Plan of Organization
Department of Astronomy
University of Maryland, College Park
Approved May 14, 2017

I. Preamble

This document describes the Plan of Organization for the Department of Astronomy. It shall not supersede College or University policies in force at the time of any action described in this document.

This plan was circulated and then voted upon on in the period May 5, 2017 to May 14, 2017 by electronic mail, following procedures the Astronomy Assembly voted to follow on October 12, 2016. The Astronomy Assembly approved this plan with a vote of 43 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstaining. This version of the Plan includes corrections for minor errors reported by voters.

II. Overview

A. The Department of Astronomy's Plan of Organization reflects its academic mission and the University's commitment to shared governance in four guiding principles. The first three principles are the Department's mission within the University: excellence in education, making major contributions to scientific research, and providing service within the university and to the community. The fourth principle is essential for the Department to meet these mission goals: the Department must be a stimulating, equitable, diverse, and rewarding place to work.

Shared governance at the University is an upward flow of ideas through the University Senate, which collects input from all University constituencies and then votes on policy recommendations to the President and other parts of the University administration. The administration takes these recommendations into account when making administrative decisions, which flow down to the Vice Presidents, Deans, and Department Chairs.

The Department of Astronomy's Plan of Organization reflects this structure, supplementing its representation on the Senate with bodies to advise the Chair, who has the chief administrative responsibility for the Department. The fundamental purpose of the Department is to fulfill its primary functional roles of education, research, and service. To do so, the Department must provide administrative and financial support, as well as providing a healthy workplace environment for all Department members. Figure 1 provides an overview of key elements in the Department's organizational structure.
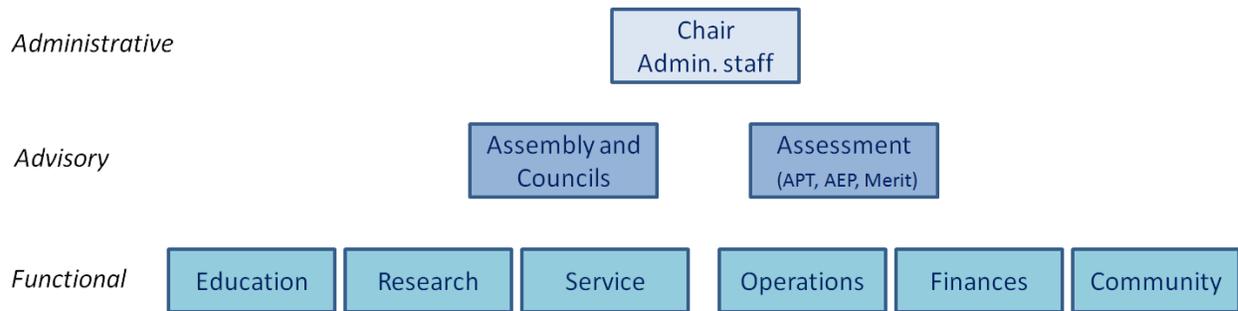
Figure 1: Overview of the Administrative, Advisory, and Functional levels within the Department of Astronomy

B.   The Department of Astronomy's Plan of Organization is described by:
   a.   The Plan of Organization itself (this document), which sets out the principles and structure of the Department's organization. As required by University policy, this document must be approved by a simple majority vote of the Assembly that includes representation by the Department's faculty, staff and students. It is to be reviewed, updated as needed, and confirmed by vote by the Assembly at least once every 10 years, as described in Sections VII and VIII.A.
   b.   Supplementary bylaws that describe the detailed functions of elements within the Plan of Organization. Bylaws cover Departmental procedures for Appointment, Promotion and Tenure (APT) for Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty; for Appointment, Evaluation, and Promotion (AEP) for Professional Track Faculty; for Merit Review; and other topics as necessary. Many of these functions may change on timescales less than the Plan's mandatory review cycle (Section VIII), and may concern only parts of the Department directly. Changes to the bylaws are approved by Departmental vote as described in Section VIII.B.

