

BYLAWS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF MARINE, EARTH, AND ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES AT NC STATE UNIVERSITY

Contents

Article 1. Departmental Vision.....	1
Article 2. Departmental Mission Statement	1
Article 3. Faculty, Staff, and Graduate Students	2
3.1 Faculty	2
3.2 Department staff and graduate students.....	3
Article 4. Departmental Faculty Administrative Positions.....	3
4.1 Department Head: Background and Charge.....	3
4.1.1 Department Head: Selection.....	4
4.1.2 Department Head: Review.....	5
4.2 Additional Administrative Positions:	5
4.2.1 Director or Co-directors of Graduate Programs (DGP).....	5
4.2.2 Director or Co-directors of Undergraduate Programs (DUP)	5
Article 5. Committees.....	5
5.1 Committee Assignments.....	5
Article 6. Departmental Affairs Committee (DAC)	6
6.1 Purpose	6
6.2 Composition of the DAC.....	6
6.3 Election/Selection of DAC Members.....	7
6.3.1 DVF Members of the DAC	7
6.3.2 Professional Staff, Postdoctoral Scholar, and Graduate Student Members of the DAC....	7
6.4 Chair of the DAC.....	7
6.5 DAC Meetings.....	7
Article 7. Faculty Meetings	8
Article 8. Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT).....	8
8.1 Timing of Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT).....	8
8.2 Dossiers	9
8.3 RPT meetings	9
8.4 Timing of RPT Meetings.....	10
Article 9. Post Tenure Review.....	10
Article 10. Revision of MEAS Bylaws	10

Bylaws of the Department of Marine Earth and Atmospheric Sciences (MEAS) North Carolina State University

Adopted April 28, 2014

Amended November 17, 2014

Amended May 4, 2015

Revised September 20, 2023

Article 1. Departmental Vision

The vision of the Department of Marine, Earth, and Atmospheric Sciences (MEAS) at NC State is to be an internationally recognized hub of excellence in geoscience research and education to the lasting benefit of our scientific disciplines, our graduates, humankind, and the planet.

Article 2. Departmental Mission Statement

Our domain, the geosciences, encompasses the dynamics and history of the solid Earth, its natural sediment, soil, water systems, oceans and atmosphere, and global biodiversity. Our mission, as a large interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary geosciences department at a major research-oriented land-grant university, is:

- To conduct innovative fundamental and applied research in the geosciences to expand our understanding of the atmosphere, hydrosphere, geosphere, and biosphere and the processes that connect them.
- To educate students who will become leaders in government and industry and pioneers in advancing geoscience knowledge in academia.

- To teach introductory courses that reach hundreds of NC State non-geoscience majors yearly and promote a broader understanding of processes and critical issues regarding the Earth, oceans, atmosphere, and biosphere.
- To offer guidance founded on our scientific expertise on pressing societal issues related to the geosciences (e.g., natural hazards, environmental quality, and water resources).

The research challenges and societal importance of the geosciences have never been greater. Research and teaching in MEAS address some of the most complex and important geoscience issues facing North Carolina and the world, including hurricanes, floods, climate change, water and air pollution, coastal erosion, the sustainability of fisheries, environmental cycles of critical elements (e.g., carbon and nitrogen), and the history of life. There is an urgent need for a geoscience-informed citizenry and leaders to make sound choices concerning many of these issues. Graduates of MEAS are well prepared to apply geoscience knowledge to important societal, economic, environmental, and scientific problems in various professional career paths in the atmospheric, ocean, and Earth sciences.

Article 3. Faculty, Staff, and Graduate Students

The voices of all departmental citizens are critical to the governance structure of MEAS.

Therefore, all faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to involve themselves in decision-making processes affecting their instructional, research, and outreach functions.

3.1 Faculty

In the remainder of this document, the term “faculty” is understood to include faculty of all ranks, as listed in the bylaws of the College of Sciences unless otherwise specified, including tenured, tenure-track, and professional faculty [excerpted from [COS Bylaws](#)].

