Department of Computer Science and Engineering Bylaws

Revised February 2010

Amended December 2013

Amended September 2015

Amended September 2016

Amended August 2019

Amended October 2019

Revised September, October 2022

Minor Revision, August 2023

I.   General Procedures

A. The Department of Computer Science and Engineering will hold general meetings of all faculty, monthly during the regular academic year, according to a schedule announced by the Chair at the beginning of the academic year. In addition, special meetings may be called by the Department Chair or at the request of at least one-fourth of the Computer Science and Engineering faculty (general voting members).

B. G*eneral voting members* of the department consist of all full-time professors, associate professors, assistant professors, and professional faculty. An appointment of at least 50% in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering is also required. In this document and in general, the term *professional faculty* is used to denote all levels of clinical and lecturer faculty.

C. *Limited voting members* of the department consist of all full-time professors, associate professors, and assistant professors (i.e., all tenured and tenure track faculty). Limited voting members are responsible for tenured/tenure-track hiring (except for Department Chair as

described later) and determining research direction related motions. An appointment of at least 50% in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering is also required.

D. All departmental meetings and meetings of standing committees, except the Personnel Affairs Committee and the Promotion and Tenure Committee meetings dealing with peer evaluations, shall be announced to all faculty at least one week in advance and shall have an agenda provided at least two working days in advance (unless otherwise noted in this document). All meetings, except those meetings of the Personnel Affairs Committee and the Promotion and Tenure Committee regarding peer evaluations, may be attended by all general voting members of the department. It is acknowledged that on rare occasions meetings of standing committees may be called with less than a week of advance notice.

E. A department staff member will record the minutes of all departmental meetings, circulate copies to the faculty members of the department within two weeks, and maintain a permanent record of these copies in the departmental office.

F. Unless specified otherwise in the departmental bylaws, whenever a vote is taken on a subject, a simple majority will pass (more than 50%). For the purposes of voting in department and committee meetings, a quorum shall consist of two-thirds of the eligible voters. Votes may be held shortly after meetings using online tools as long as in the preceding meeting a discussion on the respective motion was held. A quorum in this case is also two-thirds of all eligible voters. Such votes will be administered by the main administrative coordinator of the Department (or a designated alternate).

G. Each committee position is filled from the list of eligible faculty members by secret ballot.

H. Roberts Rules of Order shall be followed at all formal meetings.

I. The departmental bylaws may be amended or revised at any faculty meeting by the vote of a two-thirds majority provided that the proposed revision/amendment has been circulated to the full voting faculty at least five working days in advance of the meeting at which it is voted on.

J. These bylaws define the following standing committees of the department: Personnel Affairs Committee, Promotion and Tenure Committee, Executive Committee, Graduate Committee, ABET Committee, and Undergraduate Committee.

K. Every member of the departmental standing committees must be a general voting member of the departmental faculty. Typically, faculty members should not serve on more than three departmental committees (standing or ad hoc) at any one time.

L. Decisions made by committees other than those pertaining to promotions, tenure, and personnel evaluations, shall be made known to the faculty of the department at the earliest possible opportunity, and may be subject to faculty vote as described elsewhere in these bylaws if recommended by the committee.

M. Elections and appointments to the standing committees will be held at the first meeting of the full faculty in the fall semester, with newly elected or appointed members taking office immediately and serving terms of two years, with the exception of the Personnel Affairs Committee (PAC) some of whose members shall have one-year terms (detailed below). No member of any committee will serve more than two consecutive terms on that committee, unless otherwise indicated elsewhere in these bylaws (for specific standing committees). Should a vacancy occur in any committee at any time, a special departmental election or appointment will be held at the earliest reasonable time to choose a replacement to serve the remainder of the unexpired term. Members of the Executive and Personnel Affairs committees will be selected by votes of the faculty. Members of the ABET, Graduate and Undergraduate Committees will be appointed by the Chair, subject to approval of the voting members of the faculty. If the appointments to the Graduate and Undergraduate committees are not approved, then the new members of the ABET, Graduate and Undergraduate committees will be selected by vote of the faculty. The Chairs of the PAC and Promotion and Tenures Committee (PTC) shall be elected by their members.

N. At the first regular committee elections after these bylaws go into effect, all places on all standing committees will be filled by election. After the election two members of each committee will be chosen by lot to serve initial one-year terms. The other members elected will serve initial two-year terms. In general, exceptions may be made to committee memberships with the purpose of staggering two-year memberships.

O. One or more faculty search committees will be elected by the faculty at the first meeting of the full faculty after faculty searches are authorized. Each committee will serve until all positions under its authority are filled (or the search fails to fill the position). The Executive Committee can propose members for search committees.

