

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY

Manual of Operations and Procedures College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Amended December 13, 2024
Approved by CLAS December 17, 2024

Article I. Authority of the Manual of Operations and Procedures

This Manual of Operations and Procedures delineates the operating procedures for faculty governance of the Department of Physics and Astronomy. The department shall follow the by-laws and operating rules of the University and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) as delineated in the CLAS Operations Manual of Policy and Procedure (MOPP) and the CLAS Professional Policies & Faculty Responsibilities and shall follow the operations and procedures in this document as a supplement thereto. Once approved by the department and the college, this Manual becomes effective immediately.

Article II. Faculty Responsibility, and Eligibility to Vote

The Faculty of the Department of Physics and Astronomy shall follow all policies and procedures unless otherwise noted as stated in the CLAS MOPP.

Article III. Departmental Administrative Structure

Section 3.1 Departmental Executive Officer (DEO)

Selection and Term:

The DEO is the Departmental Executive Officer. The DEO is appointed by the dean of the college in consultation with the faculty of the department and with approval of the Provost.

The initial term of a DEO Appointment ordinarily shall be three to five years.

Duties:

The primary administrative duties and responsibilities of the DEO are set by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). Please refer to Article XV; Section XV.2 of the MOPP or the Role of the DEO for descriptions of the responsibilities listed below.

The DEO provides vision and leadership for the department and is the primary departmental liaison with CLAS and the rest of the administration. In addition, as outlined in the CLAS administrative manual, the duties of the DEO fall into the following categories:

Vision, Leadership, and Administration

- Provide vision, leadership and administration for the department
- Work with departmental administrative staff to manage resources creatively
- Guide faculty development
- Direct faculty reviews and make recommendations for merit increases
- Supervise delivery of departmental courses
- Supervise development of departmental curriculum
- Administer personnel policies and supervise staff
- With the support of the faculty, lead proposals for new faculty hires, assemble search committees and negotiate start up packages for new faculty hires.
- Guide new faculty development, including, in consultation with the new faculty member, an assignment of faculty mentor(s)
- Communicate and coordinate activities with the UI Center for Advancement
- In collaboration with the Director of Research Operations, coordinate nominations of faculty and staff for college, university and national awards
- Represent the department to the college, university, alumni and the public

Section 3.2 Undergraduate

(a) Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS)

Selection and Term:

The DEO will appoint a Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) from among the tenured faculty to serve an initial term of three years, to be ratified by the faculty and reviewed annually.

Duties:

- Chair the Undergraduate Affairs and Curriculum Committee
 - Oversee the duties of the committee as described in Section 3.2.b below
- Departmental Liaison to CLAS Office for Undergraduate Programs (CLAS UP)
- Attend regular CLAS DUS meetings and follow guidelines for DUS duties as outlined by CLAS.
- Maintain communication with groups throughout the University that serve undergraduate students (UG) and support teaching, such as the Student Success Team and the Center for Teaching
- Participate in training for new faculty members with the DEO and DGS
- Review content for departmental web pages on undergraduate program
- Collaborate with DEO in the strategic planning process for undergraduate program
- Compile reports/data on undergraduate program for departmental review for accreditation with Higher Learning Commission
- Work with the departmental staff to make sure Physics and Astronomy Help Center and discussion sections are staff appropriately and that TAs are appropriately trained
- Advise on cases of student academic misconduct (plagiarism, cheating) brought by faculty; consult with DEO as needed on these issues
- Collaborate with DEO on the orientation and reviews of adjuncts and visiting assistant professors
- Undergraduate Student Advising
 - Meet with prospective majors to answer questions about the departmental programs
 - Handle UG student problems/complaints and consult with DEO and administrator as needed
 - Assign students to faculty advisors after completion of PHYS:2703
 - Coordinate with CLAS and Advising Center Professional Advisors on understanding requirements and course sequencing for Physics and Astronomy degree programs
- Undergraduate Student Development
 - Coordinate workshops and seminars for student professional development
- Serve as a contact for UG departmental alumni
 - Maintain information about alumni of the UG program
 - Assist alumni in making informational visits to the department to meet with students
- Appoint and support the Physics & Astronomy Honors Coordinator
- Coordinate prospective UG student visits and programs
 - Coordinate staffing for Hawkeye visit days and other prospective student programs
- Conduct outcomes assessment of the UG program
 - Conduct exit interviews with students graduating from our programs
 - Report to the DEO annually concerning the status of the UG programs
- In consultation with SPS members appoint an advisor to the Society of Physics Students (SPS) and coordinate activities