Department voting faculty (DVF) members participate actively in departmental affairs and long-range planning through departmental committees and faculty meetings and vote on major issues. Two definitions of DVF are used; in each case, the faculty members referred to must have a $\geq 50\%$ appointment in MEAS:

University definition, used in faculty promotion and tenure and post-tenure review: For votes on faculty promotion and/or tenure, the university defines the DVF as the tenured faculty members of rank equal to or higher than the rank sought by the candidate for promotion/tenure.

MEAS definition, used in general departmental business (not promotion and tenure votes): Voting membership shall be held by those full-time employees (≥ 0.75 FTE) who meet the requirements for voting membership in the faculty of North Carolina State University as outlined in the General Faculty Bylaws in Article II, Section 2 of North Carolina State University. This definition includes tenured, tenure-track, and professional-track faculty.

Other members of the general faculty, as defined by the University, including emeritus MEAS faculty, members of the departmental staff, postdoctoral scholars, and graduate students, are also critical to the department’s success, and their input is important. However, they are not members of the DVF.

3.2 Department staff and graduate students

Staff and graduate students are important stakeholders in the department. For this document, “staff” is defined as all department personnel, administrative and/or research (including postdoctoral), who are not otherwise defined as students or faculty. The MEAS graduate students and staff are encouraged to participate actively in the functioning of the department by each sending a representative to key department committees not designated as faculty only (Article 5). Graduate student and staff representatives are voting members of the departmental committees on which they serve. The Department Head works with the MEAS Graduate Student Association officers to select the graduate students to serve on committees in consultation with the Committee Chair and the student nominee’s advisor. Participation of individual staff members as staff representatives in committees and meetings is subject to approval by their direct supervisor. Graduate students and staff are excluded from specific committee discussions and votes related to confidential personnel matters such as job performance, academic admission, and progress. Upon request, the committee chair shall provide a well-articulated reason for excluding the student and/or staff representative from a meeting. The representative may file a written appeal to the Department Head, whose ruling is final.

Article 4. Departmental Faculty Administrative Positions

There are three principal departmental faculty administrative positions: Department Head, Director of Graduate Programs (DGP), and Director of Undergraduate Programs (DUP). Other faculty administrative positions (e.g., Associate Department Head) may be utilized.

4.1 Department Head: Background and Charge

As stated in the [College of Sciences Bylaws](#) [II B], the Department Head is the department’s chief executive officer and is responsible to the Dean of the College of Sciences and departmental faculty for its administration. The Head’s primary objective is to guide the department’s fiscal, academic, and personnel activities and facilitate and articulate departmental priorities where appropriate. In addition, the Department Head shall foster and sustain a supportive, productive, and professional workplace that equitably respects the professional investments of faculty, staff, and students and allows all to succeed and grow in their careers. The Head is prepared to offer and accept new ideas and suggestions to promote this environment and to facilitate the faculty coming together around the best ideas, whatever their source. The Head has a variety of planning and management duties and should seek the counsel of the faculty and staff and delegate appropriate responsibilities. Responsibilities of the Department Head include but are not limited to:

- Execute Departmental, College, and University policies within the department.
- Consult with departmental personnel in the formulation of departmental policies.
- Lead regular departmental faculty and staff meetings to discuss educational procedures, research programs, personnel policies, departmental budget and expenditures, and other department, college, and university activities.
- Prepare departmental budgets and be responsible for the assignment and expenditures of departmental funds.