P. The Executive Committee will appoint all ad hoc committees, except where otherwise provided in these bylaws.

II. Administrative Positions

A. Department Chair

The Department Chair is the chief executive officer of the department. The authority of the Department Chair shall be exercised in the spirit of democratic governance. The Department Chair is assisted in performing these duties by the:

- Chair of the Undergraduate Committee,
- Chair of the Graduate Committee,
- any other administrative appointments the Department Chair makes.

Duties of the Department Chair:

1. Works with the Executive Committee in determining long-range budgetary needs and in formulating workable budgets for each program.
2. Manages the day-to-day affairs of the department.
3. Works with the Executive Committee in determining the general workload and the teaching assignments of the faculty.
4. Works with the Graduate and Undergraduate Committee Chairs (and potentially other appointees) in coordinating course offerings, coordinating the core programs, and assigning duties to student assistants of the department.
5. Appoints the Chairs of the Undergraduate and Graduate Committees and special directors as needed, in consultation with the Executive Committee.
6. Appoints any other departmental functionaries (e.g., Acting Chair, Associate Chairs, Library Representative) as necessary.
7. Works with the Faculty Search Committee and faculty in searching for and selecting new faculty and works with the Executive Committee in searches for staff members.
8. Works with the Personnel Affairs Committee to evaluate the performance of each faculty member each year and provides counseling if needed.
9. Works with the Promotion and Tenure Committee to make recommendations for promotion and tenure.

10. Evaluates the performance of the direct reporting staff each year. As a part of this process, the Chair may survey faculty regarding staff performance.

B. Graduate Committee Chair:

The Graduate Committee Chair is appointed by the Department Chair. It is recommended that this appointment is at the Associate Department Chair level (i.e., Associate Chair for Graduate Studies).

Duties of the Graduate Committee Chair:

1. Assists the Department Chair on matters related to the graduate programs in Computer Science and Engineering.
2. Manages correspondence regarding the graduate programs for future students and general public relations.
3. Makes recommendations to the faculty concerning procedures for graduate student admissions and examinations.
4. Supervises graduate advising and the maintenance of graduate student records.
5. Coordinates with the Graduate Committee the applications/awards for assistantships and fellowships.
6. Serves as a non-voting member of the Executive Committee (unless elected to be a member of the committee, which comes with voting rights).
7. Orients and coordinates graduate core programs and course offerings, and works with the Department Chair (and/or the Department Chair's appointee) and the Undergraduate Committee Chair in assigning duties to student assistants.
8. Notifies the Graduate Committee members of the meeting times and keeps records of the committee's decisions.
9. Oversees graduate level accreditation efforts (e.g., SACSCOC).

C. Undergraduate Committee Chair:

The Undergraduate Committee Chair is appointed by the Department Chair. It is recommended that this appointment is at the Associate Department Chair level (i.e., Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies).

Duties of the Undergraduate Committee Chair:

1. Assists the Department Chair on matters related to the undergraduate programs in Computer Science and Engineering.

2. Manages correspondence regarding the undergraduate programs for future students and general public relations.

3. Helps establish procedures for undergraduate advising, advanced placement, and transfer admissions and reviews.

4. Handles information regarding fellowships and scholarships, and administrative duties related to same.

5. Advises the faculty regarding student organizations and activities.

6. Serves as a non-voting member of the Executive Committee (unless elected to be a member of the committee, which comes with voting rights).

7. Orients and coordinates undergraduate core programs and course offerings, and works with the Department Chair (and/or the Department Chair's appointee) and the Graduate Committee Chair in assigning duties to student assistants.

8. Notifies the Undergraduate Committee of the meeting times and keeps records of the committee's decisions.

9. Acts as Chair of the ABET Committee (oversees the ABET accreditation efforts to maintain accreditation, as well as oversees accreditation for any new undergraduate programs.)

III. Procedures for Selecting and Removing the Department Chair

A. Selecting a Chair:

1. *Permanent Chair:* The Chair of the Department will be appointed by the Dean of the College of Engineering (subject to College of Engineering and University policies and procedures), from nominees selected by the following procedure:

A. A search committee consisting of four faculty will be elected by a vote of the general voting faculty. Once the search committee has been elected, the chair of the committee will be elected by a vote of the entire general voting faculty.

B. The Dean shall appoint an external (fifth) member to the committee from the College of Engineering.

C. After a thorough search in which the position has been widely advertised and the most promising candidates brought to campus for interviews by the faculty, the nominees will be confirmed and then ranked by vote of the general voting faculty of the department. The results of the vote will be forwarded to the Dean of the College.

