

**BYLAWS AND PROCEDURES**  
(Last updated May 2024)  
**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**  
**UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA—LINCOLN**

## **1) INTRODUCTION**

These bylaws make explicit certain principles and procedures governing the manner in which the department operates and functions. These bylaws may be superseded by the bylaws of the College of Arts and Sciences, the University of Nebraska—Lincoln, and those of the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska.

The goals of the department should include a continual reappraisal of academic requirements and course offerings and should require that the faculty continually reappraise the interests, talents and contributions of both faculty and students within the context of departmental aims and purposes. Conversely, departmental aims and purposes must be continually re-evaluated in relation to the interests and talents of individual faculty members and students. This dual concern for both the individual and ongoing programs and for structures of permanence and structures for change is an attitude which should pervade the faculty. This attitude should be exemplified, taught, and actively encouraged.

## **2) THE FACULTY**

The departmental faculty is comprised of Instructors, Clinical Associates, Research Associates, Professors of Practice (Assistant, Associate, and Full), and Professors (Assistant, Associate, and Full). Instructors, Clinical Associates, Professors of Practice, and Research Associates (all of whom may be employed full-time in the department) differ from higher ranks in that they usually have appointments that do not lead to tenure. Tenured faculty at the Associate and Professor levels receive continuous appointments. All other appointments are made on an annual or bi-annual basis.

The faculty is directly responsible for teaching, research, and service. Each faculty member must be associated with at least one graduate program area: Clinical, Developmental, Law-Psychology, Neuroscience & Behavior, Social & Cognitive. Faculty associated with Law-Psychology must also be associated with another program. A faculty member may request to be associated with an additional graduate area if the faculty member is willing to undertake the regular responsibilities and obligations of that area. The assignment must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the existing members of that program area's faculty.

The Chair directs newly appointed faculty member to the Regents' and Departmental Bylaws. The new faculty member also receives a written document containing the terms and conditions of employment which includes statements about terms of employment, salary, program assignment, and professional responsibilities about to be assumed. The latter document should be written by the Chair in consultation with Executive Committee and faculty, and must be approved by the Dean of the College and the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

### **2.1) Evaluation of Faculty Instruction**

The evaluation of the instruction of faculty members in the Department of Psychology shall take into account and weigh dimensions indicative of teaching performance in an individual manner

for each professor. That is, no formula of general weights for the following dimensions will be prescribed by this policy, since these dimensions may not apply equally to the evaluation of different faculty. Nor should the list be thought of as exclusive, for each faculty member will be invited to submit materials that not only relate to the listed dimensions, but which relate to dimensions excluded from this list, and that are thought to be relevant to the teaching performance of that individual. (Faculty "visitation" is available, for example, if requested by the faculty member).

Dimensions that will normally be considered in evaluating teaching performance will include student evaluations of those dimensions of classroom performance (including evaluations of those dimensions of classroom activity prescribed by the College of Arts and Sciences Policy on Student Evaluations); the quality and extent of the professor's role in directing and reading theses and research projects; the availability of the professor for less formal (than classroom contact) forms of interaction which are valuable for the education of the student in accordance with the overall goals of the department; and the degree of apparent positive influence by the professor on the development and direction of those students who could or should have been affected by contact with that professor. Information about availability, influence, etc., shall be obtained by systematic contact with students and by the general knowledge of the faculty comprising the Executive Committee. Where the development of new curricula or course is judged to have furthered the overall goals of the department as generally understood, those developments will be positively considered in the faculty member's evaluation. Within the limits that require that normal standards of academic freedom be preserved, if the currency or academic soundness or grading policies of the formal teaching of the professor is adjudged insufficient, those factors will contribute negatively to the professor's evaluation. It is, however, the obligation of those responsible for the instructional evaluation to indicate the evidence upon which their negative judgement on such issues is made.

## **2.2) Professors of Practice**

**a)** The Department of Psychology follows all relevant University and College of Arts and Sciences policies regarding hiring, retention, evaluation, and promotion of Professors of Practice.

**b)** Professors of Practice at any rank are considered voting members of the Psychology Department except on decisions regarding the granting of tenure.

**c)** Professors of Practice are eligible for membership on all Department committees. Professors of Practice at any rank can be nominated for Graduate Faculty Associates by a majority approval of the Graduate Executive Committee. This nomination must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Once approved, Professors of Practice may serve on (but not chair or co-chair) graduate student supervisory committees. Professors of Practice may chair undergraduate theses.

**d)** Professors of Practice will be expected to prepare an annual evaluation file documenting instruction, professional development, and service (see University and College of Arts and Sciences policies that highlight expectations at each rank). The Executive Committee will conduct these annual evaluations at the same time as the faculty in tenured or tenure-leading positions.

**e)** Promotion will follow the relevant practices outlined in Section 4.5 and the policies of the University and College of Arts and Sciences.

## **2.3) Adjunct, Courtesy, and Research Faculty**

a) The Department of Psychology follows all relevant University and College of Arts and Sciences policies toward Adjunct, Courtesy, and Research Faculty.

b) Adjunct, Courtesy, and Research Faculty are not considered voting members of the Psychology Department. They are eligible for membership on Personnel Search Committees but not other standing departmental committees.

### **3) DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION**

In order to conduct its business effectively and efficiently, the faculty is organized so as to carry out administrative and program responsibilities. For administrative purposes the department has a Chair, Associate Chair(s), Executive Committee, and other committees. To coordinate instructional and research programs, the department has committees consisting of: Graduate Executive Committee, Undergraduate Committee, and five graduate area program committees, (Clinical, Developmental, Law-Psychology, Neuroscience & Behavior, Social & Cognitive). The Chair serves as an ex-officio member of all standing departmental committees.

#### **3.1) The Chair**

General administration of the department is delegated to a Chair who is appointed by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences after consultation with the departmental faculty. Appointments are made for periods of no more than five years.

The Chair, as chief executive officer of the department, has primary responsibility for liaison between the department and other University units, and persons or organizations external to the department or to the University. Although the Chair's role is formally reviewed periodically, the Chair is open to, actively seeks, and is responsive to informal feedback from members of the faculty.

The Chair is to support and encourage the development of each student, faculty, and staff member. The Chair carefully informs all new faculty and staff about what is expected of them and will continue to inform them about how they are functioning each year, as well as at other appropriate times. Although the Chair shows special concern for less experienced faculty and staff members, the Chair also evaluates the performance of all and shares these evaluations with them. In this feedback process, it is important that the Chair reflect the opinions of others as well as their own. Although the Chair assumes responsibility for recommending salaries and budget, the Chair seeks the advice of the Executive Committee members on salary matters and discusses the departmental budget in departmental meetings. Prior to making salary recommendations to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Chair carefully reviews all performance data on each faculty member. This review will consider the factors that are used in determining promotion and tenure.

The complex cooperative and individualized functions of the department require that the Chair delegate responsibility to the faculty. Not only must individuals assume direct responsibility for their teaching, research, and service, but should represent the department within both the University community and the community at large, as appropriate.

Although the Chair may ask faculty members about their teaching, research, and service activities, it is the individual faculty member's responsibility to keep the Chair informed and to be

sensitive to what the Chair needs to know. Any new activity or change in a relationship that may affect the department may be of particular interest to the Chair.