C.   Terminology in this document
   a.   "Plan" without any further qualifier denotes the Department of Astronomy's Plan of Organization.
   b.   "The Department" without further qualifier refers to the Department of Astronomy.
   c.   "Chair" without further qualifier denotes the Department Chair.
   d.   "TTK faculty" refers to Tenure/Tenure Track Faculty as defined by the University.
   e.   "PTK faculty" refers to Professional Track Faculty as defined by the University.
   f.   "Faculty" without further qualification refers to both TTK and PTK faculty.
   g.   "First rank" refers to the most junior rank within the University's three-rank faculty classification system.
   h.   "Research faculty" refers to all ranks of Research Professors, Research Scientists, Research Engineers, Faculty Specialists, Postdocs, Faculty Assistants, and Research Scholars as defined by the University.
   i.   "Graduate students" refers to students in good standing with the University who have been admitted to graduate degree programs in Astronomy.
   j.   "Undergraduate students" refers to students in good standing with the University who have declared undergraduate majors in Astronomy.

k. "Staff" without further qualifier refers to those with exempt and non-exempt University appointments within the Department of Astronomy.

l. "Days" denotes calendar days.

D. Department governance and structure are bounded by policies defined by the following governing documents and other references maintained by the Senate's, President's, and College's offices:

a. "Plan of Organization for Shared Governance at the University of Maryland, Plans of Organization of Units," Article 11

b. "Plan of Organization for the College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences"

c. "Faculty Titles," University Policy 2-100G

d. "University of Maryland, College Park Policy on Appointment, Promotion and Tenure of Faculty"

e. "UM Guidelines for Appointment, Evaluation, and Promotion of Professional Track Faculty"

f. "Guidelines for Appointment, Evaluation, and Promotion of Professional Track Faculty"

III. Administration of the Department

A. CHAIR

The chief officer of the Department of Astronomy is the Chair, who has overall responsibility for departmental activities including the budget, administrative services, educational programs, research operations, and personnel. The duties of the Chair include but are not limited to:

a. Promotion of an intellectual environment which is inclusive and recognizes the value of diversity and shared governance.

b. Management and encouragement of educational activities in the Department including curriculum development, excellence in teaching, student research, and public outreach.

c. Formulation of long term plans to improve and expand education and research in the Department.

d. Representation of the Department to other academic units, the College, and the University.

The Chair may delegate duties as appropriate, retaining overall responsibility. The Chair shall be a tenured faculty member with tenure home in the Department of Astronomy, and is appointed by the Dean of the College.

B. DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

The Director of Operations (DO) is responsible for departmental administrative and academic operations, and has responsibilities including facilities, designated academic operations, appointments, and interaction with related College and University offices. The DO is responsible for supervision of the administrative office staff. The DO is appointed by and reports to the Chair.

C. DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

The Director of Finance (DF) is the head of the departmental business office, and has responsibility for the financial, payroll, and benefits activities within the Department. This includes State and grant accounting, compliance with University, State, and Federal rules, personnel services, and interaction with the College and University financial and research administration offices. The DF is responsible for supervision of the business office staff. The DF is appointed by and reports to the Chair.

D. GRADUATE DIRECTOR AND GRADUATE ADVISOR
The Chair may appoint one or more members of the Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty to serve as Graduate Director and to be advisor to graduate students.

E. UNDERGRADUATE ADVISOR AND DIRECTOR OF THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM
The Chair may appoint one or more members of the Faculty to serve as Undergraduate Advisor and to oversee the undergraduate program as Director of the Undergraduate Program.

F. RESEARCH DIRECTOR(S)
Specified Research Centers within the Department may have Directors who are appointed by the Chair, College, or University, in consultation with the research unit members and the Department. These Directors may have administrative and leadership duties within their Research Center. In some cases, a Center, and the Directorship of a Center, may be shared with another University unit (Department or Research Unit). Members of the Center who hold appointments in the Department of Astronomy and who are appointed by the Chair are ultimately the responsibility of the Chair, and report within the structure of the Department.

G. OTHER ASSIGNMENTS
The Chair may appoint others who have responsibility for specific administrative functions within the Department, as assigned by the Chair. These position(s) may be filled by faculty or staff, as appropriate for the duties.