- Allocate the use of departmental space, equipment, and supplies.
- Supervise the employment, performance, and welfare of the faculty and staff (non-faculty EHRA and SHRA) employees in the Department, either directly or by proxy.
- Recommend personnel actions, appointments, promotions, dismissals, granting of tenure, and salary adjustments.
- Work with the faculty and staff to implement initiatives the faculty favorably voted for.
- Make and oversee teaching assignments.
- Represent the Department effectively within the College and University and outside the University.
- Facilitate and, sometimes, lead efforts to solicit funds for scholarships, fellowships, research equipment, other infrastructure improvements, and other activities designed to develop the department.
- Lead the recruitment and hiring of new faculty and staff members and negotiate for such positions with the Dean.
- Coordinate faculty involvement in long-range planning.

The Department Head stays informed regarding the workload of each faculty member in the department through annual faculty activities reports and other communications with faculty members. To the extent practicable, the Head balances the workload among faculty members, recognizing that such balancing requires qualitative insight beyond simple quantitative indices.

Some factors to consider in balancing workloads include:

- Teaching assignment (number of courses taught, class contact hours, number of students in a class, etc.).
- Advising assignments (number of undergraduate and graduate advisees, etc.).
- Research activities and obligations.
- Service, including professional society activities, special administrative assignments, outreach, committee assignments (university, college, department), etc.

Other factors include 1) Making the best use of faculty resources through differential assignments (e.g., assigning faculty members greater roles in areas of individual strength and interest, where the interests of the Department and the individual will often coincide) and 2) Maintaining high quality in all work activities, and recognition of personal or family circumstances that may temporarily affect the ability of a faculty member to contribute to the department.

4.1.1 Department Head: Selection

Per the College of Science bylaws, Department Head searches, and appointments shall be conducted by [NCSU FEG 05.55.02 Hiring Procedures for Faculty and EHRA Personnel](#). To select a permanent Department Head, the Dean will constitute a search committee from the members of the department's faculty, including at least one member of each tenure/tenure track rank, at least one professional track faculty member, at least one graduate student, and at least one staff member. The Department Head search committee typically will be chaired by a Department Head from another department in the University. In addition, the Dean may utilize

the Departmental Affairs Committee to aid in populating the search committee for a new Department Head.

4.1.2 Department Head: Review

Per the College of Science bylaws, section 11-B-1b, Department Heads shall be reviewed periodically according to [NCSU REG 05.50.03 Review of Academic Department Heads/Chairs](#).

4.2 Additional Administrative Positions:

The Department Head has oversight and authority for the Directors of Graduate Programs (DGP) and Undergraduate Programs (DUP) positions and other administrative positions deemed necessary, such as Associate Head. While the text below lays out general expectations for these positions, the Department Head may utilize exceptions with the support of a majority of the faculty.

4.2.1 Director or Co-directors of Graduate Programs (DGP)

Historically, this position is/are filled by tenured faculty in MEAS with a strong interest in facilitating graduate studies/research. The DGP or co-DGPs work with the departmental Graduate Program Committee to implement and maintain procedures for the effective operation of the graduate program. The Department Head is encouraged to consult with the MEAS community when filling these positions.

4.2.2 Director or Co-directors of Undergraduate Programs (DUP)

Historically, this position is/are filled by faculty or staff in MEAS with a strong interest in undergraduate education. The DUP or co-DUPs work with the departmental Undergraduate Curriculum & Programs Committee to implement and maintain procedures for the effective operation of the undergraduate programs. The Department Head is encouraged to consult with the MEAS community when filling these positions.

Article 5. Committees

Service on departmental standing committees is an important aspect of faculty governance and is expected of all faculty members. The addition or subtraction of committees is permissible without changing the MEAS bylaws following discussion and vote by the DVF (MEAS Definition). In addition, ad-hoc committees may be constituted by the Department Head or following discussion and vote of the DVF to fulfill specific roles or assignments (e.g., search committee, workload balance, etc.). The committee chairs are responsible for maintaining up-to-date descriptions of the MEAS standing committees, which are available as an [online spreadsheet](#). A [separate online spreadsheet](#) maintains the names of individuals staffing the MEAS committees. Also, MEAS faculty members represent the department on college and university committees, as described in Article VI of the [COS Bylaws](#).

