**By-Laws
of the
School of Information Sciences**

I. Preamble

In adopting these By-laws, SIS establishes a framework and general procedures for the participation of the faculty, staff, and students in the governance of the School. Detailed procedures for certain functions may be enumerated in other policy documents.

Under the rules of the University, operational authority within the School rests with the Dean. However, communal consensus processes produce better decisions, and a variety of specific procedures and academic traditions mandate extensive involvement of faculty, students, and staff in developing and executing policies. Consequently, it is necessary to have a functional structure within which the members of the SIS community can be represented and can develop recommendations for the operation of the School and the establishment of its policies.

We explicitly recognize that timeliness is sometimes a crucial factor in decisionmaking. Accommodating this factor whilst simultaneously allowing for thorough collegial consultation can be challenging. Similarly, we recognize the need to use the time and attention of the faculty and staff members as effectively as possible. The faculty and the Dean's Office together commit to finding a balance between and a framework for seeking efficiency for shorter term and lower level operational decisions and collegial discussions and consultations for longer term and higher level ones.

We believe that this balance is best achieved through the creation of a representative SIS Council. The responsibilities of the SIS Council include the expression of member views and the exercise of traditional academic responsibilities concerning the maintenance of appropriate academic standards in instruction, the development of educational programs and degree requirements, and the recommendation of policies in such areas as resource allocation, faculty and staff development, student affairs, research and service programs, and the School of Information Sciences' relations with local, regional, national, and international communities.

These By-Laws also establish standing committees, including various Academic Program Committees, a Research Advisory Committee, and a Student Services Advisory Committee.

II. Definitions

Faculty – unless stated otherwise, the term "faculty" will refer to full time faculty members of the University of Pittsburgh whose primary appointments are in the School of Information Sciences. This includes tenured, untenured, and non-tenure-stream faculty members. It excludes adjunct faculty, visiting faculty, and faculty with a secondary appointment in SIS.

Staff – unless stated otherwise, the term "staff" will refer to full or part time permanent staff members who have completed their probationary period.

Students – unless stated otherwise, the term "students" will refer to full or part time students in good standing whose primary academic program is one of the academic degree programs of the School of Information Sciences.

Assembly – unless stated otherwise, the term "assembly" will refer to a plenary meeting of the faculty, staff, and students of the School.

Written – unless stated otherwise, the terms "written" or "in writing" can imply either print or electronic form.

III. SIS Faculty

Members of the SIS faculty corporately and individually are responsible for advancing the teaching, research and service missions of the School of Information Sciences. This responsibility includes

- Assuring high quality undergraduate and graduate education
- Sustaining a research program that contributes to the scholarly record
- Contributing to the life of the School, the University, and the professions

To balance timely decisionmaking, faculty engagement, and focus of education, the faculty delegates certain of its responsibilities to Academic Program Committees and to the SIS Council. The faculty reserves the right to approve new courses, new curricula, major changes to existing courses and curricula, and research interest groups by a majority vote of the faculty, either at assembly or by ballot. SIS Council may approve routine course and curriculum changes, with all such actions reported to the faculty.

To maintain the high quality and focus of its degree programs, the faculty hereby establishes Academic Program Committees for the undergraduate, graduate information science, graduate library and information science, and graduate telecommunications programs. The scope, responsibilities, and composition of these committees are outlined below. The addition or termination of an Academic Program Committee requires an amendment to the By-Laws as described below.

To ensure transparency and accountability, the SIS Faculty is to receive routine reports from the SIS Council and Academic Program Committees on topics such as strategic

planning, progress on priority concerns, opportunities, problems, budget status, and other issues directly related to the life of the School.

The faculty meets at least once per semester in plenary session to be convened by the Dean or his/her representative. Additional meetings may be called by the Dean as necessary, or called by a written petition to the Dean by at least 25% of the faculty. A record of the proceedings of each faculty meeting will be produced, archived, and distributed to the faculty.

IV. The Academic Program Committees

The Academic Program Committees (APCs) are non-elected standing committees consisting of faculty teaching in the respective academic degree program. APCs are chaired by an elected Program Chair, as described below, who serves at the pleasure of the Dean. The concerns falling under the committee's purview include, but are not limited to:

- student issues, such as recruitment, admissions, advisement, progress and completion standards and course / program standards and evaluation,
- curricular issues, such as scheduling course offerings and assuring that programs offered by the School conform to the standards of relevant external accreditation bodies, and
- coordination and articulation of the program and its components and standards with other degree programs offered by the School of Information Sciences.