### **3.2) Associate Chair(s)**

The Chair appoints up to two Associate Chairs. The length of this appointment and typical duties are determined by the Chair and the appointee. Flexibility in duties needs to be recognized given the shifting requests of regulatory bodies and upper administration. In the absence of the Chair, an Associate Chair, designated by the Chair, or the Executive Committee if the Chair cannot do so, will act in the Chair's stead. Whenever the Chair will be absent for an extended period of time (e.g., two months or longer during the regular academic year) the faculty consults with the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences regarding the appointment of an Acting Chair. The Chair or an Associate Chair should initiate this action.

## **4) COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

Administrative work of the department is conducted, in part, through a system of standing and ad hoc committees which are elected, appointed, or renewed by the Chair according to the rhythms defined in these bylaws or by unexpected need. Ad Hoc committees may be appointed at any time. The Chair of each committee is responsible for keeping adequate records of committee decisions.

### **4.1) Standing Committees: Graduate Area Programs**

Five graduate area program committees exist within the department, namely: Clinical, Developmental, Law-Psychology, Neuroscience & Behavior, Social & Cognitive. Each program committee shall consist of those faculty members who have requested assignment to that committee and have been approved by a two-thirds vote. Directors of the programs are appointed for terms of five years, with the exception that appointments are reviewed by the Chair if so petitioned by a majority of the faculty of the department or majority of the faculty within the area; all such directorships are subject to review by a new department Chair.

Each graduate program area has responsibility for recommending graduate admissions and graduate student support, and for advising of students admitted to each program area. Graduate curriculum requirements and evaluation procedures are the province of the Graduate Executive Committee. The Area Program Director shall supervise these activities under the direction of a majority vote of the area faculty, and any other functions will be undertaken only if responsibility is delegated by a majority vote of the area faculty. Area Program Directors will not have any special responsibility for faculty personnel decisions within each area, unless elected by the entire department to an appropriate committee for that purpose. Meetings of the program committees shall be held at least once each semester, or shall be called whenever requested by one-third of the faculty members of the area.

### **4.2) Ad Hoc Committees**

In the absence of appropriate standing committees, the department should make use of ad hoc committees that consider important departmental issues and problems. The ad hoc committee defines the varied aspects of a problem or issue and suggests appropriate alternative lines of action that might be taken by the Chair or at a regular departmental meeting by a majority vote and will be for a specific period of time.

### **4.3) Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall consist of three elected faculty members, one appointed pre-tenure faculty member (when appropriate), and one elected representative of the Graduate Student Association. The Chair and Associate Chair(s) serve as ex officio members of the Executive Committee. Elections for the Executive Committee shall be for three-year terms. The Chair, in consultation with the Executive Committee and relevant pre-tenure faculty, may appoint one pre-tenure faculty member to serve on the Executive Committee for 1 one-year term. The Chair or the Chair's designee is responsible for initiating election procedures when required. The only restrictions on eligibility for faculty serving on the Executive Committee are: (a) the individual is in a tenured or tenure leading position or is a Professor of Practice and (b) the individual has voting rights in the department. When one of the three elected faculty is absent for an extended period of time, that individual shall be temporarily replaced by the faculty person receiving the next most votes in the most recent election. When the elected graduate student cannot be present for a meeting, that individual will be replaced by the alternative graduate student as designated by the Graduate Student Association. The graduate student representative shall not participate in any discussions concerning the evaluation of faculty or faculty leaves. For the faculty (merit) evaluation process, only one of the Associate Chairs, designated by the Chair, will participate in this process.

The Executive Committee meets with the Chair at least four times per academic year. The Committee may meet more often at the request of the Chair, or any Executive Committee member can request that the Chair call a meeting.

### **Functions of the Executive Committee**

1. The Chair, in consultation with the Executive Committee, shall make major financial decisions concerning disbursements. Voting members of the department as has become traditional shall make major decisions concerning financial policy. The decision of what financial disbursement decisions constitute "major" decisions shall be established by the Chair and/or by a majority of the Executive Committee, with the latter maintaining precedence over the former.
2. Taking into account the financial and administrative restrictions existent within a given year, the Executive Committee will establish the procedures by which it will make salary recommendations. Once guidelines are established in the abstract, the committee members will make individual merit recommendations without the participation or presence of the graduate student representative. The Committee will make recommendations about Executive Committee members without the participation or presence of the discussed individual. The committee will be advisory in making merit recommendations, with the Chair bound to follow the "spirit" of the recommendations—although exact dollar assignments may vary at the Chair's discretion.
3. The Executive Committee will make decisions concerning the criteria for eligibility for leaves available to members of the department. The Executive Committee will determine which of competing faculty will be recommended to the College to receive leave.
4. The Executive Committee may discuss and make decisions concerning issues other than those specifically designated in these bylaws when a majority of the Executive Committee wishes to do so. Such decisions may be made when those decisions are not reserved by tradition or bylaws (departmental, or other institutional bylaws taking

precedence over departmental bylaws) for specific other administrative levels, faculty groups, committees, the faculty and voting graduate student representatives acting in departmental meetings, or the Chair. Unresolved disagreements regarding agenda or decision-making responsibilities between a majority of the Executive Committee and Chair must be resolved by a departmental meeting held during the normal academic year and (if possible) within two weeks of the disagreement with that discussion taking precedence over other departmental meeting agenda items.

5. The Executive Committee will oversee the nomination process for new Chairs. Because the Chair is appointed by the Dean, the Executive Committee will first review the current College of Arts and Sciences Chair appointment processes. Members of the Executive Committee who are not applying for the position will solicit nominations and self-nominations for a new Chair. Faculty members who accept the nomination will disseminate vision statements and hold open meetings with faculty to answer questions. The Executive Committee may modify these procedures to be consistent with processes required by the Dean.

6. The term of an Executive Committee member will be automatically discontinued if and when an appropriate faculty committee votes not to continue their contract (in the case of faculty) or votes to not continue that individual in the Ph.D. program (in the case of a graduate student member).

#### **4.4) Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee Procedures**

Faculty members promoted by the Department of Psychology at the levels of associate and full professor constitute the Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure (RP&T) Committee for all RP&T functions except promotion to professor. For promotion to professor, the RP&T Committee shall consist of promoted full professors. The Chair of the RP&T Committee shall be appointed by the department Chair. The Department Chair cannot serve as RP&T Chair. The department Chair participates in RP&T discussions, but is a non-voting member of the RP&T Committee.

The RP&T Committee reviews the progress toward tenure of each untenured faculty member each time that contract renewal must be initiated. Promotion and tenure standards can be found in Section 10. Prior to any review, the RP&T Chair will review the current processes and procedures articulated by the College of Arts and Sciences and Executive Vice Chancellor for Faculty Affairs (e.g., CAS Handbook; UNL *Guidelines*) and apprise the RP&T Committee. The Chair of the department initiates these reviews when contract renewal is required.

Although voting on promotion, tenure, and contract extensions is done by secret ballot, the RP&T Chair will make a written summary of the comments by the RP&T Committee and will prepare a letter indicating the vote of the RP&T Committee and summarizing the comments, as required by College and University policies. The department Chair will review those comments and write a separate letter reflecting the Chair's own independent recommendation. Both those letters are transmitted to the candidate and to the College.

