

**BYLAWS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES**  
**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

I. The Department Mission

The Department of Religious Studies is committed to excellence in active research, undergraduate teaching, and the full range of faculty service from departmental to international. Its purpose is to research and teach an understanding of religious phenomena both historically and in contemporary societies around the world, to strengthen students' analytical reading and writing skills, and to prepare students for a range of careers through our distinctive Nonprofit Leadership Concentration. Our Departmental goals in brief are vibrant, effective teaching and good post-graduation student placement, exceptional research, grant, and publication productivity, and a strong record of service, outreach, and community engagement.

II. Constituency and Modes of Participation in Academic Governance

1.1 The Faculty

- 1.1.1. The regular faculty of the Department of Religious Studies consists of all persons in the Department who have been appointed under the rules of tenure and who hold the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or instructor.
- 1.1.2. The temporary faculty of the Department consists of all persons holding the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or instructor, but not appointed under the rules of tenure.
- 1.1.3. The honorary faculty of the Department consists of those persons designated as Visiting Professors or Professors Emeriti/ae.
- 1.1.4. The voting faculty in Department, College, and University elections consists of all regular faculty, and temporary faculty members who hold full-time appointments for the academic year, except where otherwise stipulated by Department, College, or University bylaws.

1.2 The Students

- 1.2.1. The student constituency of the Department of Religious Studies for the purpose of selecting representatives to Department, College, and University committees consists of all students who have declared with the Registrar a major or major preference (in the case of lower division students) in Religious Studies.
- 1.2.2. The Religious Studies majors will be invited each year to select two representatives to

participate in Department Meetings (see 2. below) where they will have full rights and responsibilities of participation and voting, except on matters reserved to the faculty by The Bylaws for Academic governance: Michigan State University (see current edition).

### 1.3 Modes of Participation in Academic Governance

According to the Bylaws for Academic Governance there are four modes of faculty and student participation in academic governance. As applied to the Department of Religious Studies, these modes are:

#### 1.3.1. Consultation

A committee of faculty and/or students who discuss and inform the Department Chairperson (see 3. below), who has the authority and responsibility for decisions. Such a committee is not a deliberative body and there is no vote. Rather, the members express their views to inform the Department Chairperson's decisions.

#### 1.3.2. Advisory

A deliberative committee of faculty and/or students who make recommendations to the Department Chairperson, who has the authority to make decisions. The Department Chairperson is not bound by the recommendations and accepts full responsibility for the decisions.

#### 1.3.3. Shared Responsibility

A deliberative committee of faculty and/or students who make recommendations to the Department Chairperson and share responsibility for decisions. If the Department Chairperson and the committee cannot agree and action must be taken, then the recommendations of the Department Chairperson and those of the committee will be submitted in writing to the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters for resolution.

#### 1.3.4. Delegated Authority

A deliberative committee of faculty and/or students who are authorized to make decisions on specified matters. Such decisions are subject to review by the Department Chairperson, but will be altered only in exceptional circumstances and only with the approval of the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters.

## 2. Department Meetings

### 2.1. Frequency

At least one Department Meeting will be held each fall and spring semester. Additional Department Meetings may be called by the Department Chairperson.

## 2.2. Announcement

Department Meetings will be announced in advance with the distribution of a written agenda.

## 2.3. Conduct of Department Meetings

2.3.1. The Department Chairperson or his or her designee will preside at all Department Meetings.

2.3.2. A majority of the voting members of the Department Meeting constitute a quorum for the conduct of business (i.e., action by vote) at a Department Meeting.

2.3.3. Department Meetings will be conducted in accordance with the procedures described in the current edition of ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER, except as modified by a majority vote at a Department Meeting.

2.3.4. The Department Chairperson will serve as secretary for Department Meetings or may appoint someone else to serve as secretary. Action that is interpreted as constituting a policy or position will be recorded and distributed in writing to all voting members of the Department Meeting, and a copy of these minutes will be filed in the Department Office.

## 3. Department Chairperson

### 3.1. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1.1. The chief administrative officer of the Department of Religious Studies is the Department Chairperson, who conducts the administrative business of the Department and presides at Department Meetings.

