

Bylaws for the University of Arizona Writing Program (WP)

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I. Preamble

The Writing Program Council (WPC) comprises the co-chairs for all standing and ad hoc committees. The WPC develops policies for undergraduate courses offered in the Writing Program (WP), advises on and approves curricular changes and assessment projects related to those courses, and sets the strategic goals that fulfill the stated Mission of the WP. The WPC respects pedagogical diversity, promotes stakeholder inclusion, and, as elected representatives of the Writing Program membership, engages in the [shared governance](#) of the Writing Program, actively participating in the development of WP policy in service of the WP Mission:

As part of a land-grant institution situated in a diverse region, the Writing Program is committed to serving the university and intersecting communities through a learning community composed of effective initiatives, engaged faculty, and motivated students.

- Small classes create opportunities for students to develop writing creativity, craft, and credibility while reflectively and critically thinking and talking about writing processes.
- Community and civic engagement in writing initiatives place our students, faculty, and program in active partnerships that enhance life and learning for the people of Arizona and the world.
- Professional development support encourages leadership and collaborations among Writing Program faculty from diverse academic backgrounds.
- Research on writing instruction theories and practices advances the knowledge and expertise in the field and in the program.

II. Writing Program Council Structure

1. Constituents

For voting, the Writing Program is composed of the following constituencies and constituency membership is defined by a person's current career status within the Writing Program through teaching and/or administration:

- a. Faculty
- b. Graduate Assistants/Associates, Teaching (GATs)
- c. WP Faculty/Graduate Administrators & WP Staff

2. Committees

a. Types of Committees

There are three types of WP committees: [standing committees](#), [ad hoc committees](#), and [task forces](#). Both standing and ad hoc committees will be appointed and/or affirmed as needed by the WPC at the beginning of each

semester. Task forces are determined by the Senior Director of the WP based on need, for specific, immediate purposes and are dissolved following fulfillment of those purposes.

- i. **Standing committees** perform ongoing operations integral to the functioning of the Writing Program.
 1. In order to form a standing committee, a formal charge must be composed that clearly articulates a rationale for its formation and details the scope of its annual operations. A simple majority (50%+1) vote by the WPC in favor of this charge will result in the committee's formation.
 2. In order to dissolve a standing committee, one of the following procedures shall be followed:
 - a. A rationale describing why the committee's mission is no longer necessary must be submitted to the WPC. A simple majority (50%+1) vote by the WPC will result in its dissolution. Or,
 - b. After two or more years of inactivity, the committee will be automatically dissolved. The Senior Director of the Writing Program will notify the WPC a semester in advance of the dissolution for possible discussion and/or action.
- ii. **Ad hoc committees** are formed to address vital but temporary exigencies.
 1. These exigencies are determined by (1) information gleaned from the research and assessment conducted by and in the WP, and/or (2) discretion of the Senior Director of the WP in consultation with the WP Admin Team, WP members, and/or representatives of WPC constituencies.
 2. A formal charge outlining the scope and anticipated duration of an ad hoc subcommittee will be voted on by the WPC. A simple majority (50%+1) vote by the WPC will result in its formation.
 3. Ad hoc committees will be dissolved upon completion of their task, or when the purposes of the committee are either no longer reachable or no longer necessary. They may also be transformed into standing committees following a WPC vote. (see II.2.a.i.1 above)
- iii. **Task forces** are formed at the discretion of the Senior Director of the WP to address vital, immediate needs within the Writing Program.
 1. Task forces are not subject to voting in the WPC.
 2. Task force leadership may be appointed by the WP Director, but will remain open to membership for the duration of the task.
 3. Task forces may be dissolved upon completion of their task, at the discretion of the WP Director, or may be transformed into standing or ad hoc committees following a WPC vote. (see II.2.a.i.1 and

II.2.a.ii.1&2 above) Task force members are not eligible to vote in the WPC, since they are appointed rather than elected.

b. Leadership Structure

Standing and ad hoc committees will be composed of a representative, tripartite leadership structure: an appointed WP faculty/staff/graduate administrator, an elected Faculty member (non-admin), and elected EGU GAT representative (non-admin). In the event that someone is not available to serve as the appointed WP faculty/staff/graduate administrator or a constituency is not able to supply a representative, the position may be left vacant, resulting in a truncated leadership structure for that committee.

- i. Each constituency has equal representation on every committee via the tripartite leadership. Committee meetings are open to all members of all constituencies and all members of the WP are encouraged to join and actively participate.
 1. The labor and authority associated with leading the committee should be equally distributed across the tripartite leadership. The committee leaders should discuss how they can best collaborate to share the responsibilities and authority of leadership at the beginning of each term.
- ii. Every effort should be made to ensure a committee leader holds their position for two semesters, unless a committee only exists for one semester. If a committee leader has to step down from their position mid-semester, they should help find an interim member who will be confirmed by their constituency via a new vote (see sections II.2.b.iii and iv below) to carry out the appropriate duties for the remainder of the term.
- iii. Elections for Faculty (non-Admin) reps are organized at the beginning of each Fall and, as necessary, each Spring term. Faculty members facilitate the nomination process, and a staff member facilitates the voting process among the Faculty cohort.
- iv. Elections for GAT reps will be organized by EGU at the beginning of each term. EGU will facilitate the nomination and voting process for their GAT representatives.
- v. Admin reps are appointed by the Senior Director of the Writing Program.
- vi. Any person serving as a committee leader must be affiliated with the Writing Program through teaching or administration for the duration of their leadership.