All APC meetings will be announced to the faculty. Any SIS faculty member may attend any APC meeting. Records of the proceedings of each APC meeting will be kept, archived, and distributed to the faculty.

A. Functions

1. Student Affairs

1. Develop standards, criteria, and procedures for recruiting and admitting students into the degree and related certification programs and assessment of competence at the successive stages of study in attainment of the degree and/or certificate(s).
2. Set course schedules and arrange for instructors for each course.
3. Develop and monitor policies and procedures regarding student advisement, appointment of a student research advisor, the formulation of his or her thesis/dissertation committee, and the scheduling and conduct of thesis/dissertation overview examination and final defenses. These standards shall include expectations for the quality and timeliness of faculty and staff response to student inquiries and requests for advice.
4. Provide a forum for academic concerns of students.

2. Academic Affairs

1. Ensure that all components of the program's requirements are consistent with approved University of Pittsburgh academic policy.
2. Develop standards, guidelines, and requirements for programs of study conforming to the appropriate accreditation agency's standards, where such apply.
3. Develop standards and procedures by which the quality of courses and programs are evaluated.
4. Receive, review, and make recommendations on program proposals.
5. Receive, review, and make recommendations on course proposals.
6. Provide a forum for academic concerns of the faculty and students.
7. Monitor academic policy implementation.

B. Composition

The membership of each Academic Program Committee shall include all voting faculty who teach in that program. "Teach" means being the instructor of record for at least one course in the program for the prior academic year and one for the current year, with appropriate exceptions made for faculty on sabbatical, new faculty joining SIS, and faculty who have "bought out" from their teaching requirement. The Dean or his/her representative will have non-voting status unless s/he meets the membership criteria of the Program Committee. Program committees may elect additional faculty members to be voting members of the APC.

Each Academic Program Committee shall elect a Program Chair by simple majority. The term of office is three years. Elections will normally be held during the spring term, with the Program Chair assuming his/her duties in the fall term.

V. SIS Council

The SIS Council, together with its designated committees, exercises its governance functions in accordance with the guidelines and procedures set forth in these by-laws.

A. Functions

The Council shall:

1. act for and represent the faculty, staff, and students in making recommendations to the Dean on major issues of the School;
2. serve as the School's planning and budgeting committee for the University's Planning and Budgeting System;
3. develop and/or review policies, guidelines, and procedures that support or affect scholarship, research, teaching, and service;
4. develop and/or review policies, guidelines, and procedures in areas of governance, such as personnel, terms and conditions of employment, budget plans for the School, resources, and diversity enhancement;
5. establish committees as needed to develop and implement policies and procedures related to the above areas;
6. coordinate the activities of its various committees, receive the reports, and act upon the recommendations of those committees; and

7. consult with and advise the Dean and/or the representatives of the Dean regarding issues of concern to faculty, staff, and students.

The Council will sometimes find that an issue requires extended effort by a smaller committee. In such cases, mindful of the need for a timely recommendation to the Dean, issues may be referred to committees for final action. In addition, the Dean may request interim reports directly from committees in any case where a decision must be made and the full deliberative process of the Council and its committees has not yet been

B. Composition

The SIS Council consists of eleven (11) voting members. The voting members include four program chairs (Program Chairs for Undergraduate, Graduate IS, Graduate LIS, and Graduate Telecommunications), three faculty elected at large, a Council Chair elected at large, one staff plus one alternate (at large) and two students. Non-voting members include the Dean or his/her representative, the Associate Dean(s) (unless they are voting members by the above criteria), and other staff members designated by the Dean to attend SIS Council meetings.