3.1.2. The Chairperson bears primary responsibility for the Department's educational, research, and service programs, budgetary matters, physical facilities, and personnel matters, taking into account the exceptions and advisory procedures outlined in these Bylaws and in those of the College of Arts and Letters and the University.

3.1.3. The Chairperson has a special obligation to build a department strong in scholarship, teaching, and public service (Bylaws for Academic Governance).

### 3.2. Appointment

3.2.1. The regular faculty of the Department (see 1.1.1. above) has shared responsibility

with the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters for determining the procedures for the selection of the Chairperson to be nominated by the Dean.

- 3.2.2. The voting faculty (see 1.1.4. above) will select the faculty and student members of the selection committee who are to be appointed by the Department as determined by the procedures agreed upon with the Dean (see 3.2.1)
- 3.2.3. The term of office of the Chairperson is five years, with eligibility to serve for more than one term, subject to the University regulations on retirement from administrative positions.
- 3.2.4. When constituted in accordance with the procedures agreed upon with the Dean, the selection committee will meet for the first time at a time and place arranged by the DAC, and will select a chairperson and a secretary from among its members. Thereafter, it will meet as often as necessary at the call of its chairperson.

### 3.3. Review

- 3.3.1. If the Chairperson wishes to serve another term, she or he is subject to review by the Department and the Dean during the fifth year of her or his term of office.
- 3.3.2. The regular faculty has shared responsibility with the Dean for determining procedures for review of the Chairperson.
- 3.3.3. A review procedure may be initiated by the Dean, the Department Chairperson, or the Department Advisory Committee (see 4. below).

### 3.4. Acting Chairperson and Temporary Chairperson

- 3.4.1. If a vacancy occurs in the office of Department Chairperson before a new one is selected according to the above procedures, or when the Chairperson is on leave of one semester or more, including the summer semester, an Acting Chairperson will be appointed.
- 3.4.2. The procedure for selecting an Acting Chairperson will be the same as that described above in 3.2.1. and 3.2.2.
- 3.4.3. If the Department Chairperson is temporarily incapacitated or is on vacation or other absence of less than a term, he or she will consult the Department Advisory Committee before appointing a Temporary Chairperson.

## 4. Department Advisory Committee

#### 4.1. Composition

The Department Advisory Committee (DAC) will consist of three regular faculty members who represent at least two different ranks.

#### 4.2. Selection

4.2.1. The members of the DAC will be elected annually by the regular faculty at a Department Meeting held during the spring semester.

4.2.2. Any vacancy on the DAC will be filled by a special election arranged by the Department Chairperson and the DAC.

#### 4.3. Responsibilities

4.3.1. The DAC advises the Department Chairperson on all major matters affecting the Department.

4.3.2. The DAC has shared responsibility with the Department Chairperson in determining the need for any Department ad hoc committees. The DAC will appoint the chairperson and members of any such committee except for a tenure and promotion committee which shall be elected by all regular faculty and will also stipulate its responsibilities and length of tenure.

#### 4.4. Procedures

4.4.1. The DAC will determine its own operating rules and procedures and elect its own chairperson from its membership at its first meeting.

4.4.2. The DAC will meet as often as is required in order to perform its duties and responsibilities, but will meet at least once each academic term except for the summer semester.

4.4.3. Meetings of the DAC may be called by its chairperson or by the Department Chairperson.

4.4.4. The DAC chairperson will distribute to all voting members of the Department Meeting the agenda and minutes of each DAC meeting.

4.4.5. The Department Chairperson should generally be present at meetings of the DAC.

## 5. Terms of Employment for Faculty

5.1. The terms and conditions of employment will be provided in writing to each faculty member at the time of appointment. These terms will include:

5.1.1. The time period of the appointment and the salary provision.

5.1.2. The general expectations in regard to professional responsibilities.

5.1.3. Any conditions other than the appointee's performance of his or her professional responsibilities that may make a further appointment inadvisable (Faculty Handbook).

5.2. The Department Chairperson will deliver to each non-tenured faculty member at the time of appointment a copy of these Bylaws and will inform the new appointee of the Department's policies and procedures for action on the status of non-tenured faculty.