2. *Interim Chair:* Names of candidates for Interim Chair will be solicited from the faculty and nominees determined by a vote of the voting faculty of the Department. The name(s) of the nominee(s) will be forwarded to the Dean of the College of Engineering. The Dean of the College will appoint an Interim Chair, considering the above input.

B. Vote of Confidence for Department Chairs:

The faculty of the Department may review the Department Chair at any time during her/his term according to the following procedure:

A. At least 20% of the general voting faculty of the Department may notify the Department Chair in writing that they are calling for a vote of confidence. The written notification will contain the particulars for calling for a vote of confidence.

B. The Department Chair may respond to the bill of particulars in a manner of his or her choosing within 30 days.

C. The general voting faculty will conduct the vote of confidence by secret ballot (anonymous on-line voting recommended). The voting will be administered by a two-person ad hoc committee with one of the members appointed by the appellants and one by the chair:

- within ten working days of the Department Chair's response in the case that there is a response, or
- within five working days after the 30-day response period has elapsed if there is no response.

D. The results of the vote of confidence will be forwarded to the Dean of the College, who may decide to terminate the appointment of the Department Chair.

IV. Executive Committee

The Department of Computer Science and Engineering will have an Executive Committee to deal generally with departmental policy, subject to the approval and/or censure of the majority of the voting faculty.

A. The Executive Committee will consist of five elected members from the voting faculty plus the Department Chair, who acts as chair of the committee. The Chairs of the Graduate and Undergraduate Committees will serve as ex officio non-voting members (unless they have been duly elected to the committee).

    1. There will be one committee member elected by simple majority vote of the entire voting faculty from each of the following groups:

        - tenured full professors
        - tenured associate professors, and
        - other tenure-track members of the department.

    2. The remaining two members of the committee will be elected at-large in a separate ballot following the election of the above three elected members. It is recommended that at least one of the two at-large members be a professional faculty member.

B. The Executive Committee will hold regularly scheduled meetings as required with the date and time specified by the committee.

C. Additional meetings may be called by the Department Chair or by agreement of a quorum of its members (a one-week notice is not necessary).

D. At the first Executive Committee meeting, a committee secretary shall be chosen (from the five elected members or any other non-voting appointee) who will inform faculty, by the circulation of minutes, of actions and decisions of the committee within two weeks after each meeting and will make these minutes available for record in the department office.

E. In addition to dealing generally with departmental policy and implementation of bylaws, the Executive Committee will:

    1. Act as the finance committee of the department to determine long range budgetary needs.

    2. Assist the Department Chair in the administration of departmental computing facilities, allocation of resources, and planning for future computing and other resource needs.

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3. Appoint ad hoc faculty appeal committees and other ad hoc committees as needed, unless otherwise provided in this document.

4. Assist the Department Chair in matters regarding departmental scheduling of courses, determining teaching loads and teaching assignments for the faculty.

V.   Personnel Affairs Committee(s)

The Department of Computer Science and Engineering will have one or more Personnel Affairs Committee(s) (PAC) to deal generally with peer review for purposes of recommending merit evaluations for the faculty. If there are less than ten professional faculty (a combined set of full-time Clinical Faculty and Lecturers), then only one PAC will exist for all faculty, i.e., the *PAC*. If there are ten or more professional faculty, then two PACs will convene:

- the *Tenure PAC* will focus on tenure-track and tenured faculty;
- the *Professional PAC* will focus on professional faculty.

The *PAC* or the *Tenure PAC* will consist of seven members total:

- two Full Professors,
- two tenured Associate Professors, and
- three at-large members, selected from Full and tenured Associate Professors.

The terms for the two Full- and two Associate- Professor members will be two years, (to bootstrap the process, or on rare occasions for staggering the rotation process, a one-year term may be recommended). If there are enough tenured faculty members, then no person shall serve more than two consecutive years and, after completing two years, may not serve again until after two years. No unit administrators can be a member of the PAC.

If a ***Professional PAC*** is formed then its membership will consist of *four* members, where at most one should be at the Clinical Assistant or Lecturer level. The majority should be at the Associate/Full/Principal rank unless there are less than two who qualify. One of the members shall be a tenured faculty member. Terms will be one year in duration, with the option for reelection to a second term. If there are enough faculty members, then each faculty member shall not serve more than two terms.