C. Selection of Council Members and Officers

1. Diversity Engagement – The SIS Council shall act in compliance with and support the principle of equal opportunity in the composition of Council and its committees. The Council will encourage women, minority persons, and those with disabilities to seek election to Council and election or appointment to its committees.
2. Voting Definitions
   a. Voting Faculty – The voting faculty shall be defined as full-time University personnel who hold primary (tenure-stream or non-tenure-stream) faculty or research appointments in the School of Information Sciences. For certain purposes, the University imposes tighter constraints, such as membership in the Graduate Faculty. Nothing in these by-laws is meant to violate or override those constraints.
   b. Voting Staff – The voting staff shall be defined as full- and part-time permanent staff employees (who have successfully completed a provisional period of employment) in the School of Information Sciences.
   c. Voting Students – The voting students shall be defined as students currently registered in one of the academic programs offered by the School of Information Sciences in good standing.
3. Council Nominations and Elections
   a. All voting faculty, staff, and students are eligible for nomination.
   b. On or before February 1 of each year, Council will prepare an announcement of all vacancies on the Council and its committees for the fall term and issue a call for nominations.
   c. Once the nominating process is complete, the Council will prepare election slates that shall consist of a minimum of one candidate more than the number of vacancies on the Council slate.

d. On or before March 1, copies of the slates shall be prepared and made available to eligible faculty, staff, and students of the School.

e. All eligible voting faculty in the School may vote for all faculty vacancies. All eligible voting staff in the School may vote for all staff vacancies. All eligible voting students in the School may vote for all student vacancies. Such balloting may be either electronic or in paper form, provided that individual votes are not identified with individual voters.

f. The SIS Council Chair and one other Council member determined by the Council through simple majority shall count the votes and publish the results (except if either of these individuals are candidates for election on the current ballot, in which case Council will name an alternate).

g. Normal terms of service for faculty and staff members on the SIS Council will be three years. To ensure continuity, the terms of faculty members will be staggered so that at most two at-large elected positions will be open in a given year. The term of service for students will be one year. The terms will commence on the first day of the fall term in the academic year in which members are elected.

h. The following steps will be taken to assure that able candidates are on the ballots for Council and its committees:
   1. The process of electing Council and committee members will begin with an open nomination period, in which members are encouraged to nominate those colleagues they believe most capable of serving in the various roles.
   2. In cases where the number of nominees is insufficient for a competitive election, or where the Dean feels that wide enough representation has not been achieved, the Dean, with advice from the Associate Deans, will seek out and encourage additional candidates to be on the ballot.
   3. The Dean, Associate Deans, and Program Chairs will work with those elected to help them find ways to manage the work involved in committee service. Ordinarily, this will not involve reductions in course load or additional compensation.
   4. In extraordinary cases where the Dean feels that a committee is not sufficiently representative of the School's members, he/she can add up to two additional members to the committee.

i. Filling Council Vacancies
   In the event a Council member is unable to serve to the end of his/her elected term, Council will appoint the person who received the next highest number of votes for that specific vacancy in the preceding election to complete the unexpired term. If no such person is available to fill a vacancy, Council may, at Council's discretion, appoint any other person who would be eligible for election, hold a special election, or leave the vacancy unfilled until the next regular election.

D. Responsibilities of SIS Council Members and Officers

Members of the SIS Council are expected to:

1. Prepare for, attend, and participate actively in all regular and special Council meetings.
2. Chair Council committees. Each Chair's responsibilities include organizing the committee in the fall term each year, scheduling and managing committee activities, and communicating committee activities to Council.
3. Foster communications between Council and SIS faculty, staff, and students.
4. Uphold the purpose of the Council by performing all duties specified in these By-laws.

The Chair is expected to:

1. Call and set the agenda for regular and special Council meetings.
2. Preside at all meetings of the Council.
3. Oversee the governance infrastructure of the Council. Oversight responsibility includes ensuring that Council and its committees have full membership, ensuring that committees perform their functions appropriately, and promoting the dissemination of the results of committees' deliberations appropriately to SIS faculty, staff and students.
4. Appoint members to committees as necessary in the normal course of activities.
5. Engage in consultations with the Dean as needed between regular Council meetings.
6. Ensure that the Dean's office receives and archivally keeps SIS Council records, ensure that the minutes of SIS Council meetings are prepared and approved in a timely fashion, and take responsibility for supervising all necessary secretarial functions of the Council. The Dean's office will provide clerical support for SIS Council operations and will provide for archival records storage. A secure repository for these documents will be provided. At regular intervals, the records of the SIS Council will be sent to the University of Pittsburgh Archives Service Center for permanent storage.

