Governance of the School of Social Sciences

The School of Social Sciences is maintained within the College of Arts and Sciences to serve the greater university community by (1) providing instruction; (2) conducting scholarly investigations and research; and (3) applying knowledge resulting from this scholarly activity to the solution of the problems that affect Florida, the nation, and the world.

The management of the affairs within the School of Social Sciences is placed in the faculty and the Council of Chairs. This Governance Document expresses the general principles guiding School governance and may be amended to reflect changing circumstances affecting the School or new priorities. The amendment process is described in this document. This governance document is intended to be consistent with the CAS Governance Document and all specific authorities included there.

General Principles Concerning Faculty in the Governance of the School of Social Sciences (insofar as these are consistent with existing College/University Policies)

The faculty of the School of Social Sciences has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, standards, and procedures for admission of students into specific degree programs within the School. The faculty sets the degree requirements, determines when the requirements have been met, and otherwise qualifies students and recommends them to the appropriate university entities to grant the degrees thus achieved.

The Role of the Council of Chairs in the Governance of the School

1. The Council of Chairs of the School of Social Sciences (SSS) shall consist of current Chairs of Departments in the School, or their representatives. Each member of the Council of Chairs shall represent faculty in their respective departments in a manner consistent with the mission of their departments. The Directors of the Institute for Study of Latin America and the Caribbean (ISLAC) and the Institute on Black Life (IBL) shall be non-voting members. 2. Departments may join or leave the School by permission of the Dean in consultation with the CAS Faculty Council and the SSS Council of Chairs.

3. The Council of Chairs will be an assembly of equals. Duties such as keeping meeting minutes and providing an agenda will be assigned on a rotational basis. The Council will meet at least once per month. Meetings may be convened by the Dean or by members of the Council. The Council will also meet at least once per semester as part of the College Council of Chairs when determined by the Dean.
4. The functions of the Council of Chairs will include but not be limited to (a) identifying problems common to multiple Departments within SSS and proposing solutions to those problems (b) identifying common research areas, projects, and initiatives; (c) discussing and proposing synergistic means of resource allocation, such as interdisciplinary faculty cluster hiring plans; (d) discussing curricular activities and general education priorities, especially with a view to reducing redundancy and fostering original programs and (e) bringing issues of concern from the general faculty to the Dean.

5. The Council of Chairs will assist the Dean in the development of intra-institutional, national and international outreach to promote the social sciences at USF.

6. From among its members, the Council of Chairs will elect representatives to the CAS Steering Committee. The number of representatives will be determined by the Dean in accordance with the CAS Governance Document. Terms will be two years, preferably staggered. The Council will also elect a representative to the Provost’s Chairs Steering Committee for a term of two years. These representatives will provide written notes on meetings to the full Council.

7. The preceding responsibilities of the Council of Chairs remain in effect when there is a delegation of these responsibilities to the Dean, other representatives from among faculty, or other administrative officers. Council of Chairs members must exercise diligence and provide oversight to ensure that their agents represent faculty in an appropriate manner.

Other Operational Considerations (consistent with the Governance Document of the College of Arts and Sciences):

1. The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences shall be responsible for review and evaluation of departments and department chairs.

2. Budgetary oversight and management shall be the responsibility of the Dean and the Dean’s staff.

3. The Dean shall be responsible for coordinating activities and policies among Schools in the College of Arts and Sciences.

The Standing Committees

The Standing Committees of the School shall be the Undergraduate Committee, the Graduate Committee, and the Tenure and Promotion Committee.

1. **Undergraduate Committee**: This committee shall make recommendations to the appropriate individuals or bodies relevant to curricula, advising, and all other issues concerning undergraduate education in the School. This committee shall review all proposals for new undergraduate courses, certificates, programs, and degrees as well as proposals for substantive changes in existing requirements. It shall make recommendations to the CAS Undergraduate Committee and University Undergraduate Council regarding actions on such proposals. It may, if it chooses,
return proposals to departments or programs with suggestions for revision. It may also encourage and plan networking opportunities among various departments.

