

Brandeis University

Department of Romance Studies

## **Departmental Policies and Procedures**

### **The Department**

The Department of Romance Studies comprises Programs in French and Francophone Studies, Hispanic Studies, and Italian Studies. Faculty in the Department also play a significant role in various interdepartmental programs and concentrations, as well as the general education mission of the University.

### **The Mission of the Department**

The Department of Romance Studies participates fully in Brandeis University's educational mission. We do so by promoting the study of world languages, literatures, and cultures in order to make our students aware of cultural differences and similarities. This awareness of world cultures permits our students to understand themselves better and to perceive how our own society participates in a rapidly globalizing society.

Our department is committed to offering innovative and thought-provoking courses that foster an understanding of French and Francophone, Italian, and Hispanic and Latino cultures. As instructors of language, literature, and culture, we use the latest research in our respective fields to ensure the quality of our teaching. Moreover, many of us contribute to our fields of expertise through active participation in research and publication. This symbiosis of teaching and research creates an enriching intellectual environment.

By helping students learn about other cultures and by enabling them to express themselves better in foreign languages and in their own, we ensure that they will, as Brandeis graduates, more effectively promote their own welfare and that of others.

### **Members of the Department**

The Department of Romance Studies includes faculty on all ranks: tenure-line (Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor), and contract faculty outside the tenure track

(Professor, Associate, Assistant, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer). Additionally, the administrative staff (Academic Administrator and staff, full- and part-time) is an integral part of the Department.

### **Administrative Structure**

Significant administrative functions in the Department are fulfilled by the Department Chair, the Advisory Committee, the Undergraduate Advising Head(s), the Directors of the Language Programs, the Level Coordinators, and the Administrative Staff. Other members of the department may, on occasion, be asked to undertake administrative responsibilities in conjunction with their regular teaching (including advising) and University and professional service.

### **Department Chair**

Acting in consultation with members of the Department of Romance Studies, the Chair is responsible for supervising all departmental functions, including:

- 1) Supervising the budget and staffing;
- 2) Overseeing the undergraduate curriculum in the Language Programs and in the Programs in Literature and Culture;
- 3) Coordinating class schedules with the University administration (the Registrar and the Dean);
- 4) Advising the Provost and Dean on faculty performance;
- 5) Making annual recommendations regarding faculty salaries;
- 6) And, in accordance with University guidelines, overseeing departmental action with respect to the appointment, reappointment, promotion, and award of tenure to faculty.

The Department Chair is a tenured member of the department who is normally appointed for a term of three years. The Department recommends a candidate for Chair to the Dean, who makes the appointment. If the recommendation of the Department is not accepted by the Dean, the appointment of the Department Chair is governed by provisions in the Faculty Handbook.

The process of recommending the reappointment of the current or the appointment of a new

Chair is undertaken early in the fall semester of the final year of the current Chair's term. The tenure-line faculty will meet no later than the first week of October to determine nomination(s) for appointment or reappointment of the Chair. At a Department Meeting, ballots are distributed to all voting members of the Department. The ballot includes the name(s) of the candidate(s) as well as the possibility of abstention from the vote. All voting members of the Department turn their ballots into the Academic Administrator over the course of the following week. The vote for the position of Chair is tallied at a full department meeting. Once the vote has been tallied and a candidate selected, the recommendation is forwarded to the Dean, whose decision is communicated to the entire department.

### **Consultative Bodies**

#### **Advisory Committee**

An Advisory Committee, comprised of one full professor, one associate professor, one assistant professor, and one contract faculty member serves as a consultative body. The Advisory Committee consults with the Department Chair as needed on matters of Departmental administration and/or policy.

The Advisory Committee is an elected body. Each group of faculty (the full professors, the associate professors, the assistant professors, and the contract faculty) elects its own representative to the Committee. This election should be held at the first Full Department Meeting of each academic year.

Members of the department can use the Advisory Committee to address grievances should they desire to resolve the issue within the department. The Advisory Committee would strive to mediate and resolve the grievance, or will resort to other university offices according to the particularity of each case. University grievance procedures are also available as per handbook whenever a staff or faculty finds this avenue more appropriate.

#### **Undergraduate Advising Heads**

Each program in the Department of Romance Studies will have its own Undergraduate Advising Head. The Undergraduate Advising Heads are appointed by the Department Chair in

consultation with the faculty in the respective programs. The term for this role is usually three years but it might be interrupted or extended as needed.