E. Council Meetings and Procedures

1. Regular meetings of the SIS Council shall be held at least once each month during the normal academic year and once during the Summer term.
2. Roberts Rules of Order will be followed during all meetings. A quorum for Council meetings shall consist of a majority of voting members, including at least five faculty. The presiding Chair of the SIS Council may vote on matters before the Council when that vote will affect the outcome or when a quorum is otherwise lacking.
3. The Council shall draw up an agenda for the faculty assembly during each fall and spring term. The purpose of this assembly can vary, but may include gathering feedback from the faculty, discussion of academic issues, etc.
4. The Council may call a School Assembly of faculty, staff and students as deemed necessary. All assemblies require at least one week's advance notice in writing.

5. The Council may declare vacancies on the Council and its committees under circumstances that adversely affect governance (e.g., extended leave of a member; extensive absence from meetings).
6. Recording and Reporting - The Council will keep a record of its activities. The Council will maintain a permanent indexed file of its records in the Dean's Office. The minutes of Council meetings will be recorded and circulated expeditiously to the School. In addition, the Council shall report its activities to the School in a written annual report.
7. Each action of any Committee, other than those on internal committee matters, requires ratification by the SIS Council before its action is recommended to the Dean. Otherwise, committees will act expeditiously to assure timely and effective advice to the Dean in the operation of the School.
8. The Dean's office shall provide archival storage for all documents produced by the SIS Council and its committees and shall provide clerical support for preparation and editing of minutes from Council and committee meetings. Announcements to members of the School Community, ballots, and similar paper or electronic documents will, at Council's discretion, be prepared, supported, and/or distributed by the Dean's office staff.

F. Council Committees

SIS Council may delegate specified governance activities to SIS Council committees. These by-laws establish a structure for standing committees, each of which addresses a specific area of governance. The standing committees include:

- the Research Advisory Committee (RAC)
- the Student Services Advisory Committee (SSAC)

Council has the responsibility to review the standing committee structure every year, and may propose initiation or elimination of committees as appropriate by By-law amendment. In addition, the SIS Council may establish *ad hoc* committees to accomplish tasks not falling under the purview of any standing committee. Ad hoc committees terminate on the date their reports are accepted by Council. All *ad hoc*, Dean-appointed committees shall periodically, or on request, report to Council.

SIS Council meetings are open to all SIS faculty, staff and SIS students who might wish to attend.

1. Formation of Standing Committees

Nomination and election procedures for electing committee members and for filling vacancies on elected committees parallel the procedures for Council membership. For elected committees, there should be a minimum of one person more that the number of vacancies on the ballot.

The Dean and Associate Dean(s) cannot serve as elected members on School committees. The Dean may appoint a representative with non-voting status to all committees.

Unless specifically excepted by the Dean, a faculty, staff, or student member may not serve concurrently on more than two Council committees. Terms of service for faculty and staff members on all elected committees will normally be three years. The terms will commence on the first day of the fall term for the year in which the members were elected. The term of service for students will be one year commencing fall term.

Unless otherwise specified, a Council committee will normally have one-third of its elected membership replaced each year, and it may recommend that the Council designate a replacement for any member who misses two consecutive meetings unless excused by the committee chair.

In the event a committee member is unable to serve to the end of his/her elected term, Council will appoint the person receiving the next highest number of votes for that specific vacancy in the immediately preceding election who was not seated on the Committee to complete the unexpired term. If no such person is available to fill the vacancy, the Council will determine whether to appoint another person who would be eligible for election, call a special election, or fill the vacancy at the next regular election.

2. General Committee Procedures

Committees are expected to meet as regularly as their work requires and no less than once per fall and spring term. The agenda of each meeting should be distributed at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled time of the meeting by the committee chair. Meetings of all committees, with the exception of committees dealing with confidential personnel matters, shall be open to the School. Roberts Rules of Order will guide the conduct of all meetings.

Committee chairs are elected by the SIS Council at its last meeting in the spring, for a one year term beginning in the fall term. A secretary for each committee will be appointed by the Chair of the committee. Each committee will keep a record of its activities and provide copies of minutes to the Council.

Each committee will report to SIS Council (or, if taking final action, the Dean) as requested and/or according to their charge and will submit a written report of its activities to Council at the end of each academic year. All committee recommendations requiring Council ratification are to be sent to Council by the committee chair in writing for action at Council's next regularly scheduled meeting.

Committees may establish subcommittees to perform activities consistent with their charge. Subcommittee membership is not limited to members of the Committee. Academic Program Committees may elect additional faculty members to be voting members of the APC.