In order to have a quorum for meetings to discuss faculty reappointment, promotion, and tenure, at least 50% of voting-eligible faculty must be in attendance. Promotion, tenure, and contract extensions require a two-thirds affirmative vote of the voting-eligible members of the department who hold the same or higher professional rank as the intended rank of the candidate

(discounting the department Chair). Although voting by proxy is permitted, faculty are strongly encouraged to attend RP&T Committee meetings. This may include participation in the meeting via video conference.

When an individual who is eligible to vote for promotion, tenure, or contract extension is absent from the meeting or on leave, the RP&T Chair will be responsible for making a reasonable effort to give that individual the opportunity to vote. If, despite this effort by the RP&T Chair, a faculty does not vote, that faculty member will be considered as not having voted, and the required two-thirds shall be defined as two-thirds of those voting.

External reviewers will be solicited for all promotion and tenure decisions (see UNL *Guidelines*; CAS Handbook). Prior to the process of identifying reviewers, the candidate shall sign the College Waiver of Rights Regarding External Letters of Review. A list of names of potential reviewers will be provided separately by the candidate and members of the RP&T committee with substantive expertise. One or more reviewers suggested by RP&T committee are required to evaluate the candidate's file.

#### **4.5) Committee Membership Rosters**

Rosters of eligible voters (see section 5.1) and committee memberships or assignments are maintained current by the Chair or the Chair's designee. These rosters are distributed to eligible voters at the beginning of each academic year or more often if necessary.

#### **4.6) Graduate Student Association**

The Graduate Student Association is comprised of all regularly enrolled graduate students in the department. It is convened in the spring semester each year by the incumbent president who conducts an election of officers for the following year. At least two officers are elected, viz: president and vice president. Additionally, all elected student representatives are to attend and participate in general departmental meetings that do not include personnel issues.

### **5) DEPARTMENTAL MEETINGS**

Departmental meetings are held in order to expedite administration, to keep faculty informed regarding departmental matters, and to take such action as necessary to implement departmental functions. Meetings are held at the call of the Chair or at the request of 25% of the voting faculty; a minimum of three meetings are held each semester. The Chair prepares an agenda that is posted or communicated to faculty and staff members prior to each meeting.

#### **5.1) Voting Eligibility**

All faculty who maintain a percentage of FTE in the Department and whose tenure or tenure-leading home is in the Department of Psychology may vote on Departmental matters; Professors of Practice may vote on departmental matters except as noted elsewhere in this document (see 2.2.b). If a faculty member contributes to the functioning of the department, but does not meet the definition for voting eligibility described previously, that faculty member can be given voting rights in the department if two-thirds of the voting members of department agree to do so. Faculty members on temporary leave from the University or who are absent temporarily from the department retain their voting rights and may assign their proxy on specific issues.

## **5.2) A Quorum**

The transaction of business at meetings of the department requires the presence of at least 50% of eligible voting members as defined in section 5.1.

## **5.3) Passing a Motion**

Unless stated otherwise in these bylaws, two-thirds of the voting members is required to pass a motion. A two-thirds affirmative vote of the eligible voting members, as defined in section 5.1, is necessary for recommending the hiring of new faculty members and for promotion and tenure (section 4.4).

## **5.4) Vote Postponement**

Whenever an issue of vital importance is being considered in a departmental meeting, the Chair may postpone voting on the issue to the next meeting or by a secret ballot placed at a prescribed time in each voting member's mailbox. To make recommendations on the issue, the Chair may also appoint an ad hoc committee that should be representative of the interests of those most involved. Postponement of voting on an issue for a period exceeding two months requires a majority vote of the voting members of the Department.

## **5.5) Voting by the Chair**

The Chair, as a voting member of the department, should cast a ballot on all issues, with exceptions defined in section 4.5.

## **5.6) The Secret Ballot**

The secret ballot is employed in the contexts of hiring new faculty members, making decisions about promotion and tenure, and electing members of the Executive Committee. The secret ballot may be requested at any time by any voting member or by the Chair, and is instituted by majority vote.

## **5.7) Procedures for Hiring Faculty**

**a. Certification Training.** To comply with University policies, before a Search Committee is formed, all voting members of the Department as defined in 5.1 must participate in any and all training required by the University for Search Committees.

**b. Designation of Search and Review Committees.** All voting members as defined in 5.1 who have been certified for participation on search committees will be appointed by the Chair to the Search Committee for a new faculty member. In consultation with the Executive Committee, the Chair will designate a subcommittee chair and subcommittee of the Search Committee as the Review Committee. This Review Committee will include a graduate student from the Department. The Review Committee will review applicant files and develop a short list of candidates for presentation to the Search Committee. Professors of Practice may serve on Search and Review Committees for Professors of Practice and tenured or tenure-leading positions.

**c. Selecting a final list of candidates.** After the Review Committee has presented the short list of candidates to the Search Committee and after the Search Committee members have been given the opportunity to individually review the files of those selected candidates, in a



Departmental meeting convened by the Chair, the Search Committee votes each candidate as “acceptable” or “not acceptable” for interviews and directs the Chair or the Chair’s designee to schedule interviews for candidates voted “acceptable” by 50% of the voting members.

**d. Voting on hiring.** Following the candidate interviews, the Search Committee reconvenes in a Departmental meeting to discuss the potential candidates. The Graduate Student Association representatives for the Department and any other interested graduate students will be invited to the start of this meeting to provide perspective and impressions of the candidates in a manner to be determined by the Graduate Student Association. All graduate students will then be excused from the meeting before additional discussion starts. Voting on hiring faculty is done in two parts by secret mail ballot. One vote is whether the candidate is acceptable or unacceptable. Acceptability is defined by 60% of voting members as defined in 5.1 voting “acceptable.” Typically on the same ballot, the short-list candidates who were interviewed and who remain in the hiring pool are ranked from most preferred (1) to least preferred. The Search Committee directs the Chair to negotiate an offer to the highest ranked acceptable candidate first, followed by additional acceptable candidates in rank order as needed.

## **6) AMENDING THE BYLAWS**

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the eligible voting members of the department. There are two approaches to initiating the process for an amendment to be considered: i) a written proposal signed by three voting members, or; ii) a consensus of the Executive Committee. The procedure for voting on the bylaw amendments shall be to discuss the proposed changes in a departmental meeting, and then to vote on the final version of those changes by anonymous ballot.

## **7) ADDITION OF NEW PROGRAMS OR DELETIONS**

The addition or deletion of a graduate area program that does not fit within the structure of the Clinical, Developmental, Law-Psychology, Neuroscience & Behavior, or Social & Cognitive area requires a change in the bylaws.

## **8) OPERATION OF OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **8.1) Undergraduate Committee**

The Undergraduate Committee consists of the Chair of the Undergraduate Committee, Undergraduate Area Coordinators (i.e., Assessment, Awards, Curriculum, Recruitment and Retention, Student Organizations, Learning Community, and Teaching), one Department Associate Chair, an Academic Advisor Representative, and two Undergraduate Student Representatives. Additionally, there will be an ad hoc at large position available who will serve as liaison to the Inclusive Excellence Workgroup if such representation is not already present in the existing membership the committee. Typically, the Chair of the Undergraduate Committee will coordinate one of the Undergraduate Areas listed above. The Undergraduate Student Representatives are appointed for staggered two-year terms and are selected by the Undergraduate Committee. Other members of the Undergraduate Committee are appointed by the chair in consultation with the Executive Committee.

