Bylaws for the Institute for Governance and Civics at Florida State University

These are the bylaws for the Institute for Governance and Civics at Florida State University. These bylaws were last approved on November 18, 2026 by a majority of the IGC's voting members, and on November 19, 2026 by the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement.

Preamble

In 2023, the Florida Legislature passed § 1004.6499, Fla. Stat. (2023), which created the Florida Institute for Governance and Civics at Florida State University. The law charges the IGC to:

> Provide students with access to an interdisciplinary hub that will develop academically rigorous scholarship and coursework on the origins of the American system of government, its foundational documents, its subsequent political traditions and evolutions, and its impact on comparative political systems.
>
> Encourage civic literacy in this state through the development of educational tools and resources for K-12 and postsecondary students which foster an understanding of how individual rights, constitutionalism, separation of powers, and federalism function within the American system.
>
> Model civic discourse that recognizes the importance of viewpoint diversity, intellectual rigor, and an evidence-based approach to history.
>
> Plan and host forums to allow students and guests to hear from exceptional individuals who have excelled in a wide range of sectors of American life, to highlight the possibilities created by individual achievement and entrepreneurial vision.
>
> Become a national and state resource on using polling instruments and other assessments to measure civic literacy and make recommendations for improving civic education.
>
> Provide fellowships and internship opportunities to students in government.
>
> Create through scholarship, original research, publications, symposia, testimonials, and other means a body of resources that can be accessed by students, scholars, and government officials to understand the

innovations in public policy in this state over a rolling 30-year time period.

The following bylaws are adopted to define the governance, roles, responsibilities, and operating principles of the IGC in a manner consistent with — and responsive to — its legislative mandate and strategic objectives.

Section 1: Bylaws

A. **Adherence with Other Governing Documents**. IGC policy shall adhere to and be consistent with all relevant university policies such as those found in the FSU Constitution, the BOT-UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement, the Faculty Handbook, and the Annual Memorandum on the Promotion and Tenure Process issued by the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement.

B. **Bylaws Revision**. Any five voting members of the IGC may propose an amendment to the Bylaws. A proposed amendment must be made available to the voting membership at least two weeks prior to an IGC meeting. To be adopted, a proposed amendment must receive an affirmative vote by a majority of the voting members.

C. **Substantive Change Statement**. Faculty and staff members are expected to be familiar with and follow the Florida State University Substantive Change Policy as found on the university web site https://sacs.fsu.edu/substantive-change-policy/.

Section 2: Membership and Voting Rights

A. **Faculty Membership.** The faculty of the Institute for Governance and Civics shall consist of those persons in the following groups:

1. Specialized faculty, of any rank, whose base salary is funded – in full or in major part -- by the IGC.

2. Tenured faculty or tenure track faculty whose base salaries are funded – in full or in major part --by the IGC. Faculty in this category shall no longer be considered a faculty member of the IGC upon termination, expiration of their contractual obligations, or termination of the IGC connection pursuant to a relevant memorandum of understanding with the college or unit involved.

3. Faculty in the First Amendment Clinic.

4. Visiting Faculty are not included in (4)(A)(1), unless otherwise stated.

B. IGC Membership. The faculty defined in §(2)(A) are members of the IGC. So too are:

1. Temporary or part-time faculty appointees, including those servings as: fellows, faculty affiliates, visiting faculty appointments, courtesy appointments, adjunct appointees, postdoctoral fellows, professors emeriti, and research associates in the IGC.

2. Administrative and Professional (A&P) personnel who work in the IGC.

3. University Support Personnel System (USPS) personnel who work in the IGC.

C. Voting Members.

1. Faculty members under §(2)(A) may vote in IGC meetings and sit on faculty search committees. Such votes represent recommendations of the faculty to the Director and are advisory in nature. Final authority for decisions rests with the Director, subject to applicable university policies and procedures.

2. Non-faculty IGC members, as defined in §(2)(B)(1) and (2), do not ordinarily hold voting rights in the IGC. However, the Director may extend voting privileges to non-faculty individuals serving on select committees (none that include faculty personnel decisions) when their credentials or expertise are deemed relevant to the work of the committee. Their votes are recommendations to the Director and are advisory in nature. Final authority for decisions rests with the Director, subject to applicable university policies and procedures.