G. The Research Advisory Committee

The Research Advisory Committee (RAC) is a committee with overall responsibility for fostering a vital research environment at SIS. It will be chaired by the Dean or his/her

representative and will consist of a representative of each faculty Interest Group (defined below). The particular functions of the RAC include:

- Review and refine SIS policies related to research;
- Engage in strategic planning directed at creating and sustaining a level of research activity appropriate to the size of the school;
- Review SIS research activities by
  - o publishing an annual research report,
  - o benchmarking SIS with respect to peer institutions and
  - o monitoring the progress of internally funded projects;
- Facilitate collaborative research at SIS;
- Facilitate the development of new external research proposals by
  - o Developing interest in RFPs, BAAs, etc. through informal meetings
  - o Developing internal proposal review processes as appropriate
- Act as a liaison with external funders; and
- Review the qualities and uses of existing research space in the IS building and recommend the assignment or reassignment of research space to the SIS Council;

The RAC will be formed by September 15 of each academic year. Each faculty research Interest Group will designate a representative to RAC.

H. The Student Services Advisory Committee

The Student Services Advisory Committee (SSAC) has overall responsibility for fostering an efficient and effective experience for SIS students. It will be chaired by the the Dean or his/her representative and will consist of a representative of each Academic Program Committee. The particular functions of the SSAC include:

- Review and refine SIS policies related to student services, including but not limited to recruitment, admissions, registration, and certification for graduation;
- Ensure that SIS provides a level of service to prospective and current students appropriate to the size and character of the school;
- Advise on improvements to SIS student services by
  - o conducting a periodic review of quality of services rendered,
  - o benchmarking SIS with respect to peer institutions and
  - o monitoring the progress of service enhancement projects;

Each Academic Program Committee will designate a faculty representative to SSAC by September 15 of each academic year.

VI. Interest Groups

The faculty shall establish Interest Groups to foster collaborative research and related endeavors at SIS. SIS Council shall establish the maximum number of Interest Groups that will be recognized. The SIS Faculty will approve the recognized Interest Groups at its first faculty meeting in the Fall Term. Interest groups shall consist of three or more SIS faculty members. An Interest Group may include additional students and researchers with primary appointments outside of SIS.

VII. Dean's Office

The Dean has overall responsibility for the operations and outcomes of the school. In addition to engaging the faculty directly and through the SIS Council, the Dean may choose to establish an Office, consisting of the Dean, Associate Dean(s), Assistant Dean(s), Director(s), and staff as appropriate to the functions and requirements expected of the Dean. Changes in the organization of the Dean's Office will be made with the advice of the SIS Council.

The Dean may appoint a faculty member to be an Associate Dean to perform specific functions that are within his/her responsibilities. An Associate Dean is automatically appointed to the SIS Council as a non-voting member, unless s/he is elected by the faculty to a voting position.

The Dean may appoint a staff member to be an Assistant Dean or Director to perform specific functions that are within his/her responsibilities.

The Dean will consult with external constituencies on matters of importance to SIS. In accordance with University policies, this includes (but is not limited to) convening a Board of Visitors at regular intervals.

The Dean also has the responsibility for certain faculty affairs, including Promotion and Tenure, recruiting new faculty members, ensuring academic integrity, and reviewing the teaching effectiveness of all full time and part time faculty members teaching in SIS programs. To discharge these responsibilities, the Dean shall appoint *ad hoc* committees of faculty, staff and students in accordance with the relevant University and SIS policies and with the advice of the SIS Council.

VIII. Amendment of By-Laws

These By-laws may be amended, repealed, or replaced in the following manner.

A proposal for By-law changes will be distributed to SIS faculty and staff. Existence and availability of the proposal will also be announced through communication vehicles commonly used by SIS students. Within a two-week period following the proposal distribution, faculty, staff, and students may submit (written) position statements to the SIS Council. Position statements and other explanatory material must be circulated to the entire faculty, staff, and to the officers of the primary student organizations.

SIS Council will review the proposal and all position statements. On the basis of that review, SIS Council will vote on the proposal. A majority vote in favor of the proposal will result in the proposal going to a vote among all faculty and staff. A majority of faculty voting in favor and a majority of staff voting in favor results in the by-law changes being accepted and becoming immediately effective (unless other timing is included as part of the proposal).