

Instructions

The university is adopting a standardized format for bylaws to ease the burden of reviewing them and to help ensure that required changes can be made easily (e.g., changes necessitated by collective bargaining). To facilitate this, several templates have been created that contain the elements that must be contained in a unit's bylaws. This will form a standardized "main body" for bylaws across units. Content that falls outside of the required elements can be easily included in a unit's bylaws through one or more appendices. Those are not standardized and may vary across units.

Please take the following steps to adopt the standardized format for your unit's bylaws.

1. Grab a Template. Select the correct template for your unit. If you have questions about which template is the best one for your unit, please email Melissa Crawford (mucrawford@admin.fsu.edu).

2. Cut and Paste. Go through each item in the template and paste in the content from your existing bylaws. Please do not re-order, re-number, or change the language of the template items. The template will note, where applicable, language that is set for all units and should not be changed. As noted in the template, you can simply refer the reader to an appendix if your current bylaws have the relevant content in an existing appendix (e.g., P&T criteria). Do NOT put content in two places. If your existing bylaws have content in an appendix, then you must decide if you want to place it in the "main body" by pasting it in response to the template item or if you want to keep it in the appendix and refer to it from the "main body" template item. If you cannot find content in your existing bylaws for an item in the template, please contact Melissa Crawford for assistance on how to proceed (mucrawford@admin.fsu.edu). You may need to create content for that item or it may be that it is "not applicable" for your particular unit. Please address every template item that is not marked "optional." Do so by pasting in existing bylaws content, creating new content (if necessary or desired by your faculty), referring to an appendix, or stating why the item is not applicable for your unit. Template items marked "optional" may be deleted if they are not used.

3. Add Necessary Appendices. Once each template item has been addressed with content, the "main body" of the bylaws document is complete and it is in the new standardized format. If your existing bylaws contains additional content or appendices, or you elected to create appendices, then these should be added to the document after the "main body" as indicated in the template document. Note that you need to include as an appendix any internal document that your bylaws refer to in a substantive way (e.g., if your criteria for evaluating teaching simply refers to your department's policy on teaching assignment, then that policy needs to be in an appendix in the bylaws and the reference should point to that appendix). You can order the appendices however you like, but you may need to "re-number" them (A, B, C, etc.). Once all content is in the new format and all appendices are ordered as desired, cross-check the "main body" against the appendices to ensure that necessary references are made. Note that you

can have appendices that are not referenced in the “main body” because they are on topics that are not covered in the template items (e.g., procedure for awarding graduate faculty status). However, if you find that you have such appendices, then your faculty may want to consider whether that content belongs in the bylaws or is better suited as a policy instead (in which case you would remove it from the bylaws through your bylaws revision process).

4. Send for Approval. Converting existing bylaws to the new standardized format does not require a vote of your faculty if no alterations to the content were made (rewording, additions, deletions). However, you can have your faculty vote on the re-formatted bylaws if you or they wish to. If you made changes to the bylaws during the conversion to the standardized format, then follow your bylaws revision procedure for getting them approved by the faculty. Send the complete, single document with the “main body” and all appendices (if any) through the normal approval chain.

5. Post. Once the OFDA level approval is received, add the date of that approval to the opening paragraph where indicated and then post your bylaws on your public-facing website. It is necessary to post the bylaws as a single document with the “main body” and all appendices included. It is recommended that you convert the Word document to a PDF for posting, but that is not required. Finally, to ensure that the OFDA bylaws web page accurately reflects your approved bylaws, please email Melissa Crawford (mucrawford@admin.fsu.edu) with the URL for your newly posted bylaws and copy your dean’s office (if applicable).