## 6. Annual Review Process

6.1. The annual review is a shared responsibility of the Chair and faculty members to assure effective teaching and curricular innovation, professional development and scholarly activities, and service and outreach contributions. The purpose of the annual review is to combine self-assessment with peer and administrative review in order to strengthen instruction and ongoing contributions suited to individual faculty member interests and career stages. All faculty members submit a standard Departmental annual reporting form as well as supporting documentation in early spring semester. The annual peer review process takes place each spring semester, and consists in all faculty members reviewing and commenting upon other faculty members' work. The peer reviews are submitted to the Chair in confidence, and the Chair then arranges a Departmental ranking for salary purposes.

6.1.1. Untenured and probationary faculty are required to meet with the Chair to discuss their annual review. On request, other faculty members may meet with the chair to discuss their annual review.

6.1.2. In preparation for this review, the faculty member may supplement

the annual report with other appropriate materials including those that concern ongoing projects and long- range plans.

- 6.1.3. The Chair's annual review letter shall be delivered to the faculty member before the beginning of the next academic year. Within a six-month subsequent period, the faculty member may append a response to the review.
- 6.1.4. According to university Bylaws, the Chair of the Department is responsible for merit salary adjustments and for assuring that all merit salary adjustments conform to the Academic Salary Adjustment Guidelines provided annually by the Office of the Provost.
- 6.1.5. If for a given annual review year there are no faculty Merit raises, or if the average raise pool amount is set at 1% or less, major publications will count in the subsequent annual Merit review year.

## 6.2 Evidence of Meritorious Performance

- 6.2.1 The quality of each faculty member's professional accomplishments each year shall be evaluated in determining the appropriate level of merit.
- 6.2.2 Faculty members who believe that the forms of evidence described below do not fit the kinds of work they are encouraged to do may include with the materials listed in 3.2.3.4 a statement explaining why that is the case and describing the forms of evidence they consider appropriate.

## 6.3 Research and Professional Activity

### 6.3.1 Types of Scholarly Activity

- 6.3.1.1 The candidate shall document such forms of evidence as the following: publication of authored, co-authored, edited or co-edited books, editions, collections, textbooks, anthologies, articles, essays; peer-reviewed online journal articles; grants, especially in which the faculty member is PI; grant proposals; recognition for publication or other professional activities in the form of awards; serving as journal editor or co-editor; databases of text, images, video, or other digital content; websites; software applications; and documentary videos; delivery of original papers, lectures, or films at conferences or

at other professional venues; editorial work; service in professional organizations; refereeing for presses, journals, or external agencies; organization of conferences; reprinting of previous publications; other evidence of professional or creative activity, such as publication of book reviews, or interviews.

### 6.3.2 Evaluation of Scholarship

6.3.2.1 For each major publication or scholarly product, the candidate will describe the publication's scope, method, context among preexisting resources, and contributions to religious studies scholarship and/or teaching. For publications in which the candidate was a collaborator, the candidate will describe the level of his or her involvement and leadership.

6.3.2.2 Criteria for evaluating publications may include author order, impact factor, citation indices, invited or published peer review comments, connectedness of the publication with other projects, plans for long-term availability, grants received, and published articles or books that use the publication. Evaluators will acknowledge the specificity of the publication's medium and relevant desired outcomes, as well as take note of further projects and scholarship that the publication inspired.

6.3.2.3 Publications are judged to be of higher quality when 1. Publication is in a more highly ranked peer reviewed press or journal 2. Reviews demonstrate the work's significance. 3. The publication represents an innovative research program and presents innovative conceptual and methodological approaches to the specific research area.

6.3.2.4 In the case that no external reviews already exist, prior to the annual review process, the candidate may suggest three external evaluators for each major publication, whom he or she thinks is qualified to review the work. These must be submitted to the Department Chair by November 1 of the year previous to the Annual Merit Review process. The Chair may solicit input from digital humanities faculty members at the university or at another institution, if appropriate, to extend the list of potential evaluators.



In such a case, at least two external reviews specific to this particular publication will be solicited by the Chair during the annual review process.

### 6.3.3 Expectations for Scholarly Activity

6.3.3.1 While there is no specific minimum quantitative expectation per year, it is expected that faculty members will be active and productive scholars. The highest ranking is reserved for major scholarly publications, i.e., a book or its equivalent. Grants, projects, and digital productions will be evaluated on an individual basis as outlined above.