The function of the Undergraduate Committee is the coordinated supervision and management of the Undergraduate Psychology Program. The Chair of the Undergraduate Committee communicates with the Area Coordinators as needed to monitor operation of the Undergraduate Psychology Program. The Chair also calls Committee meetings at least four times a year with additional meetings as needed. Changes to the Psychology Major or Minor require approval of departmental voting members. Undergraduate grade disputes should first be addressed directly with the instructor or through facilitated conversation with the Department Chair or Associate Chair. If the dispute cannot be resolved through these channels, then the Undergraduate Committee may hear a grade appeal. Students who wish to file a grade appeal should reach out to the Department Chair. The committee follows the processes outlined by the College of Arts and Sciences.

### **8.2) Graduate Executive Committee**

The Graduate Executive Committee consists of the Chair of the Graduate Committee, Area Program Directors (Clinical, Developmental, Law-Psychology, Neuroscience & Behavior, and Social & Cognitive), and two at-large faculty members. The at-large members are appointed by the Department Executive Committee. The at-large members are appointed for staggered two-year terms.

The purpose of the two at-large members is to facilitate a diversity of faculty input. The Department Executive Committee will consider but not be restricted to representation from the Department's Diversity Committee and Executive Committee when making appointments for the at-large members. It is possible that the Executive Committee and Diversity Committee will be well represented by the Chair of the Graduate Committee and/or Area Program Directors, and in such cases other factors will be considered in selecting at-large members (e.g., faculty rank, bringing new members to the committee).

The function of the Graduate Executive Committee is to handle student evaluations as well as discuss and address recruitment/retention issues, curriculum issues, research issues, graduate assessment issues, grade appeals, and other graduate training issues. Grade disputes should first be addressed directly with the instructor or through facilitated conversation with the Department Chair or Associate Chair. If a dispute cannot be resolved through these channels, then the Graduate Executive Committee may hear a grade appeal. The committee follows the processes outlined by Graduate Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Nebraska Graduate College (for a full list of grade appeal procedures see the Appendix). For other kinds of conflicts or grievances, students should refer to Section 11 or the Appendix, which describes internal conflict resolution procedures and provides a detailed list of formal University channels which can be used if internal procedures fail. The committee will meet at least four times a year (once near the middle and once near the end of each academic semester) with additional meetings as needed. Before the semi-annual meetings to evaluate graduate students, the Graduate Committee Chair will request that graduate students provide relevant information to their Area Program Directors. With that information and after meeting with all available faculty in their areas, the Area Program Directors will carry the recommendations made by the area faculty to the evaluation meetings. The Graduate Executive Committee will consult with the Department's Graduate Faculty on an as needed basis.

### **8.3) Nebraska Symposium on Motivation**

#### **I. Purpose and Definition.**

The Nebraska Symposium on Motivation Committee (Committee) is responsible for the development and maintenance of all aspects of the Nebraska Symposium on Motivation. The Committee shall consist of a Series Editor and six Members. In addition, each year with assistance from the departmental staff and the Series Editor, a Volume Editor chosen by the Committee will be responsible for the current Symposium conference and the resultant Symposium volume.

## **II. Appointments and Elections.**

**a. The Series Editor.** The Series Editor is appointed for a 6-year term by the Department Chair (Chair) after consultation with the Departmental Executive Committee. If the Series Editor must be absent for up to a year, at the discretion of the Chair the Series Editor can be replaced for up to one year by an Acting Series Editor appointed by the Chair. If the Series Editor is absent for more than one year or must discontinue being the Series Editor, the Chair appoints a new Series Editor for a 6-year term. The Series Editor Elect is appointed by the Chair a year prior to the expiration of the term of the Series Editor.

**b. The Symposium Committee.** In addition to the Series Editor, the Committee shall consist of six Members, five of whom are elected by their graduate program areas (areas) and one of whom is appointed by the Chair. After the acceptance of these bylaws, the initial election of the five elected Members shall be for 1, 2, or 3-year terms, determined randomly. Thereafter each Member shall serve a 3-year term. The five elected Members represent the five areas that are not represented by the Series Editor. If a Series Editor is appointed from an area that already has a member, that Member's term will be discontinued.

With the participation of all faculty in an area, each area is responsible for establishing the election procedures that they will use to select their Member. The Series Editor maintains a record of the election of Members, and early in each fall semester is responsible for contacting any area directors whose areas should elect a replacement Member. The area director is then responsible for initiating the appropriate election procedures for that area. If a Member leaves the Committee prior to the expiration of their 3-year term, a replacement is elected from that individual's area for the remainder of that term.

The Departmental Chair appoints the 6<sup>th</sup> Member in consultation with the Executive Committee in order to achieve appropriate representation in the Committee.

**c. The Volume Editor.** The Volume Editor is chosen by Committee at the time that the relevant proposal is accepted for a future Symposium conference and volume.

## **III. Responsibilities.**

**a. The Series Editor.** The Series Editor is proactive in initiating all of the year-to-year tasks required for the continuation and thriving of the Nebraska Symposium on Motivation, both as a conference of scholars, and as a series of volumes reflecting those scholarly contributions. The Series Editor is responsible for insuring that Committee membership conforms to these guidelines and thus early in the fall semester contacts the director of each area that should elect a Member. The Series Editor requests proposals for future symposia from the departmental faculty and schedules Committee meetings so that decisions for subsequent symposia can be made by the Committee in a timely manner. The Series Editor participates in those decisions and communicates with those selected to be Volume Editors and with others who submitted proposals. As needed, the Series Editor will assist the Volume Editors with negotiations with speakers and the volume publisher, and will inform

the Volume Editors about budget parameters, communicating with the Committee if budget requests or requirements are outside of traditional guidelines. Similarly, the Series Editor will communicate with the Volume Editor concerning the overall guidelines for both the Symposium conference and of the resultant volume, and the Series Editor will seek decisions from the Committee when substantial changes in those guidelines are considered.

With the Committee, the Series Editor will develop and pursue plans to increase the visibility of Symposium and the resultant Symposium Volumes and will negotiate and maintain an appropriate agreement with a publisher for the Symposium Volumes

The Series Editor will remain informed concerning any potential problems with the funding for the Symposium, and, in cooperation with the Department Chair, will address those issues.

**b. The Committee.** With the Series Editor, the Committee reviews proposals for future Symposia, determines the acceptability of topics and proposals, and designates the associated Volume Editors. While the Committee typically delegates to the Series Editor any required negotiations concerning proposal modifications or details with prospective Volume Editors, the whole Committee may remain involved for consultation and approval of those decisions, as appropriate. The Committee considers any significant issues concerning the format of the conference or of the volume.

**c. The Volume Editor.** The Volume Editor refines her/his proposal in accordance with Committee suggestions following the proposal review, and then is responsible for all aspects of the scheduling and production of the Symposium Conference and the resultant Symposium volume. The Volume Editor is responsible for the management of the budget for each volume, within the guidelines provided by the Series Editor.

#### **8.4) Awards Committee**

##### **I. Purpose**

There are many individuals in the Psychology Department whose exemplary performance in various domains is deserving of recognition. Honors and awards provide individuals with this well-deserved recognition, and increase visibility of the Department within the university and nationally. The Awards Committee is tasked with: 1) identifying and publicizing award opportunities; 2) identifying faculty who may be competitive for university-level and external awards, and; 3) facilitating the submission of applications and nominations for such awards.