c. Current Standing Committees

At the beginning of each academic year, committees publish their charges to the WP. Typically, this is done via the WP All-Member Meeting Agenda. Committees are encouraged to regularly report agendas and minutes to the WPC. In addition to the initial charges of the standing committees, some charges may be added by the Senior Director, WPC, or the committee on an ongoing basis. If the new

charges are a major deviation from the committee's existing charges, a new committee should be formed pursuant to the process detailed above.

i. Assessment Committee

1. The Assistant Director of Placement and Assessment will serve as the appointed WP administrator representative on this committee's tripartite leadership.
2. This committee is responsible for assessing outcomes alignment for the Writing Program each year, suggesting curricular and/or pedagogical related changes based on results of assessment, and updating/evaluating portfolio assessment tools. Tasks may include:
 - a. maintaining materials/support for instructors implementing portfolio assessments; and
 - b. organizing and implementing an annual assessment event.
 - c. developing and offering professional growth activities based on assessment outcomes.

ii. Curriculum and Materials Committee

1. This committee is responsible for supporting required instructional materials and technologies and revisiting outcomes to ensure alignment. (See 2.c.i.2 above) Tasks may include:
 - a. Creating and distributing materials related to the support of required instructional materials and technologies; and
 - b. Analyzing and revising outcomes to ensure alignment based on program assessments.

iii. Awards Committee

1. This committee oversees the various teaching and student awards given through the WP. Tasks may include:
 - a. reviewing the yearly awards and the procedures used for nomination and selection during each Fall term; and
 - b. serving as the core members for the WP Teaching Award Selection subcommittees each Spring term.

iv. Committee on Teaching for Access, Belonging, and Community

1. This committee aims to cultivate a supportive learning environment within the Writing Program that advances equity, inclusion, and access by promoting pedagogical innovations that foster belonging and by forming connections to the diverse communities represented at UA, engaging across a broad range of historical experiences, cultural perspectives, and social issues in the classroom. Tasks may include:
 - a. Cultivating curricular resources that explore issues of diversity in our classrooms.

- b. Making community connections, acting as a bridge to the local community, City of Tucson and surrounding Borderlands regions, by developing and sharing a list of resources, partners, organizations, and events within and beyond the University of Arizona campus that instructors can draw on for community-engaged writing projects.
 - c. Advocacy and consultation that recommends curricular and program-level policies or practices to support equitable and inclusive learning environments
- v. **Professional Growth Committee**
 - 1. This committee oversees WP professional growth opportunities that include the Spring Symposium, Teaching Talks, and faculty workshops that support pedagogical innovation and curriculum alignment around program-level goals and developments. Tasks will include:
 - a. Assessing professional growth needs of faculty and programs on a regular basis.
 - b. Organizing, promoting, and hosting the spring symposium and teaching talks.
 - c. Facilitating other events that reflect the needs and interests of WP faculty and the Writing Programs.
 - d. Implementing frameworks for the assessment of WP professional growth offerings.
 - e. Reporting on the committee's annual objectives and accomplishments.

3. Writing Program Council (WPC)

- a. The leaders from each of the WP committees collectively serve as the **Writing Program Council (WPC)**. In addition, the Senior Director of the Writing Program serves as Chair (with no voting power), and up to two WP Staff (based on staff availability) serve as additional WPC members (with voting power and to also serve as the Historian/Record Keeper(s)). The primary duties of the WPC are as follows:
 - i. WP Motions
 - 1. Bring forth & second motions to be voted on. (see IV.2 below)
 - 2. Review all Writing Program motions and ratify them for appropriate constituency voting. (see IV.2.a below)
 - 3. Conduct and distribute committee advisory vote results and committee statements on motions. (see IV.2.b below)
 - 4. Review and discuss results of committee and constituency votes.
 - 5. Adopt/pass or reject motions (in a binding vote) brought forth to the Writing Program. (see IV.2.c below)

ii. Committee Formation

1. Both standing and ad hoc committees are formed and/or affirmed, as needed, by the WPC at the beginning of each semester. (see II.2 above)

III. All-Member Writing Program Meeting Procedures

1. WP meetings are open to anyone affiliated with the English Department who would like to attend.
2. The agenda for all WP meetings is shared with all WP constituents prior to the meeting. The minutes of each WPC meeting are made available to all WP constituents after approval at each consecutive WPC meeting.
 - a. Non-constituents may request the agenda and minutes from WP Staff.
3. Most of the WPC's business is conducted asynchronously. If necessary, a portion of the WP All-Member meeting can be dedicated to WPC business, or an additional meeting can be called.
4. Following All-Member meetings, elected representatives regularly provide all members of their constituencies direct access to, and elicit input and feedback on, initiatives their committees are developing, and ensure that the feedback is shared with the greater body.
5. WP and WP Committee meetings are encouraged to use Robert's Rules. [Refer to this page](#) for more information.