6.3.3.2 Candidates are expected to offer regular service and outreach within and outside the University. The candidate should also provide documentation of service and outreach. Service and outreach within the University and outside of it should be documented.

6.3.3.3 Within the University, typical types of service include committee, administrative, and leadership roles.

6.3.3.4 Outside of the University, typical types of service include committee, administrative, and leadership roles in professional organizations. Also acceptable are editorial, advisory, and consulting roles with respect to foundations, publishers, journals, and other relevant academic organizations.

6.3.3.5 Typical outreach includes inviting speakers, creating and running fora of public interest, engaging the public through broadcast and online media, community-based instruction, and, broadly speaking, representing the department and University in public presentations.

### 6.3.4 Leadership

6.3.4.1 The College of Arts & Letters and the Department of Religious Studies are committed to a culture of leadership. Leadership activities include chairing search or other Departmental committees; chairing committees at the College or University level; serving as an officer of a national or international scholarly

organization; serving as editor of a scholarly journal; organizing national or international conferences or symposia. Leadership may appear differently in particular contexts, but also may include:

- 6.3.4.1.1 1. In research and publication, publishing leading books or influential articles (as demonstrated by citation index, impact factor, or other applicable criteria).
- 6.3.4.1.2 2. In teaching, organizing relevant workshops, symposia, or regional, national, or international conferences or events.
- 6.3.4.1.3 3. In service, leadership positions in professional organizations or nonprofits, or in significant service to such organizations.

## 7 Recommendations for Appointment, Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion\*

In accordance with the University requirement that "academic administrators have the special obligation to build academic units strong in scholarship, teaching capacity, and public service" (Bylaws for Academic Governance and the statement in the Faculty handbook that "MSU aspires to improve continuously and this requires that academic personnel decisions must build a progressively stronger faculty" the Department of Religious Studies will apply selective, rigorous standards in making appointment, reappointment, tenure, and promotion recommendations to the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters. The achievement and performance level required will be competitive for faculties of leading land-grant universities and member institutions of the AAU.

The criteria and process to be used in the evaluation of faculty for reappointment, tenure and promotion shall include those of the Department's Guidelines and Criteria for Promotion and Tenure Evaluations.

### 7.1 Appointment

- 7.1.1 Faculty appointments in the tenure system and multi-year appointments of fixed-term faculty may be recommended to the Dean of the College by the Department Chairperson following a majority vote by the faculty.

- 7.1.2 Appointment or Hiring Committees shall consist in the voting members of the Department as a whole, except for cases of individual recusal as approved by the Department Chairperson. Additional members from other units may be included as deemed necessary by the Department Chairperson in consultation with the Committee of the whole, but will not exceed one representative from a program or non-departmental unit. That one representative will not be that program's or non-departmental unit's director or administrator.
- 7.1.3 To the extent feasible, the Department Chairperson shall consult the faculty before making recommendations to appoint fixed-term faculty for two semesters or less.

## 7.2 Promotion and Tenure

- 7.2.1 Criteria for promotion recommendations. For reappointment, as well as for promotion and tenure, the candidate must provide solid evidence of consistent and persistent professional improvement and effectiveness at Michigan State University and in the College of Arts & Letters sufficient to demonstrate the promise of continued professional achievement and growth as relevant to the applicable position.
- 7.2.2 A recommendation for promotion from assistant professor to associate professor in the tenure system must be based on several years of sustained, outstanding achievements in education and scholarship across the mission. These achievements must be consistent with performance levels expected for promotion to associate professor at peer institutions, and there must be a sufficiently long period in rank prior to the promotion. (See Faculty Handbook, <http://www.hr.msu.edu/promotion/facacadstaff/FacGuideTenure.htm#Criteria>).

A recommendation for promotion from associate professor to professor in the tenure system must be based on several years of sustained, outstanding achievements in education and scholarship across the mission. These achievements must be consistent with performance levels expected for promotion to professor at peer institutions, and there must be a sufficiently long period in rank prior to promotion. (See Faculty Handbook, <http://www.hr.msu.edu/promotion/facacadstaff/FacGuideTenu>).

re.htm#Criteria).