A. The PAC(s) will convene initially in September of each year for the purpose of establishing a calendar that is consistent with the University calendar for recommendations for annual merit evaluations. The members of each PAC will elect a Chair of the respective PAC during the first meeting of the committee. No one will serve as Chair of any of the PACs for more than two consecutive academic years. It is the responsibility of the Chair(s) of the PAC(s) to see that the respective committee's work is accomplished in accordance with the University's guidelines for annual merit evaluations.

B. The PAC(s) have the responsibility to interpret the University guidelines for making recommendations for annual merit evaluations, and to outline a consistent and appropriate plan of action for the Department of Computer Science and Engineering.

C. The PAC(s) shall make provisions within its/their plan(s) of action which includes a process that uses consistent review criteria and written feedback in all areas of applicable faculty workload, which are then provided to each faculty member together with their respective quantitative recommendations. Such a process and its recommendations evidenced by written comments provide the basis for an appropriate and objective review procedure in the case that a faculty member wishes to challenge the committee's decision concerning annual merit evaluations.

D. The *primary PAC* will provide the Departmental Chair each year an evaluation of the Chair's performance. As part of the evaluation process, the *primary PAC* will survey all full-time faculty (general voting members) in the department about the Chair's performance.

VI. Promotion and Tenure Committee

The Department of Computer Science and Engineering will have a Promotion and Tenure Committee (PTC) for the purpose of recommending promotion and tenure, and conducting annual progress toward tenure and mid-term evaluations for the faculty. The PTC of the department will consist of all tenured faculty of the department.

A. The PTC will convene initially in September of each year for the purpose of establishing a calendar that is consistent with the University calendar for recommendations for promotion, tenure, and mid-term reappointment. The members of the PTC will elect a Chair during the first meeting of the committee. No one will serve as Chair of the PTC for more than two consecutive

academic years. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the PTC to see that the committee's work is accomplished in accordance with the University's guidelines for promotion, tenure, and mid-term reappointments. It is recommended to have a two-year rotating schedule of Full Professors for PTC Chair of this committee; if Chair election fails, then the Department Chair can appoint a PTC Chair based on a two-year schedule observing any potential conflicts of interest.

B. The PTC has the responsibility to interpret the University guidelines for making recommendations for promotion, tenure, and midterm reappointment.

C. The PTC shall make provisions within its plan of action for feedback to each faculty member of the committee's recommendations and for an appropriate and objective review procedure in the case that a faculty member wishes to challenge the committee's decision concerning promotion, tenure, or mid-term reappointment.

D. An adjunct committee of the PTC will be established, consisting of full professors, for the purpose of evaluating promotions of faculty to the rank of full professor. In the case of fewer than five eligible faculty, the Dean of the College of Engineering with delegation from the Provost of UNT will work with the PTC to establish a committee using eligible members from other departments, preferably from departments within the College of Engineering.

VII. Graduate Committee

The Graduate Committee (GC) will consist of:
- The chair of the committee (as appointed by the Department Chair – see Section II)
- Four appointed and confirmed, or elected members (See Section I) from the fulltime graduate faculty.

The functions of the Graduate Committee will include (but not limited to):

A. Evaluation of applicants for graduate study and recommendation of financial support to the Department Chair (or his/her appointee).

B. Determination of graduate study entrance requirements and coordination with the standards of the University Graduate School.

C. Recommendation of course offerings to faculty members and general coordination of the graduate curriculum.

D. Review and evaluation of the performance of currently supported graduate student assistants and recommendations to the Department Chair (or his/her appointee) about renewal of appointments.

VIII. Undergraduate Committee

The Undergraduate Committee will consist of:

- The chair of the committee (as appointed by the Department Chair – see Section II)
- Appointed and confirmed, or elected members (See Section I) from the fulltime faculty. Members should include at least one representative from each of the active undergraduate programs, and at least one at-large member (who may also be the representative of a program).

The functions of the Undergraduate Committee will include (but not limited to):

A. Recommendation of course offerings and general coordination of the undergraduate curricula.
B. Advising procedures for the undergraduate majors and review and evaluation of undergraduate progress with consideration of such matters as advanced placement.
C. Overseeing the coordination of student organizations and activities involving undergraduate majors.

IX. ABET Committee

The ABET Committee will consist of a Program Coordinator from each undergraduate program within the Department, as well as the Chair of the Undergraduate Committee. The functions of the ABET Committee will include:

A. Coordinate curricular changes with the Undergraduate Committee, as it impacts ABET Criteria.
B. Advise procedures for the ABET data collection.
C. Oversee that each program has appropriate and documented processes.
D. Lead the write up of the ABET self-study and other related artifacts.
E. Coordinate ABET data collection and analysis efforts, as well as continuous improvement efforts.