IV. Voting Procedures

1. There are seven (7) occasions in which voting occurs in the Writing Program:
 - a. for standing committee formation (Writing Program Council Structure Section II.2.a.i above);
 - b. for standing committee dissolution (Writing Program Council Structure Section II.2.a.i.2 above);
 - c. for ad hoc committee formation (Writing Program Council Structure Section II.2.a.ii.1&2 above);
 - d. for ad hoc committee dissolution (Writing Program Council Structure Section II.2.a.ii.3 above);
 - e. for WPC approval of a motion for constituency review and a non-binding/advisory vote (Voting Procedures Section IV.2.a below);
 - f. for non-binding/advisory committee voting on motions and constituency assignments (Voting Procedures Section IV.2.b below);
 - g. for non-binding/advisory constituency voting on motions (Voting Procedures Section IV .2.b below);
 - h. for binding WPC voting to adopt/pass or reject motions (Voting Procedures Section IV.2.c below).

2. WP Motions

In general, motions are brought to the WPC and ratified for advisory constituency vote, the results of which are transparently reported to the WPC who then conduct a binding vote to adopt/pass or reject the motion. The details of these procedures are outlined in the sections below.

- a. The WPC reviews all motions.
 - i. Any member of the WPC can bring forth a motion. Any other member of the WPC can second the motion. Motions should include the suggestion of the appropriate constituency vote:
 1. Program-wide constituents (WP Staff not included)
 2. Faculty constituents only
 3. GAT constituents only
 - ii. Any member of the Writing Program who is not on the WPC can bring forth a motion if they have signatures from 50% plus one of all Writing Program members (or two-thirds plus one of any given constituency), calculated based on membership totals in the semester during which the motion is being brought forth.
 - iii. The WPC decides (based on popular vote with one vote per committee) if the motion is ready for the advisory constituency vote. Along with their votes, committees may write position statements to be included in the materials sent out for the constituency vote. In the event of a tie or no majority within the WPC, the Writing Program Senior Director will decide.
 - iv. Any member of the Writing Program who is not on the WPC can call for a vote if they have signatures from two-thirds plus one of all Writing Program members (of any constituency/ies). In this case, the motion goes immediately to a constituency vote, where the appropriate constituency is to be determined by the WPC.
- b. The motion then goes to the appropriate constituency as decided by the WPC's vote.
 - i. In the voting materials that explain the motion being voted upon, voters also receive the results of the committee votes on the motion as advisory votes where each committee's vote is identifiably reported. The materials also include position statements from any committee(s) who have included them with their vote(s).
 - ii. All constituents of the voting body are invited to vote anonymously through a digital platform for one week. The results are reported directly to voting members of the relevant/appropriate constituency.
 - iii. A simple majority quorum (50%+1) of the total population of voters must be met for all votes (votes by the WPC and the constituency). If quorum is not met in the first week, the voting time frame may be extended up to one week or automatically returned to the WPC, as decided by the Senior Director of the Writing Program. If quorum is still not reached after the

- extended voting period, the motion will return to the WPC, who then conducts a binding vote on the motion (see Section IV.2.c below)
- iv. All constituency members may vote in non-binding/advisory votes, including those who are WPC members.
 - v. Following a constituency vote that reaches quorum, the full results are presented to the WPC as advisory/non-binding. A summary of the results is also made available to the WP at large.
- c. Each WPC member then casts an individual vote on the motion. These votes remain anonymous, but some descriptive analytics of the vote and a rationale is made available to the WP. The simple majority (50%+1) decision in this vote of the WPC is binding.
- i. In the event of a tie or no majority decision in the WPC vote, the Senior Director of the Writing Program decides on the motion.
 - ii. Each WPC member also includes a one or two sentence rationale for their vote on the motion. The Senior Director will be responsible for collecting and publishing a rationale narrative that includes but is not limited to these statements to the WP at-large.
 - iii. Each elected WPC member is obligated to consult with, report back to, and represent their constituency in all matters with regard to voting and to their committee and WPC work.

V. Revision of Bylaws

This version of the bylaws was approved on 11/29/21 by a majority vote of the Writing Program Council members.

These bylaws can be revised by a simple majority (50%+1) vote of the Writing Program Council after a successful non-binding/advisory entire WP constituency vote.

Every five years, an ad hoc committee will be formed to review the bylaws. This committee should recommend any needed revisions and submit suggested revisions to the Writing Program Council for feedback and voting, or indicate that no revisions are necessary.

If revisions are needed in off years (that is, not every fifth year), a motion may be made for an ad hoc Bylaws Review committee to be formed. If an ad hoc Bylaws Review committee is formed, this committee should recommend any needed revisions and submit suggested revisions to the Writing Program Council for feedback and voting.

Appendix A: Voting Flow-Chart

Bylaws Section IV.2 - WP Voting Flowchart