7.2.3 Assistant Professors in the tenure system who are candidates for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor shall have a mentor appointed.

7.2.3.1 During the candidate's first year in the tenure system, his or her mentor shall be chosen by the Department Chair in consultation with the candidate.

7.2.3.2 This mentor shall be a tenured faculty member, preferably a full professor, in another Department or College. He or she shall meet regularly with the candidate at their mutual convenience to facilitate adjustment to the Department, teaching, and professional development.

7.2.3.3 In the event that compelling personal reasons (such as the mentor's illness or leave of absence) or the incompatibility of a candidate and mentor make it evident that they cannot work together effectively, either the candidate or the mentor may request that a replacement be made.

7.2.4 The review process for promotion and tenure must begin no later than the first week of April of the spring semester of the academic year preceding the formal review.

7.2.4.1 At that time the Chairperson of the Department will notify those who, according to university guidelines, must be considered for promotion and other eligible faculty members, who may choose to be reviewed for promotion.

7.2.4.2 No later than April 15, a list of candidates for promotion will be drawn up by the Chairperson of the Department and distributed to all tenured faculty members in the department.

7.3 A Promotion and Tenure Committee consisting of three tenured faculty members at or above the rank to which the candidate aspires shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Department for each candidate. Once formed, the committee will choose its own chair from among its voting members. Unless otherwise indicated, the sub-sections below refer to faculty members within the

Department.

- 7.3.1 One member will be selected by the candidate.
- 7.3.2 One member will be selected by the Chairperson of the Department.
- 7.3.3 One member will be selected by majority vote of the faculty at and above the rank to which the candidate aspires at a meeting that will take place no later than the last week of classes of the spring semester preceding the formal review.

7.3.3.1 The meeting will be called by the Chairperson of the Department and at least one week's advance notice will be given.

7.3.3.2 Only those present at the meeting may vote.

- 7.3.4 The candidate may request an additional University faculty member from outside the Department to participate in an advisory capacity with no vote by supplying a list of 3 names to the Chairperson of the Department who will make the selection.
- 7.3.5 In the event that a committee cannot be formed due to the lack of a sufficient number of tenured faculty in the Department at or above the rank aspired (3), or the unavailability of sufficient members due to faculty having recused themselves, or for other good reason, the Department Chairperson shall meet with the tenured faculty of the Department to seek an equitable solution. The candidate will also be consulted.

7.4 Each candidate shall provide the committee with a current curriculum vitae along with a self-evaluation of a length specified by the College, addressing research and creative activity, teaching, and professional service for the period under review.

7.5 Candidates must provide appropriate documentation of their activity in all areas.

7.5.1 Only work that was produced during the period of review for the current promotion can be considered. Publications, etc., that were the basis for a previous promotion in rank cannot be put forward again for a subsequent promotion.

7.5.2 All of the candidate's materials will be made available to the

committee members and voting faculty.

- 7.5.3 The departmental secretary will send a notice to the appropriate faculty indicating where the file will remain during the review process.

7.6 The Bylaws section referring to scholarship, publication, teaching, and service and outreach as outlined in section 6.1 for the annual review process also applies for the Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure process. The annual review process and the RPT process are to be understood as integrated. In addition to the criteria outlined in section 6.1, promotion recommendations shall be founded upon the following criteria:

- 7.6.1 For reappointment, as well as for promotion and tenure, the candidate must provide solid evidence of consistent and persistent professional improvement and effectiveness at Michigan State University and in the College of Arts & Letters sufficient to demonstrate the promise of continued professional achievement and growth as relevant to the applicable position.
- 7.6.2 A recommendation for promotion from assistant professor to associate professor in the tenure system must be based on several years of sustained, outstanding achievements in education and scholarship across the mission. These achievements must be consistent with performance levels expected for promotion to associate professor at peer institutions, and there must be a sufficiently long period in rank prior to the promotion. (See Faculty Handbook, <http://www.hr.msu.edu/promotion/facacadstaff/FacGuideTenure.htm#Criteria>).
- 7.6.3 A recommendation for promotion from associate professor to professor in the tenure system must be based on several years of sustained, outstanding achievements in education and scholarship across the mission. These achievements must be consistent with performance levels expected for promotion to professor at peer institutions, and there must be a sufficiently long period in rank prior to promotion. (See Faculty Handbook, <http://www.hr.msu.edu/promotion/facacadstaff/FacGuideTenure.htm#Criteria>).