(b) Undergraduate Affairs & Curriculum Committee (UACC)

Selection and Term:

- Chaired by the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS)
- The committee will consist of the DUS and four faculty members whose primary appointment is in the department; they are appointed by the Executive Committee
- Appointed members will serve three-year terms

Duties:

- Review the offerings planner and approve UG course schedules and assign instructors each semester in conjunction with the DGS and DEO
- Review, update, and approve course descriptions annually with input from instructors

- Oversee the Introductory Course Offerings
 - Oversee the selection of textbooks and online resources for these courses
 - Work with instructors to appoint undergraduate teaching assistants (UTA) where appropriate
- Monitor use and effectiveness of instructional support resources, such as Physics and Astronomy Help Center and discussion sections associated with introductory courses
- Oversee the General Education Offerings
 - Conduct regular assessment and development of the departmental offerings in the general education program
- Oversee the UG major and minor programs of study
 - Discuss and make decisions on mathematics and computing requirements
 - Develop and revise content related to degree requirements
 - Oversee revision of web content related to the UG program and curriculum
 - Implement policies on requirements for the major, including decisions on transfer courses, course substitutions, and waivers of requirements for good academic reason
- Review and assess instructional computing facilities, resources, and needs for UGs
- Select UG student award and scholarship recipients

Section 3.3 Graduate

(a) Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)

Selection and Term:

The DEO will appoint a Director of Graduate Studies from among the tenured faculty to serve an initial term of three years, to be ratified by the faculty and reviewed annually.

Duties:

- Chair the Graduate Affairs & Curriculum Committee
 - Oversee the committee duties as described in Section 3.3.c below
- Chair the Graduate Recruiting & Admissions Committee
 - Oversee the committee duties as described in Section 3.3d below
- Serve as departmental liaison to the Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC)
- Maintain communications with the Graduate College and attend regular DGS meetings
- Participate in training for new faculty members with the DEO and DUS
- Review content for departmental web pages on graduate student program
- Collaborate with DEO in the strategic planning process for graduate program
- Compile reports/data on graduate program for departmental reviews
- Work with the DEO, DUS, and staff to evaluate TA needs and plan admissions to cover these needs as well as ensure a good balance of research interests across the department with attention to available faculty research funding
- Graduate student (GS) advising
 - Meet with incoming GS to discuss courses and plans of study
 - Oversee the assignment of new GS to faculty advisors
 - Handle GS complaints and issues
- Graduate Student Development
 - Oversee evaluation and selection for GS scholarships and awards in collaboration with the GACC
 - Oversee revisions of graduate handbook annually to stay up to date with policies and procedures
 - Coordinate orientation program for incoming GS
 - Review annually GS plans of study and progress to degree
 - Coordinate workshops and seminars related to student professional development
 - Report regularly to the DEO and faculty about the status of the GS program
- Graduate Teaching Assistants
 - Work with the administrative staff on making TA assignments each semester
 - Work with the departmental staff to make sure lab and discussion sections are staffed appropriately and that TAs are appropriately trained
 - Coordinate TA training activities with the physics and astronomy lab coordinators
 - Advise GS TAs on cases of student academic misconduct; consult with supervising faculty, administrator and DEO where appropriate

(b) Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC)

This committee serves as a liaison and advocacy group between the Physics & Astronomy GS and the department administration.

Selection and Term:

This committee will be made up of GS representatives including 2 co-chairs who are elected by the GS body.

Duties:

- Provide input to relevant departmental committees representing the departmental GS perspective
- Be a conduit to all departmental GS to share relevant information on curriculum decisions, departmental policies, and campus opportunities
- Work with departmental staff in the coordination of graduate student led departmental events and community events

(c) Graduate Affairs and Curriculum Committee (GACC)

Selection and Term:

- Chaired by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)
- The committee will consist of four faculty members (in addition to the DGS) elected by the Executive Committee whose primary appointment is in the department
- Elected members will serve three-year terms

Duties:

- Oversee Graduate Curriculum
 - Review the offerings planner and approve course schedules each semester
 - Discuss and make decisions on mathematics and computing requirements
 - Develop and revise content related to degree requirements
 - Implement policies on degree requirements, including decisions on transfer courses, course substitutions, and waivers of requirements for good academic reason
 - Review, update, and approve course descriptions annually, including pre-requisites and course sequences
 - Revise web content related to the graduate program and curriculum
- Oversee progress to degree for all GS
- Oversee the selection of graduate GS awards and scholarships
- GS program assessment
 - Conduct outcomes assessment of the GS program
 - Arrange exit interviews for graduating students