##### **II. Activities**

The Awards Committee shall meet at least twice per academic year, with timing of the meetings determined by the Committee chair. The Committee shall implement a coordinated plan to: 1) develop and maintain a listing of college/university-level and external awards for which faculty of all ranks and from all program areas may be eligible; 2) identify all eligible faculty who may be competitive for those awards and approach colleagues about serving as nominators, and; 3) follow up with potential awardees and nominators to determine whether applications were submitted. The Awards Committee Chair will meet with the Diversity Committee Chair annually to establish a process for ensuring that all eligible faculty are considered for awards. The Committee Chair should also seek input from the Department Chair and Business Manager about faculty and staff who may be eligible for awards.

##### **III. Membership**

The Committee shall consist of one faculty member from each graduate program area. With the participation of all faculty in an area, each area is responsible for establishing the procedures

they will use to select their representative to the Committee. After the acceptance of these bylaws, the initial selection of committee members, excluding the chair, shall be for 1, 2, or 3-year terms, determined randomly. Thereafter each member shall serve a 3-year term. The Department Chair will designate one member to serve as Committee Chair.

## **9) DUAL RELATIONSHIP POLICY**

### **I. Definitions**

As used in this document, the term “faculty/instructor” means all those who teach and/or otherwise supervise students in the Department. This includes graduate students with teaching responsibilities, undergraduate TA’s, and other instructional personnel. The term “amorous relationships” may include sexual or romantic relationships, and is intended to indicate conduct which goes beyond what a person of ordinary sensibilities would believe to be a collegial or professional relationship. The term “familial relationship” includes any parent, offspring, spouse/partner, or sibling relationship.

### **II. Rationale**

Faculty/instructors exercise power over staff, students, and other faculty, whether in giving them praise/criticism, evaluating them, making recommendations for their further studies, their present or future employment, or conferring any other benefits on them. The Department feels that amorous or familial relationships between faculty/instructors and students or faculty/instructors and staff with whom they work are wrong because such situations increase the chances that one of the members of the relationship will abuse their power and exploit the other. In the case of amorous relationships, voluntary consent by the student or staff member may be suspect, given the fundamentally asymmetric nature of the relationship. Moreover, other students, faculty and/or staff may be affected by such relationships because it places the faculty/instructor in a position to favor or advance one individual’s interest at the expense of others. Similar considerations are relevant when one faculty member has power over another.

### **III. Policy**

The Department will consider it a breach of professional ethics for a faculty/instructor to initiate or consent to an amorous relationship, or to have a familial relationship, with a student or staff member who is being supervised or evaluated by the faculty/instructor. Similarly, it will be considered a breach of professional ethics for a faculty member to be involved in any Departmental decisions that affect another faculty or staff member, either positively or negatively, with whom that individual has an amorous or familial relationship. In all these cases, it is the ethical obligation and professional responsibility of the faculty/instructor to withdraw from participation in activities or decisions that may reward or penalize the other person involved.

## **10) PROMOTION AND TENURE STANDARDS**

### **Introduction**

The recommendation of tenure and/or promotion in rank are among the most important and far-reaching decisions made by the Department of Psychology, given that an excellent faculty is an essential component of any outstanding institution of higher learning. Promotion and tenure decisions also have a profound effect on the lives and careers of faculty. Recommendations concerning promotion and tenure must be made carefully, based on a thorough examination of the candidate’s record and the impartial application of these criteria, established in compliance with University and College guidelines. This section of the Bylaws is intended to promote the rigorous and fair evaluation of faculty performance during the promotion and tenure process by

establishing criteria that express the Department of Psychology's expectations for meeting University standards.

### **10.1) Confidentiality**

Consideration and evaluation of a faculty member's record is a confidential personnel matter. Only those persons eligible to vote on promotion and tenure (see Sec. 5.1) may participate in or observe deliberations or have access to the personnel file (except clerical staff who may assist in the preparation of documents under conditions that assure confidentiality). Although feedback about performance by the Chair, Chair of the RP&T Committee, and/or faculty mentors is an important aspect of faculty evaluation, candidates' materials, as well as details of deliberations taking place in RP&T meetings must remain entirely confidential and are not to be shared with individuals at UNL or elsewhere.

### **10.2) General Principles and Administrative Guidelines**

The University strives for a consistent standard of quality against which the performance of all faculty members is measured. Nonetheless, the nature of faculty activities varies across the University, and faculty members' records must be evaluated in light of their particular responsibilities and the expectations of their particular field. The below criteria state the Department of Psychology's expectations of performance in the areas of scholarship, teaching, and service necessary to satisfy the University standards for the awarding of tenure and/or promotion to associate professor and for promotion to full professor.

#### **Regarding evaluation for Continuous Appointment (tenure), Executive Vice Chancellor *Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty* state that:**

"The award of a Continuous Appointment (tenure) is a long term commitment by the institution to the individual faculty member, subject to the Bylaws of the Board of Regents, and therefore, requires a rigorous, in-depth assessment of the faculty member's accumulated accomplishments and a determination of whether the performance is likely to meet expectations for the indefinite future. The award of tenure requires the candidate to demonstrate that such a commitment by the University is justified. The tenure decision ultimately is based on an evaluation of the quality and quantity of work accomplished during the probationary period and is an expectation and prediction of the quality and quantity of a faculty member's future performance" (VI.A.)

#### **Regarding the awarding of tenure and/or promotion to the rank of Professor, Executive Vice Chancellor *Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty* state that:**

The rank of professor is "reserved for those faculty members whose achievements are sufficient to merit recognition as distinguished authorities in their field and who hold the professional respect of their colleagues." While the University wants all faculty to qualify eventually for promotion to full professor, no time requirements force faculty to seek this rank. Tenured faculty who are associate professors may stay in that rank for the rest of their careers (V.B.4.).

To reach the rank of professor, most aspects of a candidate's work must be judged excellent, i.e., there must be evidence of "a level of sustained creativity in the salient areas of the candidate's work" (V.B.4.). "While the focus of this creative work may not be national in scope, its quality should be sufficient to merit significant and national (or international) recognition." The

successful candidate's record will show evidence of "sustained excellence over an extended period of time" (V.B.4.).

**Regarding the granting of tenure and/or promotion in rank, the *College Handbook* states (pp. 19-20):**

"Documents recommending tenure and/or promotion in rank must include ratings of OUTSTANDING, SUPERIOR, GOOD, ADEQUATE, or INADEQUATE in each of the areas of teaching, research and service. For promotion to associate professor and the granting of tenure the candidate should have an overall rating of at least superior performance, taking into account the candidate's assignment, together with clear promise of continuing performance at this level."

"Promotions to full professor should be accompanied by an overall rating of superior over a sustained period of time and taking into account the candidate's assignment, recognizing that changes in emphasis in assignment may occur over a career. While in almost all cases accomplishment and participation is expected in all areas, in exceptional cases, outstanding performance over a sustained period of time may lead to promotion to full professor for candidates whose careers have become more narrowly focused to the benefit of the department, college, and university. An evaluation of outstanding performance in any area must be definitive."