## 7.7 Scholarly Expectations

- 7.7.1 The publication of an academic book with a university press or its

equivalent, or an equivalent body of work as appropriate to the candidate's area of specialization (5 peer-reviewed articles or equivalent productions of digital humanistic scholarship);

- 7.7.2 Reviews and other academic responses to published work (when and if available);
- 7.7.3 Concrete evidence of meritorious performance demonstrated by sustained achievement in teaching, involvement in extramural professional activities, participation in departmental, College, and University Governance activities; and other activity related to the faculty member's contributions to the University.

## 7.8 Teaching Expectations

- 7.8.1 Evaluations of teaching for the purposes of promotion will be based upon such forms of evidence as the following: any teaching award received; student evaluations of the teacher's work by way of SIRS forms or approved equivalents; nomination by the Department for a teaching award; service on M.A. or Ph.D. committees; direction of students in independent study and/or senior theses.

7.8.1.1 An individual may present other evidence of meritorious teaching by reporting activities of his or her own not already mentioned, emphasizing innovations in teaching; developing new courses or bringing previous courses up to date; activities of his or her students, or special recognition that did not take the form of an award; this evidence also may include students' accomplishments; mentoring of a student; evidence of exceptional teaching effectiveness. Appropriate documentation must accompany such supplemental information.

- 7.8.2 Candidates are expected to include syllabi and course materials as part of the documentation for the teaching section.
- 7.8.3 The candidate may—but is not required to—also request a written evaluation by a faculty member who has observed the candidate's teaching.

## 7.9 Service and Outreach Expectations

- 7.9.1 Prior to promotion from assistant to associate professor, a faculty member is expected to have served on two or more Departmental or College committees consistently and documented one or more areas of service commitment to the Department, the College, and the University. Prior to promotion from associate to full professor, a faculty member is expected to have demonstrated service and outreach leadership as outlined below.

#### 7.10 Leadership Expectations

- 7.10.1 Prior to promotion from assistant to associate professor, a faculty member is expected to have organized a sufficient number of events on or off campus to demonstrate commitment to recruitment of majors to the Department, and broader outreach. For promotion from associate professor to full professor, a faculty member is expected to have chaired more than one major committee and to have demonstrated a record of leadership contributions to the Department, the College, the University, and/or national or international scholarly organizations.

#### 7.11 Each candidate's dossier must include at least four letters by external referees.

- 7.11.1 External reviews should be solicited by the Chairperson of the Department by means of a standard letter (kept on file in the department) that has been approved by the faculty and the Dean of the College.
- 7.11.2 Letters should be solicited from the external referees no later than July 1 of the summer preceding the fall semester review; contacts with external referees are preferably made before the end of the spring semester preceding the review year.
- 7.11.3 Two referees will be selected from a list of seven names provided by the candidate. The other two, who should also be prominent scholars in the candidate's field, will be chosen by the Department Chairperson based on recommendations by members of the RPT committee.
- 7.11.4 Prior to the solicitation of letters from the referees, each candidate will have an opportunity to inform the Department Chairperson if there are individuals in the profession who should not be contacted to serve as a referee because of any potential conflict of interest that would preclude a fair and unbiased professional review of the dossier materials.



- 7.11.5 No unsolicited letters may be included in the dossier, nor will they be read by the review committee or administrators. Only faculty members of duly constituted review committees and relevant administrators will read the referee letters.
  - 7.11.6 To the extent defensible under Michigan law, the identity of external referees is not revealed to the candidate being reviewed.
  - 7.11.7 In the event that all the invited reviewers decline, the Department Chairperson will convene the committee and begin the selection process again.
- 7.12 Each candidate's dossier must include any other material specified in the College of Arts and Letters Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Guidelines.
- 7.13 All materials must be submitted by September 1. The candidate may not add nor may the committee request additional materials after that date. At this point in the process, the chair of the Promotion and Tenure Committee will send a letter to the candidate listing all documents that comprise the completed dossier.
- 7.14 The Promotion and Tenure Committee will evaluate the case of the candidate, gather and prepare the necessary documentation, and prepare a written recommendation for submission to the entire tenured faculty, who will vote on each case that is presented by the individual committees.
- 7.14.1 Prior to such a vote, the chairperson of each committee shall present a report to the faculty at or above the rank to which the candidate aspires. This process will occur early in the fall of the formal review year. Given the seriousness of this process, all voting members of the faculty must read the full file prior to casting their vote.
  - 7.14.2 The Chairperson of the Department will notify members of the faculty at and above the rank to which the candidate aspires when the dossier is ready for their perusal. External review letters shall not be included in the dossier made available for faculty perusal.
  - 7.14.3 At least three weeks after this notification, but no later than October 15, a meeting of all faculty at and above the rank to which the candidate aspires will be scheduled.