5.1 Committee Assignments

Membership on committees with oversight, financial, or performance review duties (DAC, ETF, TAAC, Post-Tenure Review, and Peer-Review of Teaching Committees) results after a vote of the MEAS faculty. Voting for open positions on these committees occurs before the end of the

spring semester.

Membership on other committees does not require a faculty vote, and in practice, committees are often filled by members of MEAS with an interest in serving on a particular committee. At the beginning of the fall semester, the DAC asks all faculty members to consider the committees they are currently serving on and identify the departmental committee(s) they would like to join and the ones they plan to rotate off in the coming academic year. The DAC then recommends committee assignments to the Department Head, attempting to match faculty members with the committees they are interested in while achieving reasonable balance among disciplines, seniority, and other relevant factors in committee membership.

Each committee operates with a chair. Each committee's first order of business is to elect a chair during the first meeting of the academic year. Each committee is expected to report to the full faculty on its activities at least once per year via the Annual Committee Activity Report Template and, if needed, verbally at a faculty meeting. All committees that allocate departmental resources greater than \$25,000 a year (e.g., ETF, TAAC) must provide an annual written report to the faculty by the end of each fiscal year (June 30) that describes the metrics used and allocations made.

The Department Head is not a departmental committee member but may meet with committees at their request. The Department Head assigns MEAS faculty representatives to non-elected College and University committees.

Article 6. Departmental Affairs Committee (DAC)

6.1 Purpose

The DAC facilitates communication among faculty, staff, graduate students, and the Department administration on policy and workplace issues and helps bring to light and pursue solutions to issues of concern regarding department administration. In addition, the DAC has two other key functions: 1) it advises the Head concerning faculty, graduate student, and staff assignments to departmental committees, and 2) it advises the Department Head in the selection of faculty for the post-tenure review committee (PTRC) as described in university rule [RUL 05.68.55](#) – Department of Marine Earth and Atmospheric Sciences post-Tenure Review Standards and Procedures. Any member of MEAS (faculty, staff, and student) with a concern related to the departmental administration or workplace may share their thoughts in writing with any member of the DAC at any time or ask to attend a DAC meeting to discuss that concern.

The DAC maintains open and productive channels of communication with the Department administration. To this end, departmental faculty administrators (some or all) may regularly participate in DAC meetings, while some DAC meetings may take place among only the DAC members. Summaries of all DAC meetings are distributed promptly to the DVF and other MEAS communities when warranted.

6.2 Composition of the DAC

The DAC operates with eight members. Five faculty members are elected by the DVF for rotating 3-year terms. Three of the DAC faculty positions are filled by a tenured professor or

associate professor from the three major disciplinary areas in the department, one member each from earth science, marine science, and atmospheric science. One “at-large” DAC position is filled by a tenured faculty member from any departmental sub-discipline. A non-tenured faculty member fills the fifth DAC position. The non-tenured member of the DAC may also excuse themselves from other DAC tasks that they find potentially controversial. If there are no non-tenured faculty members in the department or none willing or able to serve on the DAC, this fifth DAC faculty position reverts to another “at-large” faculty position for a tenured faculty member. Three members of the DAC are non-tenured/tenure-track faculty and include, a member of the professional staff, a postdoctoral scholar or research faculty member, and a graduate student.

6.3 Election/Selection of DAC Members

6.3.1 DVF Members of the DAC

Elections of representatives to the DAC for the coming academic year (1 or 2 open positions per year) are held before the end of the spring semester. The DAC receives nominations (including self-nominations) from the faculty and announces candidates before a May faculty meeting, after which voting occurs. All members of the DVF (MEAS definition, Article 3) may participate in nominations and voting for each faculty member of the DAC. Faculty members of the DAC may serve two consecutive terms (6 years) and become eligible again for DAC membership after two years off the DAC.