### **10.3) STANDARDS FOR PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND PROFESSOR (TENURE TRACK)**

#### **Scholarship**

"Scholarship" encompasses traditional academic research and publishing, as well as the endeavors that sustain those activities, such as securing of funding and other resources to support one's research. Faculty members are expected to conduct, report, and publish empirical and/or theoretical research. No single criterion can be used to evaluate the quality of research produced by a faculty member.

a) Eligibility for promotion to Associate Professor is determined by the following expectations:

- Research engagement that results in the publication of journal articles that undergo peer review, chapters, books, and other scholarly publications; peer-reviewed publications are weighted most heavily;
- Products of the faculty member's scholarship are of such quantity and quality that internal and external peers judge them to be significant contributions to the knowledge base;
- Pursuit of extramural research support from public or private funding organizations; funding from sources that include peer review is weighted more heavily;
- Dissemination of research to professional audiences through scholarly presentations, trainings, and/or workshops.

b) Eligibility for promotion to Professor is determined by the following expectations:

- Sustained research engagement and the dissemination of research results in peer-reviewed publications, chapters, books, and other scholarly publications; peer-reviewed publications are weighted most heavily;
- Candidate has made a sustained, substantive impact of importance to a discipline as judged by internal and external reviewers as being significant to the improvement and/or expansion of the knowledge base;
- Success in obtaining extramural funding;
- Dissemination of research to professional audiences through scholarly presentations, trainings, and/or workshops;
- Evidence of research recognition and impact such as leadership in professional organizations, invited presentation of research to professional audiences, honors and awards related to research activities, and consulting in areas of research expertise.

#### **10.4) Teaching**

Teaching is a primary function of the University, which strives to provide an outstanding education for its students. Teaching encompasses not only traditional classroom instruction, but also instruction that occurs through the mentoring of undergraduate, graduate students, and advanced trainees. The evaluation of classroom teaching may include consideration of syllabi and other course materials; peer and student evaluations; teaching portfolios; and the candidate's own statement of teaching philosophy and goals. The evaluation of non-classroom teaching includes consideration of the quantity and quality of mentoring activities performed by the candidate. This is reflected in, among other things, the number of students mentored and tangible indicators of successful mentoring. These indicators include: involving undergraduate students in research activities; supervision of undergraduate theses and other independent projects; progress of graduate student mentees toward their degree; publications, presentations; funding obtained for and by graduate student mentees, and; awards received by undergraduate and graduate student mentees.

##### **a) Eligibility for promotion to Associate Professor is determined by the following expectations:**

- Evidence of effective classroom teaching at undergraduate and/or graduate levels;
- Efforts toward improvement, enhancement, and development of excellence in teaching;
- Effective mentorship of undergraduate students through activities such as the involvement of undergraduate students in research and supervision of honors theses and other independent projects;
- Effective graduate advising as evidenced by the successful direction of master's research projects and dissertations; graduate mentees making sufficient progress toward their degree; graduate student success in authoring peer-reviewed publications and presentations; and service on thesis and dissertation committees.

##### **b) Eligibility for promotion to Professor is determined by the following expectations:**

- Sustained evidence of effective classroom teaching at undergraduate and/or graduate levels;



- Sustained efforts toward improvement, enhancement, and development of excellence in teaching;
- Sustained effective mentorship of undergraduate students through activities such as their involvement in the candidates' research activities and the supervision of honors theses;
- Sustained effective graduate mentoring as evidenced by the successful direction of master's research projects and dissertations; graduate mentees making sufficient progress toward their degree; advanced trainees making sufficient progress toward research and training goals; student success in authoring peer-reviewed publications and presentations; and service on thesis and supervisory committees.

### **10.5) Service**

Service is an important responsibility of all faculty members that contributes to the University's performance of its larger mission. Although the nature of service activities will depend on a candidate's particular interests and abilities, service contributions are an essential part of being a good citizen of the Department and University. The Department of Psychology accepts and values service to the Department, University, and the larger profession.

#### **a) Eligibility for promotion to Associate Professor is determined by the following expectations:**

- Regular service to the department through attendance at department meetings;
- Participation in department committees or other service roles;
- Evidence of professional service through activities such as journal or grant reviewing and committee membership in professional organizations.

#### **b) Eligibility for promotion to Professor is determined by the following expectations:**

- Regular service to the department through attendance at department meetings;
- Participation and leadership in department committees or other service roles;
- Record of service to the College or University;
- Evidence of professional service and engagement contributing to the visibility of the University through activities such as journal reviewing, editorial activities (as member of an editorial board or serving as an editor or associate editor of a journal), participation in grant reviewing, and evidence of leadership in professional organizations.

### **10.6) STANDARDS FOR PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE AND PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE**

Together with tenure-track faculty, Professors of Practice are integral to the development and performance of the Department of Psychology in delivering the highest quality instruction and service.

### **Teaching**

The Professor of Practice position is a non-tenure-track designation, with a majority proportion of time allocated to teaching. Accordingly, in evaluating Professors of Practice for promotion, emphasis is placed on effective classroom instruction.

a) Eligibility for promotion to Associate Professor of Practice is determined by the following expectations:

- Evidence of effective classroom teaching;
- The faculty member's teaching is judged by internal and external peers to be of high quality;
- Efforts toward improvement, enhancement, and development of excellence in teaching, including participation in educational activities to improve teaching effectiveness;
- Mentoring of students' teaching or other experiential learning activities such as teaching assistantships, internships, undergraduate research, theses, or other independent projects;
- Participation in activities related to the scholarship of teaching via print or digital formats, such as journal articles, textbooks, chapters, newsletter articles, workshops or other presentations, or dissemination of course curricula or other teaching materials.

b) Eligibility for promotion to Professor of Practice is determined by the following expectations:

- Sustained evidence of effective classroom teaching as rated by internal and external peer evaluators;
- Sustained efforts toward improvement, enhancement, and development of excellence in teaching, including participation in educational activities to improve teaching effectiveness;
- Sustained mentoring of students' teaching or other experiential learning activities such as teaching assistantships, internships, undergraduate research, theses, or other independent projects;
- Sustained participation in activities related to the scholarship of teaching via print or digital formats, such as journal articles, textbooks, chapters, newsletter articles, workshops or other presentations, or dissemination of course curricula or other teaching materials;
- Excellence and innovation in instruction as evidenced through recognitions such as teaching awards and letters from peers;
- Regional or national leadership in professional activities and associations related to teaching and learning, such as holding national offices in teaching-related associations or special interest groups, participation in national study groups, or creation or leadership of professional conferences or associations focused on teaching and learning;
- Receipt of internal or external funding for instruction- or training-related activities and innovations.

### **10.7) Service**

Service is an important responsibility of all faculty members that contributes to the University's performance of its larger mission. Although the nature of service activities will depend on a candidate's particular interests and abilities, service contributions are an essential part of being a good citizen of the Department and University. The Department of Psychology accepts and values service to the Department, University, and the larger profession.

a) Eligibility for promotion to Associate Professor of Practice is determined by the following expectations:

- Regular service to the department through attendance at department meetings;
- Participation in department committees or other service roles;
- Evidence of professional service through activities such as committee membership in professional organizations, review activities for teaching-related publications, or contributions to teaching- or learning-related departmental or campus activities.

b) Eligibility for promotion to Professor of Practice is determined by the following expectations:

- Regular service to the department through attendance at department meetings;
- Participation in department committees or other service roles;
- Record of service to the College or University;
- Evidence of professional service and engagement contributing to the visibility of the University through activities such as leadership in teaching-related associations or special interest groups; service on teaching- and learning-related national review panels or advisory groups for professional associations, government agencies, or foundations, and editorial or review activities for teaching-related publications.