Section 3. IGC Organization and Governance

A. IGC Meetings.

1. IGC meetings shall be held at least once each semester during the nine-month academic year. Meetings shall be called by the Director. On written request of five voting members to convene a meeting, the Director will give due consideration to such requests and may convene a meeting as appropriate.

A meeting agenda shall be submitted by the Director or Associate Director no later than 24 hours before a meeting begins.

2. Attendance at IGC meetings is limited to faculty members under §(2)(A), Administrative and Professional (A&P), and University Support Personnel System (USPS) personnel who work in the IGC. Attendees may attend meetings in person or online.

   The Director may, at his discretion, invite other persons to attend meetings under limited conditions.

3. A majority of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum. Motions will be decided by a majority vote of those present (either in person or online).

B. IGC Director.

1. The Director is the chief executive officer of the Institute.

2. The Director is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Provost. There are no term limits to the Directorship.

3. The Director may recruit tenured, tenure track, and specialized faculty in consultation with the Executive Committee.

4. In the event of a vacancy in the Director position, the Executive Committee shall provide a recommendation to the Provost on the appointment of an Interim Director and a permanent Director.

5. The Director shall be an *ex-officio* member of all IGC committees.

6. The Associate Director serves at the pleasure of the Director and fulfills such tasks as necessary to ensure the IGC's effective operation.

C. IGC Leadership and Committees.

1. Executive Committee.

(a) *Duties*. The Executive Committee shall assist the Director in implementing IGC policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, such matters as recruitment of new faculty and annual faculty evaluations.

(b) *Eligibility and election*. The Executive Committee shall consist of three IGC faculty (as defined in §(2)(A)).

Representatives to the Executive Committee shall be elected by open vote in an IGC meeting. A majority vote of those casting ballots is required for election to the Committee.

(c) *Terms of Office*. Representatives shall serve for terms of two years, beginning in the Fall term of the Academic year and ending immediately prior to the start of the Fall term. Representatives may be reelected to consecutive terms. The seat of an Executive Committee member absent from the University for one or more semesters (not including summer) will be considered vacant, and a new member will be elected to fill the unexpired portion of the term.

(d) *Meetings*. Meetings of the Executive Committee will be held as called by the Director. A majority of the representatives will constitute a quorum. A tentative agenda for Executive Committee meetings will be announced to the Committee members and to the faculty no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting. Reports of the proceedings and decisions of the Executive Committee will be made promptly.

2. Undergraduate Studies Committee

(a) *Duties*. The Undergraduate Studies Committee shall undertake periodic reviews of the undergraduate curriculum to assure an effective program for undergraduate majors and enrollees in the IGC's courses. The Committee shall, where appropriate, recommend changes in course offerings, in requirements for the major, in academic advisement procedures, and in other matters related to the undergraduate curriculum.

(b) *Eligibility and election*. The Committee shall consist of the Director of Undergraduate Studies and two IGC faculty (as defined in §(2)(A)). The Director of Undergraduate Studies shall serve as the Chair of the Committee and shall be responsible for overseeing undergraduate academic advisement and course registration.

Representatives to the Undergraduate Studies Committee shall be elected by open vote in an IGC meeting. A majority

vote of those casting ballots is required for election to the Committee.

(c) *Terms of Office*. Representatives shall serve for terms of two years, beginning in the Fall term of the Academic year and ending immediately prior to the start of the Fall term. Representatives may be reelected to consecutive terms. The seat of a Committee member absent from the University for one or more semesters (not including summer) will be considered vacant, and a new member will be elected to fill the unexpired portion of the term.

Once these faculty representatives have been selected, their names shall be made known to the Director of Undergraduate Studies reasonably promptly.

3. Promotion Committee.

(a) *Duties*. There shall be a Promotion Committee (or Committees) designated to assist faculty promotion decisions.

(b) *Composition*. The composition of the IGC's Promotion Committee depends upon the rank of the candidate(s) being evaluated. When evaluating faculty (as defined in §(2)(A)), the Promotion Committee shall be composed of all faculty of a higher rank.

(c) *Vote on promotion*. Faculty on the Promotion Committee accept responsibility for reviewing and evaluating all eBinders considered by the committee.

