

**School of Physics**  
**Georgia Institute of Technology**  
**Bylaws**

*(last modified by the faculty Nov. 1, 2022)*

**Preamble**

These bylaws describe the governance of the School of Physics and the rights and responsibilities of its members. Its objective is to ensure and promote transparency, fairness, and efficiency in how the School operates. These bylaws adhere to and are consistent with Georgia Institute of Technology policies found in the GT Faculty Handbook. In the event of a disagreement, the GT Faculty Handbook will supersede these bylaws.

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## **Code of Conduct**

As part of the University System of Georgia, we in the School of Physics at the Georgia Institute of Technology follow the Code of Conduct described in the USG Policy Manual in 8.2.18.1.4, found here: [https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/C224/#p8.2.18\\_personnel\\_conduct](https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/C224/#p8.2.18_personnel_conduct)

### **Article I. Faculty Meetings**

Faculty meetings are meant to address major issues confronting the School. The proper place for extended discussion and the formulation of recommendations for the School should take place within the appropriate committees or between faculty outside of the faculty meetings.

#### ***Section 1. Kinds and frequency of meetings***

1. The faculty of the School of Physics typically meet in regular session monthly during the semester, throughout the regular academic year. The Chair shall establish the dates of meetings. Typically, the Chair sets these dates at the beginning of the semester.
2. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair, the Chair's designated representative, or by the Faculty Advisory Committee Chair.
3. The person presiding over the meeting must ensure that remote participation is possible.

#### ***Section 2. Meeting governance***

The Chair shall preside over faculty meetings. In the absence of the Chair, they may designate another voting member to preside. If the Faculty Advisory Committee Chair calls for the meeting, they will preside or they may designate another voting member to preside.

#### ***Section 3. Meeting Secretary***

The School Office Manager shall be the Secretary of the faculty meeting. In their absence, the presiding member shall appoint a substitute. The duties of the Secretary shall be

1. Recording the minutes of the faculty meeting,
2. Archiving the minutes and make them accessible to the faculty,
3. Overseeing votes on motions.

#### ***Section 4. Agenda***

The person who called for the meeting (i.e., the Chair, the Chair's designated representative, or the Faculty Advisory Committee Chair) shall prepare the agenda for each meeting and should distribute it at least two business days before the Faculty Meeting. Faculty members may request in writing (email is sufficient) that items be included on agendas. Expected motions and a short description of the rationale for the motion should be sent along with the agenda. The agenda shall include an item for faculty issues, during which any voting member may introduce a motion.

#### ***Section 5. Motions***

All motions except those recommended by a committee require a second in order to be considered. All faculty members wishing to speak on a motion shall have the opportunity to speak at least once, after which additional debate can occur at the presiding member's discretion. Amendments can be introduced to motions under consideration and require a second and a majority vote for approval.

## **Section 6. Quorum**

One-half of the voting members of the School shall constitute a quorum at any faculty meeting; attendance may be in person or online. If a quorum is not achieved, the meeting may proceed, but no votes may be taken. The quorum must be maintained at the time of voting. Votes by proxy do not count towards a quorum.

## **Section 7. Procedural Disputes**

Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with these bylaws. In cases of dispute or doubt as to the meaning of the rules, the presiding member's interpretation shall be adopted.

## **Section 8. Attendance**

1. The Secretary shall record in the minutes who was invited to the meeting.
2. The Secretary shall record in the minutes the names of all members present at each meeting, noting the number of voting members for the purposes of establishing a quorum.

## **Section 9. Voting (procedures, rules, consequences)**

1. Full-time regularly appointed tenured / tenure-track faculty and Professors of the Practice of the School of Physics shall vote on all matters.
2. Part-time regularly appointed tenured / tenure-track faculty of the School of Physics shall be allowed to vote on all matters if they have a minimum 50% appointment in the School of Physics.
3. Academic Professionals of the School of Physics shall vote on all matters except those regarding hiring and bylaws and unless the voting faculty pass a motion to restrict that vote to voting faculty only.
4. Motions are adopted by a supermajority (2/3 or more) in cases of adoption or changes of bylaws. All other motions are adopted by a simple majority (more than 50%).
5. The majority of a vote is to be based on the number of valid votes cast (not including abstentions), not the number of eligible voters in the SoP.
6. Voting faculty may assign their vote by proxy to another member of the voting faculty, valid for all votes during one meeting. The faculty assigning a proxy forwards the name of the proxy to the person who called for the meeting (i.e., the Chair, the Chair's designated representative, or the Faculty Advisory Committee Chair) prior to the faculty meeting. The meeting participants shall be notified of the proxy. Each voting member can carry only one proxy.
7. During meetings with remote participants, voting will normally be facilitated by sharing a link to an authenticated web form using the meeting platform's chat function.