2. The Undergraduate Committee will have three members selected by the Council to provide equitable representation of department interests, all of whom will go forward to the CAS committee. The Council of Chairs will agree on an equitable rotation process across departments to ensure representation of all interests. In Year 1 only, one of these three will serve a one-year term, to be replaced by a member in year 2 serving a two year term. The other two members in Year 1 will serve two year terms. In Year 2, all three terms will be on two-year cycles, but there will be staggering (one person remaining on while the other two are replaced) because of the initial one-year appointment.

3. Recommendations on course approvals by the SSS Undergraduate committee will be communicated to the CAS Undergraduate Committee as part of a consent agenda for approval, as per the guidelines of the CAS committee.

4. **Graduate Committee**: This committee shall make recommendations to the appropriate individuals or bodies relevant to curricula, advising, and all other issues concerning graduate education in the School. This committee shall review all proposals for new graduate courses, certificates, programs, and degrees as well as proposals for substantive changes in existing requirements. It shall make recommendations to the College and University Graduate Councils regarding action on such proposals. It may, if it chooses, return proposals to departments or programs with suggestions for revision. It may encourage and plan academic networking opportunities among various departments.

   i. The School Graduate Committee will consist of three members selected in the manner described for the Undergraduate Committee, all of whom will represent the School on the CAS Graduate Committee. In Year 1 only, one of these three will serve a one-year term, to be replaced by a member in year 2 serving a two year term. The other two members in Year 1 will serve two year terms. In Year 2, all three terms will be on two-year cycles, but there will be staggering (one person remaining on while the other two are replaced) because of the initial one-year appointment.

   ii. Recommendations on course approvals by the SSS Graduate Committee will be communicated to the CAS Graduate Committee as part of a consent agenda for approval, as per the guidelines of the CAS committee.

5. **Tenure and Promotion Committee**: This committee shall make recommendations to the CAS Tenure and Promotion Committee regarding all School candidates for tenure and promotion. Recommendations shall be conveyed to the CAS committee at a time early enough for it to complete its work prior to the Dean’s recommendations to the Provost. It shall review candidates’ vitae and references, Chair and departmental recommendations, and all other relevant
materials. Recommendations shall be made on the basis of the Department’s, the College’s, and the University’s criteria for tenure and promotion.

i. Each year, in advance of considering the candidates, the Department Chair and relevant departmental faculty from each of five departments as designated by the Council of Chairs, will jointly select one tenured member of the Department, preferably a Full Professor if possible, to nominate for the SSS Tenure and Promotion Committee, and one alternate member, preferably a Full Professor. In the event that there are fewer than three Full Professors on the SSS Tenure and Promotion Committee for the review of promotion applications from Associate Professor to Full Professor, the Council of Chairs will select alternate members who hold the rank of Full Professor to serve on the Committee for the purpose of this review. Committee members will serve two-year terms, preferably staggered. In advance of considering the T&P candidates, this committee will select two of its members to go forward to the CAS T&P Committee, making sure at least one is a full professor. An at-large member will be elected by the Committee from the tenured faculty of the School annually.

ii. Recommendations on tenure and promotion that are positive by the Department Committee, the Department Chair, and the SSS Tenure and Promotion committee will be communicated to the CAS Tenure and Promotion Committee as part of a consent agenda for approval, as per the guidelines of the CAS committee.

c. Meetings:

1. The previous Chair of each Standing Committee shall assume responsibility for convening the Committee for its first meeting of the new academic year. Subsequent meetings shall be called by the new Chair as necessary to carry out the Committee's functions. Members of each Committee or the Council of Chairs may request that the Chair of a given Standing Committee call meetings to discuss specific issues.

2. Each committee shall elect its own Chair at the initial meeting of each academic year and establish its own operating procedures.

3. The Chair of each Standing Committee shall ensure that proper minutes are kept of committee actions and shall be responsible for preparing reports to the Council of Chairs and School Faculty.

d. Agenda:

The agenda for each Standing Committee shall be set by its Chair. Members of the committee and the Council of Chairs may request that items be added to the agenda.
Amendments

This Governance Document may be amended by a simple majority of the voters of the SSS Faculty voting by mail or electronic ballot.

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