## **11) CONFLICT AND GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION**

Conflict and grievances are an inevitable aspect of interpersonal relationships in an academic department. The Department is committed to building a culture that directly address conflict and grievances amongst graduate students and faculty in a manner that builds a more collaborative, healthy working environment. Please see the Appendix for internal conflict management procedures. The internal conflict management procedures are reviewed and updated on an annual basis. If internal attempts at conflict or grievance resolution are unsuccessful, people may file reports, grievances, or grade appeals using formal University processes (see Appendix for summary).

## **Appendix: Graduate Student Conflict Management Procedure Manual**

### Statement of Shared Values

Conflict and grievances are an inevitable aspect of interpersonal relationships in an academic department. Graduate students face unique challenges in certain conflict situations, especially when there are disparate levels of power such as between a graduate student and faculty member. In order to build a healthy and productive academic atmosphere in the Department of Psychology, we approach collaboration and dispute management with the following shared values:

**Respect** for the rights, dignity, and autonomy of all members of the Department.

**Fairness** to all parties involved in a dispute.

**Commitment to problem-solving** to find the best possible solution for all.

**Transparency** in communication and procedures as much as possible while still respecting the rights of all involved, including the **right to privacy**.

**Continuing education** in equitable and inclusive practices and communication skills to convey respect and prevent and/or resolve conflict.

**Commitment to academic freedom** including full freedom in research and publication, as well as freedom in the classroom in discussing the subject.

**A climate free from retaliation** in any form as is consistent with our values of respect, transparency, fairness, and commitment to problem solving.

In sum, the Department is committed to building a culture that directly address conflict and grievances in a manner that builds a more collaborative, healthy working environment.

### The Scope of Conflicts & Grievances that May Arise

The Department recognizes that the scope and nature of the conflicts and grievances that may arise are highly varied. Consequently, there is no one “right” way to resolve the issue. The primary purpose of this document is to outline the available informal processes for resolving conflict and reporting grievances. These processes are designed to reflect the Department’s shared values and offer graduate students and faculty several options for managing conflict and grievances in productive and appropriate ways. The procedures are not intended to replace any University policies or procedures (e.g., reporting to Title VII or Title IX) or filing a police report in the event of a potential crime. University reporting, grade appeal, and grievance procedures can be found at the end of this document.

### Conflict Resolution Procedures

Conflict resolution procedures are meant to address the typical conflicts that arise in the daily life of an academic department. Common types of disputes could include disagreements about authorship, grading, access to resources within a research team, work load for a research or teaching assistantship or as a member of a research team, faculty availability for meetings, delays in returns of graded materials or manuscripts, etc. Often, these conflicts can arise from

poor communication, misunderstandings, differing values, differing interests, limited resources, personality clashes, etc.

Consistent with the Department's shared values, the conflict resolution procedures provide an opportunity for parties to communicate, as well as work toward a shared understanding of what has occurred and/or a mutually agreed upon plan of action. These conflict resolution procedures can provide an opportunity for the conflict parties to:

- Engage in a pro-active approach that addresses issues and conflict before they fester and grow.
- Clearly articulate the issues or problems, with recognition that there may be differing perceptions of the problem(s).
- Address the issues face-to-face in a setting that is most conducive to productively managing the problem.
- Communicate how they want the conflict resolved and provide an opportunity to reach agreement on how to move forward.
- Re-establish trust.

If a graduate student finds themselves trying to manage a conflict situation with anyone in the Department, there are a number of steps they can take and people they can seek out for guidance and help. The following subsections details the possibilities. The possible steps and procedures are listed in the order they are commonly used. However, ***there is no "right path" for resolving conflict. Parties are encouraged to think about which options best fits the situation, their needs, etc.***

### **Conflict Management Steps and Procedures**

***Consultation for advice and support.*** Often it is helpful and appropriate to seek advice and support from faculty and leadership. This step is available at any point and may be especially valuable if the person bringing forward the issue is struggling to decide what to do, feels uncomfortable approaching the other person(s), or was not successful with initial attempts to directly discuss the issue with the other person(s). Discussing the situation could provide an opportunity to:

- Talk through the issue and related concerns with a neutral party.
- Discuss and weigh options for how to address the issue (the faculty member may seek additional information about options on behalf of the graduate student if desired by the graduate student).
- Create a strategy for how best to take action on one of those options.

***Direct discussion with the other person(s).*** Often, an early step in addressing an issue or conflict is to directly discuss the issue with the person(s) involved. Open and direct dialogue conveys respect for the other person and respect for their right to know how they may have harmed someone as well as the opportunity to resolve the dispute. Although email may be useful for scheduling a time to meet, the Department highly encourages face-to-face conversations either in-person or via Zoom. This allows the parties to engage in the type of direct communication and dialogue that promotes conflict resolution. Listening and expressing oneself are important in these conversations.

***Facilitated conversation.*** Sometimes, the parties involved in a conflict have a difficult time reaching resolution on their own and it may be useful to have an outside person help to facilitate a productive conversation. Facilitated conversations are a voluntary process in which a neutral, third-party guides a future-focused conversation, generally with the goal of reaching

mutual understand and agreement on how to move forward. These conversations are typically informal and the facilitator's primary role is to promote productive conversations by engaging in active listening, asking clarifying questions, and helping the parties come up with creative solutions. Often, these conversations will end in a verbal or written commitment between the parties to make specific changes to resolve the issue and ensure the conflict does not resurface.

**Third Party Support Person.** The Department recognizes that disparate levels of power exist in many academic working relationships. Although direct communication is generally recommended, there are situations in which an individual may feel uncomfortable directly confronting the person(s) they are having issues with. To protect the parties involved or promote the best resolution outcome, it may be reasonable for faculty (e.g., advisors) or other department leadership to act as a third party representative of the person bringing forward the issue. In their capacity as a third party support person, this individual might speak directly to the other person(s) about the issue, bring the issue to the attention of someone in an appropriate leadership positions (e.g., graduate chair), or attempt to address the issue in a broader context (so as to not single out any one individual). In these situations, the third party support person will act on behalf of the individual bringing forward the issue and must have their permission to do so. In addition, the third party support person should discuss with the individual bringing the issue forward their desires for confidentiality and anonymity, including the extent to which confidentiality and anonymity is possible in a given situation.

### **Who to Seek Out for Conflict Management Assistance**

The Department is committed to providing a collaborative climate in which conflict is address in an open and timely manner. Any faculty member may be able to assist with the conflict management steps and procedures discussed in the previous section. However, some faculty may be better situated to help specific students because of pre-existing relationships, knowledge of research area content, etc.