(d) Graduate Recruiting and Admissions Committee (GRAC)

Selection and Term:

- Chaired by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)
- The committee will consist of four faculty members whose primary appointment is in the department (in addition to the DGS). They are appointed by the Executive Committee
- Appointed members will serve three-year terms

Duties:

- Graduate Admissions
 - Evaluate graduate applications and prioritize applicants
 - Ensure a process in selection of GS that promotes accessibility, opportunity and diversity
 - Nominate prospective students for recruitment fellowships from the Graduate College as appropriate, appoint faculty mentors
 - Evaluate language competency of international student applicants

- Graduate Recruitment
 - Organize and conduct recruiting visits to other campuses
 - Coordinate and host annual prospective graduate student visit day each spring
 - In coordination with the DEO, DGS, and staff, develop and implement strategies for effective recruitment of GS

Section 3.4 Research Resources & Infrastructure

(a) Director of Research Operations (DRO)

Selection and Term:

The DEO will appoint a Director of Research Operations (DRO) from among the tenured faculty to serve an initial term of three years, to be ratified by the faculty and reviewed annually. The DRO serves to coordinate research needs for the department.

Duties:

Research Infrastructure, Resources and Personnel

- Chair the Committee on Research Infrastructure and Operations
 - Oversee the committee duties as described in Section 3.4b below
- Coordinate Shared Research Resources (staff, equipment, space) in the department and meet quarterly
- Oversee the coordination of requests and opportunities for shared instrumentation, equipment, and space
- Monitor and promote departmental Service Centers (machine shops, electronics shop, etc.)

Departmental Undergraduate Research

- Manage a list of research opportunities offered by faculty
- Manage a list of undergraduates seeking research opportunities
- Promote participation in University of Iowa Spring, Fall and Summer Research Festivals
- Stay connect with the Office of Undergraduate Research
- Track and annually report on undergraduate research activities
- Oversee student research grant program selection and reporting

Faculty Training, Research Support, and Recognition

- Participate in training for new faculty members with the DEO on departmental research operations
- Coordinate nominations for faculty and research staff awards
- Collaborate with DEO in the strategic planning process for research

(b) Committee on Research Infrastructure and Operations (CRIO)

Selection and Term:

- Chaired by the Director of Research Operations (DRO)
- The committee will consist of four members whose primary appointment is in the department; two members will be faculty, and two members will be from the research staff (in addition to the DRO chair) appointed by the Executive Committee
- Appointed members will serve three-year terms

Duties:

- Advise and coordinate department wide research computing needs
- Assess the feasibility of major grant or equipment proposals
- Advise DEO on research related space assignments and policies
- Identify and coordinate nominations for research and research mentoring fellowships and awards for faculty and staff (national, international and campus wide)
- Review and recommend content for departmental web pages on research operations
- Review annually departmental service centers on services offered, equipment, processes and policies
- Serve as a peer review committee for large grant proposals as needed

Section 3.5 Executive Committee

Selection and Term:

- The committee consists of the DEO, the three directors (DUS, DGS and DRO), the Departmental Administrator and/or Assistant to the DEO and additional faculty members at the discretion of the DEO. The additional faculty members would be chosen to represent the broad and diverse interests of the department

Duties:

- The Executive Committee will advise the DEO on departmental matters
- The Executive Committee will assist the DEO in appointing ad-hoc committees as needed
- The Executive Committee will assist the DEO in appointing all committee members to departmental committees based on faculty members preferences

Article IV. Committee Appointments

Appointments to departmental committees (promotion & tenure, probationary, peer reviews, etc.) will be made by the DEO with the assistance of the Executive Committee.

Article V. Departmental Meetings

- Departmental meetings are held monthly during the academic year
- Departmental meetings are chaired by the DEO or the person designated by the DEO
- A call for agenda items occurs approximately 1 week prior to the meeting
- Special meetings are scheduled by the DEO when needed
- A quorum is defined as 2/3 of the eligible faculty
- Minutes are kept by the Departmental Administrator and Assistant to the DEO
- It is expected that all departmental meetings will follow Robert's Rules of Order

Article VI. Procedures for Amendment of the Manual for Operations and Procedures

The Manual for Operations and Procedures can be amended at any time. To amend these operations and procedures, a written proposal is submitted to the DEO for discussion at a departmental meeting. A 2/3's majority vote is required to approve the amendment. This vote is taken by a show of hands done either in person or via electronic means during the meeting. Amendments of the Manual are subject to approval by the College.