X. Rights and Responsibilities of Faculty Members

A. Prerogatives of Faculty Members:

1. A faculty member has the right to be informed in writing of all official evaluations of professional performance. The faculty member has the right to be counseled by the committees or officers charged with such evaluation.

2. A faculty member has the right to be informed in writing of all professional complaints filed against him or her. No complaint will be considered by the Department or recorded in faculty personnel file unless it has been submitted to the Chair of the Department in writing and the faculty member has had the chance to respond in writing. Faculty members must respond in writing to student, faculty, or administrative complaints. Written complaints that have been found to be groundless by the Chair of the Department or by an appropriate appeals committee may not be recorded in the faculty member's personnel file and must be discarded.

3. A faculty member enjoys all privileges stipulated by the UNT Policy Manual.

B. A faculty member must meet all stipulated policies and standards of performance and professorial responsibilities detailed in the UNT Policy Manual.

C. Principles for Peer Evaluation:

The Personnel Affairs Committee(s) is/are responsible for peer evaluations. Along with each faculty member's departmental file, these evaluations will inform decisions regarding appointments, tenure, promotion, salaries, and course staffing.

1. Each area of a faculty member's performance shall be evaluated and recorded by the committee, which then certifies evaluations by signing them. Signed dissenting opinions are permissible.

2. The final evaluation of each faculty member shall be placed on file with the Chair of the Department only. The records on file may be used by subsequent Personnel Affairs Committees.

3. Members of the PAC(s) will keep the work of the committee in strict confidence. Except in the event of an appeal, members of the committee will refer all faculty inquiries to the Chair of the respective PAC only.

4. Any faculty member who requests an explanation of his or her ranking or evaluation will be able to learn the reasons for that ranking. The explanation must be submitted in writing and signed by all members of the respective PAC.

D. Procedures for Salary Recommendations:

Based on the PAC(s) evaluations, the Department Chair initiates a proposed schedule of salaries and forwards the recommendations to the Dean. The evaluations of the Personnel Affairs Committee are forwarded to the Dean along with the Chair's recommendation.

XI.   The Appeal Process:

A faculty member may appeal any number of decisions by a committee or administrator of the department. Such an appeal may be the first step in a grievance procedure that may ultimately go to the University Review Committee, University Tenure Committee, or other body within the University.

Procedure for appeals:
A. A faculty member may initiate an appeal of a decision by informing the chair of the relevant committee and the Department Chair within 20 working days of the decision in question. This memo must outline the reasons for the appeal and the remedy desired.
B. Within ten working days the appropriate committee or administrator will reconsider its/their evaluation and inform the faculty member and the Department Chair in writing of the outcome of its deliberation.
C. Should the outcome of this deliberation be unacceptable to the faculty, then (s)he may begin a *grievance process*.

The grievance process:
A. The grievance process is initiated by the faculty by informing the administrator or the chair of the relevant committee in addition to the Department Chair in writing; the process must be started within ten working days of the rejected appeal. The grievance letter must also include one name that the faculty appellant wishes to appoint to the ad hoc Grievance Committee.

B. Within five working days of receiving the request for a grievance, the Executive Committee must also name one faculty member to be appointed to the Grievance Committee and inform all involved parties.

C. Within five working days of being informed by the Executive Committee, the two appointed members will then choose a third person to serve as Chair of the ad hoc Grievance Committee. All ad hoc Grievance Committee members should be from the Department of Computer Science and Engineering. No administrators shall serve on the appeal committee unless they are chosen by the appellant. Furthermore, the members of the Grievance Committee shall not have been involved in the appeal matter and shall not be biased one way or the other.

D. The ad hoc Grievance Committee will determine its own process and procedures but:

- must allow presentation of both sides of the issue by the parties; and
- must submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the Department Chair with a copy to the appellant faculty member, the other party, and the chair of the relevant committee or administrator within 15 working days from the time the committee was formed.

In addition, should the Grievance Committee discover any violations of Department, College, or University policies, the Committee will report these violations to the Dean. The Department Chair will immediately enforce the decision of the ad hoc committee or explain in writing within five working days why (s)he is not enforcing the decision.

E. If the appellant is not satisfied with the outcome, (s)he may continue the process by requesting a grievance committee at the college level in accordance with the College of Engineering Constitution.

F. The faculty member may take the grievance to the appropriate university committee if resolution is not reached within the College.

Resolution of disputes between faculty members:

Following the grievance process stated earlier, the faculty member(s) filing the grievance must write to the Department Chair and name one member to the ad hoc Grievance Committee. The Department Chair then asks the other party to choose one member for the appeal committee. The process then continues as described in the grievance process, from step-C.