**Suggested Order of Department Contacts.** The following is an ordered list of who a graduate student can go to for conflict management assistance:

- Advisors or other trusted faculty members
- Any area head, though most often students' seek out their own program area head (<https://psychology.unl.edu/graduate-programs>)
- The graduate chair (Mike Dodd, [mdodd2@unl.edu](mailto:mdodd2@unl.edu))
- The chair (David DiLillo, [ddillilo2@unl.edu](mailto:ddillilo2@unl.edu)) of the department

Importantly, the person bringing forward the issue can skip any of these steps if they are either not comfortable with the person or the issue involves them. If a student wishes to speak to someone other than the chair of the department, they may seek out either of the associate chairs of the department (Sarah Gervais, [sgervais2@unl.edu](mailto:sgervais2@unl.edu); Manda Williamson, [mwilliamson3@unl.edu](mailto:mwilliamson3@unl.edu)).

**External Ombudsperson.** The Department recognizes that because of the nature of an academic unit, there may be situations in which the person bringing forward the issue may wish to consult someone outside of the department. An ombudsperson is a neutral party who provides confidential, informal, independent and impartial assistance with managing conflict. The ombudsperson is available to listen, discuss options, and support the person bringing forward the issue. Dr. Eva Bachman ([ebachman1@unl.edu](mailto:ebachman1@unl.edu)) is the Director of Graduate Student Support and serves as an ombudsperson for graduate students at UNL.

## **Confidentiality Expectations**

An individual bringing forward an issue to a faculty member or the ombudsperson can generally expect a degree of confidentiality. However, there are times when the anonymity of the party bringing forth a concern cannot be maintained (e.g., if the specifics of a conflict issue allow one party to deduce the identity of the other). Exceptions to confidentiality also arise if someone is in imminent danger. It is considered best practice to openly discuss confidentiality concerns and expectations before engaging in a conversation about a conflict issue.

## **Potential Outcomes**

The goal of most conflict management processes is to generate a verbal or written commitment between the parties to make specific changes to resolve the issue and ensure the conflict does not resurface. Importantly, this is an agreement between everyone involved and all individuals must actively participate in forming the agreement. Each agreement will likely be unique because the needs of the parties, nature of the issue, etc. is likely unique. However, here are a few examples of potential outcomes:

- In an authorship dispute a plan could detail improved procedures to assist the research team in better communicating authorship order and associated responsibilities.
- Workload or resource disputes may involve more clear communication about expectations and/or redistribution of workloads or resources.
- Feedback about insensitive or inappropriate language may yield an opportunity for the student to express why the language was problematic and a faculty member agreement to make changes or provide needed context if the material under question is within the scope of course material. A faculty member may provide an acknowledgement or make an apology to the class. (Repeated instances may require more formal processes as students should not have to repeatedly engage in this process with the same faculty member).

Commitments between the parties should take into consideration the needs and interests of the parties involved. Often, the most successful agreements offer creative solutions to problems that strengthen communication, trust, and a strong working relationship. Keep in mind, it is common for both parties to make commitments to change the situation for the better.

## **Conflict Management Training Opportunities**

Although conflict is pervasive, the skills necessary to resolve the conflict are not always intuitive. Thus, the Department is committed to continued training and discussion relevant to managing conflict. The training opportunities will be open to all members of the department and program heads, the graduate chair, department chair, and the ombudsperson will be expected to actively participate in these opportunities. Training opportunities could include:

- Trainings & discussions on how to have difficult conversations that include conflict management skill development including active listening, problem solving, etc.
- Continued training on University policies and procedures such as Title IX.

## **University Reporting Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policies**

The Institutional Equity and Compliance Office (IEC) can investigate allegations of discrimination and harassment that are prohibited under civil rights laws (e.g., Title IX, Title VII, Title VI, and the ADA). The university non-discrimination statement is available here: <https://www.unl.edu/equity/notice-nondiscrimination>. It prohibits discrimination based upon “race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation in its programs, activities, or employment” but the policy and procedures are less comprehensive than the university sexual misconduct/harassment policy.

The sexual misconduct/harassment policy is available here: <https://www.unl.edu/equity/university-sexual-misconduct-policy>. This policy includes requirements for addressing sexual misconduct/harassment under both Title IX and Title VII. As stated in the policy, under Title IX, sexual harassment is currently defined as (a) An employee of the University conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the University on an individual’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; (b) Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the University’s education program or activity; or (c) Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking as defined by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). As stated in the policy, under Title VII (applies to employees only), sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual’s employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual’s work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment, sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the individual’s employment and create an abusive working environment. Under current University policy, employees at the University are “expected to promptly report conduct that may violate the University’s Sexual Misconduct Policy to the University.”

Under the current policy, there are some instances where interpersonal behaviors align with the behavioral definitions of harassment/misconduct (e.g., unwanted touching, inappropriate or offensive comments) but are deemed unactionable by the IEC. For example, the IEC will judge whether unwelcome conduct was “severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive” (following current Title IX regulations) or “severe or pervasive” (following Title VII), and if they decide that it was not, IEC will not take action to resolve the problem using their procedures. Additionally, the scope of the policy for complaints related to Title IX currently only covers incidents that occurred in “locations, events, or circumstances over which the University exercises substantial control over both the Respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs, and also includes any building owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by a postsecondary institution” (which means that behaviors that are unrelated to campus events/programs or happened in a non-university building may not be actionable under IEC policies and procedures).

If a faculty member or student has questions about sexual harassment/misconduct and/or has questions about reporting options and resources, there are confidential resources on campus and in the community that specialize in these issues who can help:

- Voices of Hope: <https://www.voicesofhopelincoln.org/> (office line: 402-476-2110 and 24-hour crisis line 402-475-7273)
- UNL Center for Advocacy, Response & Education: <https://care.unl.edu/> (402-472-3553)



## University Grade Appeals and Grievances

Students wishing to use formal University channels for reporting discrimination or misconduct, appealing grades, or engaging with formal grievances processes may want to consult with advisors, area coordinators, the grad chair, or the department associate chairs or chair for support and information. Students may also consult with the graduate student ombudsperson if they wish to talk with someone outside the Department (see above).

**Graduate Grade Appeals Process:** Appeal of grades in graduate-level courses shall be made through the graduate student grade appeal procedures for the campus through which the grade was awarded. <https://catalog.unl.edu/graduate-professional/policies/grades/>

- Students who believe their evaluation in a course has been prejudiced or capricious must first attempt to resolve the matter with the Course Instructor within 30 days of the posting of the grade report by the Office of the University Registrar.
- If unsuccessful, the student may then file a written appeal to the Graduate Committee Chair for consideration by the Department Graduate Executive Committee. This appeal must be filed within 60 days of the posting of the grade report by the Office of the University Registrar. A written determination of the appeal shall be presented to the student and instructor.
- If the matter is unduly delayed or not resolved, the student may present the original appeal documentation to the Dean for Graduate Studies who shall request a review by a subcommittee of the Graduate Council. A final appeal may be made to the full Graduate Council, if it agrees to hear the case. Since awarding grades in courses occurs at the individual campus level, the decision of the Graduate Council shall be final and is not subject to further appeal beyond the campus.
- If the instructor's grade is overturned, the instructor of record has the right of appeal, in writing, at the same successive levels of review.

**University Grievance Processes:** Graduate students who are on an assistantship (e.g., teaching, research) can file grievances against faculty or administrators with the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee. <https://www.unl.edu/facultysenate/procedures-academic-rights-and-responsibilities-special-hearing-committees>

**Reporting Scientific Misconduct:** Graduate students may file scientific misconduct reports with the Office of Research and Economic Development.  
<https://research.unl.edu/researchcompliance/about-research-misconduct/>