DAC members are elected on the following three-year rotation:

- Year 1: earth, untenured
- Year 2: marine and at-large
- Year 3: atmospheric

<i>Earth & non-tenured</i>	<i>Marine and At-Large</i>	<i>Atmospheric</i>
fall 2023 - spring 2026	fall 2024 - spring 2027	fall 2025 - spring 2028

As of the bylaws revision [September 2023], this rotation commences with the 2023-2024 academic year as year 1.

6.3.2 Professional Staff, Postdoctoral Scholar, and Graduate Student Members of the DAC

The Professional Staff, Postdoctoral/Research Scholar, and Graduate Student members are selected to serve from within these groups at the beginning of each academic year in consultation with the Head. An individual may serve consecutive terms.

6.4 Chair of the DAC

The chair of the DAC should be a DVF member. The members of the DAC elect the chair.

6.5 DAC Meetings

The Chair of the DAC schedules and convenes DAC meetings at least three times per semester during the academic year. Additionally, one DAC meeting a semester is specifically designated for representatives of the graduate students and staff to share their perspectives with the DAC. Part of the purpose of the DAC is to be a “safe place” to raise concerns that individuals might be reluctant to raise directly with the Department Head or other administrators.

Article 7. Faculty Meetings

Faculty meetings address issues and concerns related to the best functioning of the department. Designated graduate student and staff representatives are requested to participate in most faculty meetings. In addition, a few meetings a year are reserved for faculty only, including RTP meetings (Section 8). Graduate Students, Postdoctoral Scholars, or Professional Staff members attending faculty meetings may be asked at any time to leave the meeting, typically by the Head.

All faculty meetings will be announced beforehand, and an agenda will be provided. For non-RPT faculty meetings, any MEAS DVF member may request that membership to an upcoming meeting be restricted to DVF faculty only, whereby the faculty member provides the Head with a well-articulated reason for excluding the student and/or staff representative from a meeting. The Department Head will decide whether the exclusion is warranted. The Head’s decision is final.

The Department Head convenes one or two faculty meetings per month during the 9-month academic year (typically none in the summer) and distributes an agenda at least three business days before each meeting. Faculty members wishing to add items to the agenda communicate that to the Head. The Head also announces the planned dates for faculty meetings during the upcoming semester before classes start. The Head generally chairs faculty meetings and designates another faculty member to do so in their absence. Minutes listing all actions or decisions taken at the previous meeting are distributed to the faculty at least three business days before the next meeting.

Any faculty member may request a faculty meeting outside of the routine meeting schedule announced by the Head in response to special circumstances, such as an opportunity or problem, especially but not only those that may be time-sensitive. Such a request is normally made by an e-mail message to the DVF, and if seconded (in this same e-mail mode) by at least two other faculty members, the meeting is considered officially called. If possible, such special meetings should be scheduled for the same day of the week and time used for regularly scheduled faculty meetings.

Article 8. Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT)

Several written procedures govern RPT processes within the Department (Rule 05.67.701), College of Sciences ([RUL 05.67.706](#)), and NC State ([POL 05.20.01](#)). This section aims to clarify a few aspects of department-level timing and details in areas not covered in other written RPT guidance.

8.1 Timing of Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure (RPT)

Timing of Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Decisions are guided by NC State Policy

05.20.01. The faculty member's contract drives the timing of RPT decisions at the time of faculty appointment as described on the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost website, [Mandatory Reviews](#). Section 1.3.1 of [REG 05.20.05](#) requires that the MEAS department notify faculty about pending department voting faculty (DVF) reviews early in the academic year in which they are eligible for reappointment, promotion, and/or tenure.

8.2 Dossiers

MEAS faculty members preparing RPT dossiers must strictly follow university guidelines ([NCSU REG 05.20.20](#)) and should develop their dossiers in consultation with the MEAS Department Head.