7.14.3.1 The chairperson of the promotion and tenure committee will chair the meeting and present the candidate's material.

7.14.3.2 The faculty assembled at this meeting will discuss the candidate's material, and will then vote on the candidate's case by a ballot. That vote will constitute the faculty's recommendation to the Chairperson of the Department, who will also attend the meeting but who will not vote.

7.14.3.3 Only those faculty members present at the meeting who have read the candidate's file may vote.

7.14.4 The chair of the promotion and tenure committee will write a formal letter to the chair of the department stating the committee's recommendation along with the faculty vote. If necessary, a dissenting opinion letter may also be submitted.

7.14.4.1 All members of the promotion and tenure committee must sign the committee recommendation or a dissenting opinion letter.

7.14.4.2 The committee recommendation and any dissenting letter will be forwarded to the Department Chairperson.

7.14.5 At least five days before presenting the departmental recommendation to the Dean of the College, the Chairperson of the Department shall notify the candidate of the outcome of the review process and of the Chairperson's decision to accept or reject the recommendation.

7.14.5.1 In the case of a rejection of the recommendation, the notification shall be in writing and provide reasons for the decision.

7.14.5.2 Any candidate may, during the five-day period, request a conference with the Chairperson and the committee to review a recommendation.

## 7.15 Reappointment

7.15.1 The process for reappointment recommendations shall be the

same as that for promotion and tenure recommendations, except that letters from external referees need not be solicited.

- 7.15.2 Department committees for cases of reappointment shall be limited to tenured faculty.
- 7.15.3 The principal criterion for reappointment of faculty in the tenure system shall be evidence of consistent and persistent professional improvement and effectiveness at MSU in the three areas of research/publications, teaching, and service/engagement sufficient to predict that the individual will qualify for tenure within the second probationary period.

## 8 Grievance Procedures

### 8.1 Faculty Grievance Procedures

- 8.1.1 The Department follows the University Faculty Grievance Procedures (please see <http://www.hr.msu.edu/HRsite/Documents/Faculty/Handbooks/Faculty/AcademicPersonnelPolicies/ivfacultygrievance.htm>). The University's administrative review procedure is an informal process for faculty to request an independent assessment from their department Chair, Dean, or Provost on such personnel matters as salary status, reappointment, promotion, and tenure (please see <http://www.hr.msu.edu/HRsite/Documents/Faculty/Handbooks/Faculty/AcademicPersonnelPolicies/ivadminreview.htm>).

### 8.2 Student Grievance Policy

- 8.2.1 Student grievances are now addressed by the Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education (APUE) and relevant University Hearing Boards.

## 9 Approval and Review of these Bylaws

9.1 Initial approval of these Bylaws will be a shared responsibility of the regular faculty of the Department and the Department Chairperson. A majority vote of the faculty will be required for approval. The temporary faculty and the student representatives who are voting members at Department Meetings will be consulted for advice and suggestions.

9.2 The regular faculty of the Department will be the final authority with regard to

the interpretation of these Bylaws.

9.3 These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of all regular faculty members of the Department. A written copy of a proposed amendment will be given to each regular faculty member at least one week before the Department Meeting at which it will be considered.

9.4 These Bylaws will be reviewed by the College Advisory Council at the time of their approval by the Department and at intervals not to exceed five years. Decisions of the CAC may be appealed to the University Committee on Academic Governance (Bylaws for Academic Governance).

Approved by the Department of Religious Studies 9 April 2018