience (SoN) has been included in the new schedule starting 2017.
- Fall and Spring semesters are indicated as “f” and “s” respectively. All appointments extend through the trailing summer.