# **Article II. The Faculty Advisory Committee**

## **Section 1. Composition**

The committee has 6 members, each serving two year terms. The committee composition comprises (at the time of their election) two Professors, two Associate Professors, one Assistant Professor, and one non-tenure-track faculty member. Terms are staggered so that 3 new members are elected each year.

## **Section 2. Selection of members**

FAC committee members are determined by election by single transferable vote. People eligible to vote in the election are (1) tenure track faculty with the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor, and (2) non-tenure track faculty: Academic Professionals, and Professors of the Practice. All eligible voters are eligible to be elected to the FAC, with one exception: no person may serve two consecutive terms. Elections for the open positions are run by the current FAC, in advance of the new term, which starts on the first day of the Fall Semester. Once the new FAC committee is fully determined, its committee members elect the committee chair.

## **Article III. Ad Hoc Committees**

With the exception of the Faculty Advisory Committee, the standing committees of the School and the chairs of those committees are appointed by the Chair of the School. Subject to Institute regulations, the Faculty and the Chair may appoint and charge ad hoc committees to deal with specific issues.

## **Article IV. Faculty Searches**

The process for hiring new tenure-track faculty begins with the Faculty Search Committee in consultation with the SoP Faculty and the Chair. The Faculty Search Committee will seek the advice of and feedback from the SoP Faculty in the search process. Acting upon the findings of the Faculty Search Committee, the Chair will convene one or more faculty meetings to discuss and vote on the candidates. The Chair will proceed with the hiring process guided by the faculty consensus.

When an open position for an Academic Professional needs to be filled, the Chair will convene one or more faculty meetings to discuss and vote on the candidate(s). The Chair will proceed with the hiring process guided by the faculty input and vote. Full-time Academic Professionals in the School can vote on candidates for an Academic Professional position.

## **Article V. Evaluation Rubrics**

1. In response to faculty handbook changes mandated by the Board of Regents and adopted under duress by the Whole Faculty of Georgia Tech in September 2022 as a necessary protection against arbitrary enforcement, the School of Physics has established rubrics for the purpose of annual evaluations of academic faculty, and post-tenure-review of tenure-track faculty. The evaluation rubrics are maintained as an appendix to the School bylaws.
2. Initial adoption and subsequent changes to the evaluation rubrics for tenure-track faculty are considered changes to the School bylaws. As such, they must be approved by a supermajority (2/3 or more) of the voting tenure-track faculty.
3. Evaluation rubrics for tenure-track faculty are developed and ultimately proposed to the faculty by an elected “rubrics committee”. This committee shall only be constituted when necessary, e.g. by a majority vote of the faculty, and must be elected by the academic faculty to serve for a period of no more than one year. Elections, including nominations, are the responsibility of the Faculty Advisory Committee. The committee must comprise no less than four tenured

academic faculty. Members of an expiring rubrics committee are eligible for re-election to a subsequent iteration of the rubrics committee.

4. Non-tenure-track academic faculty may choose to organize a rubric committee to develop alternative rubrics to apply to different non-tenure-track roles in the School. These shall be approved by a 2/3 vote of all non-tenure-track academic faculty. If no rubrics are specified for a particular role, the rubrics for tenure-track faculty will be used. Rubrics for research faculty may be developed individually with the faculty member's supervisor at the time of hire.

Faculty members are evaluated on the three rubrics in research, service, and instruction as necessary based on their duties and workload. By default, tenure-track faculty and professors of the practice shall be evaluated on all three rubrics, non-tenure-track academic faculty shall be evaluated on service and instruction, and research faculty shall be evaluated solely on research. Changes from the default set of rubric(s) used for evaluating a faculty member must be approved by the Chair and the faculty member in writing prior to the end of each evaluation period. The Chair must assign service or instruction duties, respectively, to any faculty member who will be evaluated on the service or instruction rubrics.

## **Article VI. Amendments to the Bylaws**

These bylaws supersede any previous bylaws not herein included. They may be amended with a two-third majority vote in a faculty meeting after the faculty has been given prior notice and at least two weeks to consider the proposed amendment.