Abstentions are limited to situations involving real or perceived conflicts of interest. Absences from campus that result in a failure to ballot during the review process will be recorded as "absent," not as an "abstention."

The Promotion Committee shall vote by secret ballot whether to promote eligible candidates.

Reasons for negative ballots must be stated in accordance with the official reasons designated by the university and will be forwarded as part of the candidate's eBinder.

D. Faculty Recruitment. In cases in which a faculty job opening may occur, the Director shall appoint a chair and at least two other faculty members to serve on a search committee. The committee shall make recommendations to the faculty and Director.

E. Unit Reorganization. Unit reorganization may be undertaken by the Director, who shall seek input from the executive committee.

Section 4: Curriculum

The development and review of curriculum is overseen by the Undergraduate Studies Committee.

Section 5. Annual Evaluation of Faculty on Performance and Merit

A. Peer Involvement in Annual Performance and Merit Evaluation. Each faculty member's performance will be evaluated relative to his or her assigned duties.

1. Standards. Each faculty member's performance will be rated annually using the following university rating scale:

   Exceeds Expectations - This describes a faculty member whose accomplishments during the evaluation period exceed performance expectations according to her/his assignment of responsibilities. These accomplishments may include the following: significant research activity; highly effective teaching; and highly engaged and effective service to the department, college, university, discipline, or community.

   Meets Expectations - This describes a faculty member whose accomplishments during the evaluation period meet performance expectations according to his or her assignment of responsibilities. These accomplishments may include the following: research or creative activity; effective teaching; active participation in professional associations; and service to the department, college, university, discipline, or community.

   Official Concern - This describes a faculty member who has difficulty in completing assigned responsibilities during the evaluation period in a manner that is consistent with the high standards of the university.

Does Not Meet Expectations - This describes a faculty member who fails to meet expectations during the evaluation period according to his/her assignment of responsibilities.

2. The Executive Committee shall conduct the peer review portion of the annual evaluation process and provide recommendations to the Director, who shall complete the official annual evaluation, based on evidence of research, teaching, and service submitted by faculty from the previous two calendar years.

3. Each member of the Executive Committee evaluates each faculty member's teaching, research, and service—where relevant—and provides a score from 1 (Does Not Meet Expectations) to 4 (Exceeds Expectations) for each dimension. Those scores are averaged across the members of the committee and then weighted by the faculty member's Assignment of Responsibility to produce an overall score.

   Where relevant, the IGC bases merit salary decisions on the average of the current and previous year's annual evaluations.

   Members of the Executive Committee do not evaluate themselves or spouses/partners within the IGC. To avoid such cases, the Director shall assign other IGC faculty to provide an evaluation.

4. At the end of the evaluation process, the Executive Committee will submit its ratings and accompanying narratives to the Director. No restrictions exist as to how many faculty members can be placed in any category. Each member of the Executive Committee will make a summary judgment of each faculty based on the evidence of performance relative to his/her assigned duties and place him/her in one of the categories detailed above in Section 5(A)(1). The Executive Committee ratings will be submitted as recommendations to the Director.

B. Criteria for Evaluation of Specialized Faculty.

1. Teaching.

(a) *Evidence*. In cases where teaching is a specialized faculty's assigned duty, teaching performance will be evaluated based on the following evidence:

courses taught during the previous two-year period, standardized student evaluations, membership on student

committees (e.g., undergraduate Honors Theses), and mentoring undergraduate students in their research and teaching. Syllabi are to be provided for all courses during the evaluation period.

(b) *Teaching Observations*. Teaching performance also will be evaluated based on teaching observations. The evaluated faculty member shall be notified at least two (2) weeks in advance of the date, time, and place of any direct classroom observation or visitation made in connection with the faculty member's annual evaluation. If the faculty member determines that this date is not appropriate, because of the scheduled class activities, the faculty member and the person(s) responsible for performing the observation or visitation will mutually agree upon an alternate date.

(c) *Report*. Whenever a person conducts a classroom visit for the purpose of a teaching evaluation, a report of his/her observations must be submitted to the faculty member within ten (10) working days of the observation. Otherwise, nothing from the visit may be used in the evaluation process. The report must suggest corrective actions for any shortcoming that is identified. No corrective actions that impinge upon academic freedom may be suggested.