The duties of Undergraduate Advising Heads include:

- 1) Overseeing and preparing the paperwork for the declaration of majors and minors;
- 2) Coordinating the advising of majors and minors in the program, including notifying and students about academic requirements such as the Senior Seminar, the Senior Essay, or Thesis;
- 3) Assisting the Office of Study Abroad and the Registrar in the evaluation of credit(s) from study-abroad programs; Overseeing credit for language exemptions, and transfer courses for upper-level courses;
- 4) Overseeing the seventh-semester (unofficial) and final audits of majors and minors;
- 5) coordinating with UDR liaison (if that person is different from UAH) in support of their initiatives and as representatives of student's interests and concerns
- 6) And organizing events for majors and minors, such as Meet the Majors and Senior Essay and Thesis workshops.

### **Directors of the Language Programs**

The Directors of the Language Programs supervise all aspects of the language program in courses numbered 10 through 108.

- 1) The Academic Responsibilities of the Directors of the Language Programs include:
  - a) Curricular development of the language programs in French, Italian, and Spanish;
  - b) Fulfillment of their teaching duties (load set by their contracts depending on their category, set by the Office of the Dean);
  - c) Development and review of bridge courses in French, Spanish, and Italian between language and literature programs in collaboration with the faculty in language and literature;
  - d) And coordination of workshops, speakers and colloquia for the professional development of the language faculty.

2) The Administrative Responsibilities of the Directors of the Language Programs include:

- a) Supervising language curriculum in French, Spanish, and Italian;
- b) Staffing and scheduling language courses, and submitting schedule in a timely manner to the Chair;
- c) Coordinating and reviewing Placement Examinations in French, Spanish, and Italian;
- d) Overseeing credit for language exemptions, and for transfer of language courses;
- e) Naming search committee for new language faculty in consultation with the Chair, and chairing this committee;
- f) Chairing committee for the renewal of contract faculty;
- g) Supervising level coordinators in French, Spanish, and Italian;
- h) Coordinating pre-enrollment bulletins for language courses numbered 10-108;
- i) Supervising development of relevant course materials for language courses numbered 10-108;
- j) Representing language programs in ROMS to University community, as needed;
- k) Cooperating with other University language programs, including active participation in the World Languages and Cultures Committee;
- l) Advocating for the language faculty and the language programs in discussions with the Chair and tenured and tenure-line faculty as well as University administrators;
- m) Keeping regular office hours and be available for consultation;
- n) And coordinating with the rest of the language team to ensure a certain level of advising during the summer and during pre-enrollment.

### **Level Coordinators**

The coordination of all courses numbered 10 through 108 is accomplished by designating a Level Coordinator, whose responsibilities include coordinating transition from one semester to the next, placing book orders for the following semester, creating a master syllabus, providing the Director of the Language Program with copies of course syllabi and final examinations for inclusion in the central files, informing the Director of the

Language Program with respect to level issues, about pedagogical problems in each level, and significant changes implemented in the course.

Ideally, the responsibilities of the Level Coordinators should rotate between and among all contract faculty, although it is recommended that contract faculty who have taught at Brandeis for fewer than 2 years not be given this task.

Level Coordinators are appointed by the Director of the Language Program at the time course sections have been posted and teaching responsibilities assigned.

### **Administrative Support Staff**

The Academic Administrator is responsible for managing the Department Office and implementing office policy. If changes in policy are required, the Administrator will consult with the University administration and the Department Chair in accordance with current University policy. The Academic Administrator participates in the planning of the Department budget, monitors and approves expenditures, coordinates departmental events, and serves as an executive assistant to the Department Chair.

### **Meetings**

All faculty are expected to attend relevant meetings according to their teaching responsibilities and kind of appointment. All full-time faculty are also expected to attend Full Department Meetings. Meetings of the Tenure and Tenure Track faculty, of the Language Programs, and of each area Program in Literature and Culture (French area meetings, Hispanic area meetings) are usually attended only by the appropriate faculty.

Eligibility to vote on Department matters relating to curriculum, appointment, and reappointment, is as provided by the Faculty Handbook, which includes all faculty holding appointments in the tenure structure and all faculty outside the tenure structure who hold at least half-time appointments and have held such appointments for at least two semesters.

Meetings of the Full Department are held as needed, normally at least twice a semester. They are called by the Department Chair, although any Department faculty member may request a meeting to discuss a matter of particular importance. Full Department Meetings are led

by the Department Chair or by her/his designate.

Meetings of administrators (including Department Chair, UAHs, Directors of the Language Programs, and Academic Administrator) are held as needed, normally twice a semester. They are in charge of discussing curricular matters, academic planning, assessment, or any issue that falls within the administrators' responsibilities.