8.3 RPT meetings

The NC State RPT policy requires the "Department voting faculty" (DVF, University definition) to meet to evaluate a candidate's accomplishments, as documented in their RPT dossier, relative to the written RPT standards (NCSU REG 05.20.05, Section 2 and Department Rule RUL05.67.701). In MEAS, two fall meetings of the DVF are scheduled for this critical purpose: discussion and evaluation of the dossier. This two-meeting format allows follow-up on any missing information, inconsistencies, or unclear issues that come to light during the initial discussion before the vote following the second meeting. It also allows more time for DVF members to weigh information and arguments before voting. Finally, it allows the DVF to communicate with each other on their draft DVF assessment statement (contents of which are explained at the link above) that is prepared and distributed between the two meetings.

The second meeting concludes with access to the online portal that includes the vote of the DVF. The Department head should report the online vote results to the candidate and faculty as soon as possible. The second meeting also includes a motion to approve the written DVF assessment.

An ad-hoc, non-binding RPT meeting of the DVF is recommended during spring semesters before candidates submit their dossier by the University's summer deadline. This preliminary faculty meeting aims to review a candidate's progress and make suggestions about enhancing their dossier. A straw poll may be conducted on the candidate's potential to earn tenure (either for early tenure submissions or advancement from Associate to Full professor)

All RPT meetings and written evaluations arising from these meetings follow the university guidelines (NCSU REG 05.20.05, Section 2). As such, discussion and evaluation are limited to the candidate's accomplishments, as documented in the dossier, relative to the written RPT standards (Department Rule RUL 05.67.701) and a faculty member's Statement of Faculty Responsibilities. Other areas not related to written RPT standards, such as complaints about the candidate, their interactions with others, etc., may be topics for discussion in other venues, but not the RPT meetings, since the DVF evaluation is a scholarly/academic evaluation and is not intended to substitute for the Department Head carrying out their responsibilities regarding other potentially problematic faculty issues. Further, if the DVF and/or Department Head are to give feedback to a faculty member on individual workplace problems/issues, fairness and adherence to policy suggest that such feedback must be outside of, and before, RPT evaluation (e.g., as part of the annual evaluation by the Department Head, drawing on their observations and/or on comments from the DVF to the Department Head as part of the consultation described in Section

7 of the MEAS RPT guidelines, ([NCSU RUL 05.67.701](#)).

8.4 Timing of RPT Meetings

The date of the RPT meeting should be scheduled and noted to the faculty by the Department Head during the spring semester of the same year. Given that RPT dossiers, with both DVF and Department Head evaluations, are typically due in the Dean's office in late October, the two MEAS RPT meetings should be concluded by late September at the latest. Therefore, complete dossiers with letters should be available to the DVF in the first week of September, external letters of evaluation should be solicited early enough to meet this deadline, and the candidate's dossier should be complete to send to external reviewers in June.

Article 9. Post Tenure Review

The University has detailed policies on the post-tenure review (NCSU REG 05.20.04 – “Post Tenure Review of Faculty” and regulations therein). MEAS last updated our supplementary policy [NCSU RUL 05.68.55 – “Department of Marine Earth and Atmospheric Sciences Post Tenure Review Standards and Procedures”](#) in February 2017. Section 5.2 of University Regulation NCSU REG, 05.20.04-post-tenure review of faculty, outlines the documentation provided to the Post-Tenure Review Committee.

Article 10. Revision of MEAS Bylaws

Any MEAS faculty member (Article 3) may propose a revision to the MEAS bylaws. The proposed revision should be written, showing any proposed text additions or deletions with separate markings. The proposed revision will be shared with the Departmental Affairs Committee faculty members, discussed at a MEAS faculty and staff meeting, and perhaps modified as a result of this discussion but not voted on at the meeting where it is first discussed. A motion to adopt the revision in its final form may be made at the next faculty meeting. The motion to revise the MeAS bylaws will pass if supported by at least 60% of the DVF (MEAS definition, Article 3).