2. Scholarship/Research.

(a) *Evidence*. In cases where research is a specialized faculty's assigned duty, evaluations will be based on the following evidence: publications, conference participation, grant activity, and work in progress. Eligible publications, conference participation, and grant activity are limited to the previous two calendar years.

Only items actually published and appearing in print during that two-year period will be evaluated as "publications." Faculty are required to provide copies of publications.

Items accepted for publication, but which have not yet appeared in print are not to be included among publications. Faculty may list other research activity as "works in progress."

Faculty also will be evaluated on less traditional forms of publications, such as the publication of IGC research reports,

the production of datasets or research materials for public consumption, expert witness reports or testimony, and opinion editorials.

(b) *Quality*. The Executive Committee will scrutinize the quality of publications. Distinctions between journals and other outlets can be drawn based on reputation, citation rates, whether a journal is listed in the ISI-database, and whether it is peer-reviewed. In terms of book publishers, important distinctions can be drawn between scholarly and commercial presses versus vanity publications. If a journal or other outlet is not obviously visible to the scholarly community, the faculty member is responsible for demonstrating that the journal is peer-reviewed and of good quality or that the book publisher is a quality outlet. Additional information including, but not limited to, circulation figures, citation rates, affiliation with an important professional association, recognized rankings by the discipline or a subfield, and a copy of the journal itself may be provided to the committee.

3. Service.

(a) *Evidence*. In cases where service is a specialized faculty's assigned duty, performance will be evaluated based on the following evidence: serving on review panels for student essay competitions, review panels for student awards; serving on scholarship selection panels, giving introductions at IGC events, supervising IGC Ambassadors, assisting with IGC programmatic efforts, service on event panels. Mere attendance at IGC events is not sufficient to count as adequate service.

(b) *Committee Work*. Service evaluations also will focus on whether the person has (where possible) served on IGC faculty committees and if so, in what capacity.

(c) *IGC Brand Recognition Service*. Because the IGC is creating a national brand name, we welcome and encourage media outreach. Consequently, podcasts, television or radio appearances, and media coverage of research will be counted favorably as service to the IGC.

4. **Structure of Merit Pools.** The Director shall determine merit within any merit pools, informed by the merits review process described in this section.

Section 6. Promotion of Faculty

A. Progress Toward Promotion Letter. Each year, every IGC faculty member who is not yet at the highest rank for his or her position will receive a progress toward promotion letter from the Director. That letter outlines progress toward promotion in accordance with the Faculty Handbook and other relevant policies.

B. Peer Involvement in Evaluation of Promotion of Faculty. *See* Section 3(C)(3).

C. Criteria for Promotion of Specialized Faculty.

Specialized faculty members qualify for promotion to the next higher rank based on satisfying the minimum University requirements for that rank and on demonstrated performance above the minimum satisfactory level in his/her areas of assigned duties during at least three years preceding the promotion.

1. Promotion of Teaching Faculty

In the case of specialized teaching faculty promotions, each faculty member shall be evaluated by the Promotion Committee primarily on the basis of classroom teaching. Student evaluations and faculty visitation are an integral part of assessing classroom teaching merit. Each faculty member shall be offered the opportunity to present to the Promotion Committee any other evidence indicating the quality of his or her instruction, such as preparation of special teaching materials, successful teaching techniques, supervision of theses, honors, and awards. Candidates are expected to be active in IGC and/or University committees, student mentoring and the like. Peer dissemination of improved practices in classroom teaching is encouraged but not required for promotion to the next higher rank.

Research and service work will be evaluated by the Promotion Committee commensurate with the portion of the candidate's AOR dedicated to those activities.

2. Promotion of Research Faculty

In the case of specialized research faculty promotions, each faculty member shall be evaluated by the Promotion Committee primarily on the basis of research, using the same criteria listed in §5(B)(2) above.

Faculty being considered for promotion should submit copies of all relevant research. For articles and books that have been accepted for publication but have not yet appeared, letters from journal editors or book publishers indicating that the items have been accepted for publication shall be included.

Teaching and service work will be evaluated by the Promotion Committee commensurate with the portion of the candidate's AOR dedicated to those activities.