Meetings of the Language Programs (also called 'contract faculty meetings') are also held as needed, at least twice a semester, either separated by programs or together. They are called by the Directors of the Language Programs, although any contract faculty may request a meeting to discuss a matter of particular importance. Meetings of the Language Program are led by the Director of the Language Program or by her/his designate.

Meetings of each of the Programs in Literature and Culture are also held as needed, or usually at least twice a semester. They are normally called and led by the Undergraduate Advising Head(s), or by the Chair. Each program makes its own curriculum decision, and effectively acts as the curriculum committee. Decisions pertaining curricular matters and planning, Literature and Culture course assignment, new course development, teaching schedules, and mentoring, are initially discussed at these meetings.

Meetings for the Tenured Track Line faculty are held as needed, or usually at least once a semester. They are called by the Department Chair, although any tenure-line faculty member may request a meeting to discuss a matter of particular importance.

Collegial debate and simple majority rule is normally the standard for any decision making.

When in doubt regarding meetings procedures or decision making processes, or in case of exceptionally complex matters, meetings should be run and matters decided accordance to the *Robert's Rules of Order*.

A schedule of all meetings for the semester, with the exception of meetings of a confidential nature and those that are called on an emergency ad hoc basis, is distributed to Department faculty no later than one week prior to the beginning of the semester. Department faculty may be requested to furnish the Academic Administrator and/or Department Chair with schedules that include information regarding attendance at

conferences and the like.

A tentative agenda will be distributed to the Department faculty at least two days prior to the scheduled meeting. Additional items for the agenda will be accepted up to one day prior to the meeting and a final agenda will then be distributed to all the Department faculty.

Minutes of all meetings might be taken at the discretion of the faculty in charge of the meeting, or when any person at the meeting requests it.

### **Academic Programs**

The Department comprises Programs in French and Francophone Studies, Hispanic Studies, and Italian Studies. The Programs in French and Francophone Studies and in Hispanic Studies include majors and minors. The Program in Italian Studies includes a minor and may also include a major, upon petition to the Interdisciplinary Independent Major subcommittee. A student can choose among the courses that are taught in Italian, within the Romance Studies Department, and a list of courses from affiliated departments including Classical Studies, Fine Arts, and History, as well as individual courses occasionally taught and approved to count towards the IIM.

The mission, or purpose, of each program is described in the *Brandeis University Bulletin*. Any changes in the mission of a program must be addressed in the statements found in the *Bulletin*.

### **Program Structure**

Programs in the Department are divided by language (French, Italian, and Spanish) and by level.

The Language Programs (courses numbered 10 through 108) fall under the purview of the Directors of the Language Programs, in conjunction with the Department Chair. The Undergraduate Advising Head(s) oversees the Programs in Literature and Culture (courses numbered 109 and above), in conjunction with the Department Chair.

### **The Language Programs**

The Directors of the Language Programs make decisions regarding the Language Programs in consultation with the contract faculty. Matters that are decided in this way include but are not limited to: the methodology and/or approach used in language courses; the language



curriculum; the goals for individual courses and sequences of courses; the selection of common textbooks and other pedagogical material; and the assessment of student achievement and program goals.

### **The Programs in Literature and Culture**

Appropriate faculty in each program make decisions regarding the programs in Literature and Culture. They oversee the curricula, the design/approval of all new program courses, and the requirements for the major and the minor.

### **Appointment and Reappointment of Faculty**

All hiring, appointments, and reappointments are conducted in accordance with University policy as set forth in the Faculty Handbook and in conformity with guidelines established by the Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion.

### **Hiring of Tenure-line Faculty**

The hiring of tenure-line faculty at any rank begins with the identification and clear articulation of a departmental need. The Administration must authorize the request of the Department before any search may begin. Once a search for a tenure-line faculty member has been authorized, a Search Committee is constituted and a national search initiated in accordance with guidelines established by the Administration and the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.

A Search Committee is comprised of all tenure-line faculty in the relevant program, any outside faculty whose participation is deemed useful to the search, and the Department Chair. Each Search Committee can set up its own procedures, which must be communicated to the Administration and to the Department.

In the process of the search, the Search Committee should endeavor to invite and include the Department in all public lectures and public social events.

Once the Search Committee has completed its work, it makes a recommendation to the tenure-line faculty of the Department, consulting them for either support of the recommendation or difference of opinion. The Search Committee will then rank the final candidates and make a recommendation to the Administration, acknowledging the tenure-line faculty's

response in the letter of recommendation.

### **Reappointment of Assistant Professors**

The reappointment of assistant professors is handled in accordance with the Faculty Handbook.

### **Tenure and/or Promotion**

Tenure and/or promotion are/is handled in accordance with the Faculty Handbook.

### **Hiring of Contract Faculty**

The hiring process for all contract faculty begins in the same way as hiring for a tenure-line position, with the identification and clear articulation of a departmental or programmatic need and with authorization from the Administration.

Contract faculty may be hired either as a full-time or as a part-time faculty member for one semester, with the possibility of a new appointment according to Department and University needs.

If a search for a full-time multi-year contract faculty member is authorized, a Search Committee is constituted and a national search initiated in accordance with guidelines established by the Administration and the Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion.

A Search Committee comprises the appropriate Director of the Language Program, two contract faculty in the relevant program(s), any outside faculty whose participation is deemed useful to the search, and the Department Chair. The Search Committee should be chaired by the appropriate Director of the Language Program. Each Search Committee can set up its own procedures, which must be communicated to the Administration and to the Department.

In the process of the search, the Search Committee should endeavor to invite and include the Department in all public lectures and public social events.

Once the Search Committee has completed its work, it makes a recommendation to the Administration.

The hiring of a part-time or semester or yearly contract faculty member involves the appropriate Director of the Language Program and at least one other faculty member in the

appropriate area. The recommendation of the Director and the other faculty submitted to the Chair Department Chair.

### **Reappointment of Contract Faculty Members**

Recommendations regarding the reappointment and/or promotion of contract faculty within the lecturer track (e.g. from lecturer to Senior lecturer) are made by a committee of the appropriate director and two other faculty members (depending on the rank of the person to be reappointed). This committee will report to the Department Chair, who will report to the Dean of Arts and Sciences. They are based on consideration of materials provided by the contract faculty member up for reappointment as well as student evaluations, peer observations, and class observations by the appropriate Director of the Language Program. A promotion of a contract faculty to Assistant, Associate, or Professor Outside the Tenure Structure (OTS) track requires a vote of the appropriately ranked faculty (TTL and OTS). The candidate will present a dossier in accordance to the faculty handbook and a meeting will be convened. If the motion is supported by a majority vote, the Chair submits the recommendation to the Dean. Decisions regarding any recommendation take into account:

- a) The quality of teaching;
- b) The innovation and quality of teaching materials and pedagogical contributions to Department programs;
- c) Service to the Department and University;
- d) Professional development
- e) Evidence of scholarly activity and achievement, when appropriate to the rank.

Contract faculty are normally recommended for reappointment for periods of one to five years, depending on the number of years they have served as a full-time member of the Brandeis faculty and the quality of their work.

Appointments or reappointments are not a guarantee of automatic renewal.

### **Appointment and Reappointment of the Director of the Language Program**

The Chair of the Department will form a small committee of representative faculty to consider applications for appointment or reappointment of one of the Directors of the Language Programs. Contract faculty will be a part of all aspects of the appointment or reappointment process.

### **Observations, Evaluations, and Assessment**

The observation and evaluation of classroom instruction is an integral part of the professional and pedagogical development of all faculty. Therefore, all department faculty are encouraged to invite colleagues and peers into their classrooms every semester for the purpose of informal observations.

In the case of formal observations and evaluations, it is suggested that the faculty members involved meet to discuss the goals of the particular class session, the range of activities, and any suggestions for improvement.

Programs have devised different methods to assess majors and the achievement of programmatic goals:

In French and Francophone Studies, majors are asked during their final semester to make an oral presentation about a paper they wrote at Brandeis. Faculty judge how well the student is able to write, talk, and analyze works in historical and cultural context. This allows faculty to assess if the program is attaining the performance levels we set out in our teaching goals. Based on the outcome of these assessment presentations, faculty periodically revise curriculum and teaching methods.

In Hispanic Studies, majors are assessed in *HISP 198: Experiential Research Seminar in Literary and Cultural Studies*, during which students write a substantial research paper and present their work to the class. This capstone project is used as a benchmark to assess whether the goals stated by the program are being met, in general terms and also as they pertain to each individual major.

In Italian Studies, as of 2011, there is not an official major, but students can and have been able to petition for an Interdisciplinary Independent Major in Italian Studies. Final assessment of IIMs before graduation consists of a full oral proficiency interview, which determines

whether the majors have reached the range of expected linguistic proficiency and whether they are capable of addressing several of the objectives (core skills and knowledge) described in this document. The process of such an assessment includes a discussion of a paper or papers, and an overview of the studied content during the student's four years of instruction within the Italian Studies curriculum.

**Changes to this Document**

Any changes to this document require a two-thirds majority vote of the eligible faculty according to the Faculty Handbook.