IV. Shared Governance of the Department

Article 11 of the "Plan of Organization for Shared Governance at the University of Maryland" requires two department-level advisory bodies: a unit-wide assembly (hereafter the Astronomy Assembly) and an elected Faculty Advisory Council. Continuing in the spirit of shared governance and inclusion, this departmental plan includes an additional two councils described below: the Early Career Advisory Council and the Staff Advisory Council. All members of each Council are voting members of their Council. To properly capture the meaning of formal votes from these advisory councils, in all cases the number of pro, con, and abstention votes shall be recorded and reported, as well as the number of potential and actual participants in the vote. To vote, members must be physically present or able to participate in all relevant discussions by live electronic means.

    A. ASTRONOMY ASSEMBLY
        a. The Astronomy Assembly is an advisory body of the whole. It consists of all Department members. The Assembly shall meet at least once per year to discuss issues of concern to the entire Department. Assembly meetings will be announced widely at least 14 calendar days in advance of the meeting date.
        b. Each academic year a Chair and Vice-Chair of the Assembly shall be elected by majority vote by all members of the Assembly from within the Assembly body to serve single one-year terms. The Assembly Chair (or Vice-Chair, if the Chair is unavailable) will be responsible for convening and leading the Assembly meetings, including the first one in the succeeding academic year. The Assembly Chair is ineligible for reelection for a period of two years following the term. The Vice-Chair may be elected to the Chair's position in the year following election to Vice-Chair.

c. The Department Chair shall report to the Assembly on the state of the Department. Any member of the Assembly may request open discussion of items of broad concern to the Department.

d. The Assembly is responsible for approval of the Department's Plan of Organization and approval for any amendments to the Plan as described in Sections VII and VIII.A.

B. FACULTY ADVISORY COUNCIL

a. The Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) consists of all members of the Tenured/Tenure-track faculty and all Professional Track faculty above the first rank. The Chairs of the Early Career (IV.C) and Staff Advisory Councils (IV.D) shall be invited to attend the FAC meetings as observers.

b. The FAC shall meet at least once per year. Additional meetings may be called by the FAC Chair or at the written request of at least three members of the FAC. The FAC Chair and Vice Chair will consult with the Department Chair to determine issues for the meetings, and will be in charge of setting the meeting agenda. The FAC Chair may invite to FAC meetings representatives of the other departmental groups when issues relevant to these groups are being discussed. Meetings must be widely advertised at least 14 calendar days in advance of the meeting date.

c. The University Plan of Organization section 11.2.a(2)(c) requires FAC members to form a Committee on Committees to nominate slates of candidates for committee service. All Astronomy FAC members shall serve as members of the Department's Committee on Committees.

d. Each academic year a Chair and Vice-Chair of the FAC shall be elected by majority vote by all members of the FAC from within the FAC body to serve single one-year terms. The FAC Chair (or Vice-Chair, if the Chair is unavailable) will be responsible for convening and leading the FAC meetings including the first one in the academic year following their elections. The FAC Chair is ineligible for reelection for a period of two years following the term. The Vice-Chair may be elected to the Chair's position in the year following election to Vice-Chair.

C. EARLY CAREER ADVISORY COUNCIL

a. The Early Career Advisory Council (ECAC) advises the Department Chair on issues with significant impact on scientists early in their careers. ECAC meetings will be announced widely at least 14 calendar days in advance of the meeting date. The ECAC consists of all Department members in the lowest PTK faculty rank, members holding postdoctoral positions, and graduate students. The Chairs of the Faculty (IV.B) and Staff Advisory (IV.D) Councils shall be invited to attend the ECAC meetings as observers.

b. The ECAC shall meet at least once per year. Additional meetings may be called by the ECAC Chair or at the written request of at least three members of the Council. The ECAC Chair and Vice Chair will consult with the Department Chair to determine issues for the meetings, and will be in charge of setting the meeting agenda. The ECAC Chair may invite to ECAC meetings representatives of the other departmental groups when issues relevant to these groups are being discussed. Meetings must be widely advertised at least 14 calendar days in advance of the meeting date.

c. Each academic year a Chair and Vice-Chair of the ECAC shall be elected by majority vote by all members of the ECAC from within the ECAC body to serve single one-year terms. The ECAC Chair (or Vice-Chair, if the Chair is unavailable) shall be responsible for convening and leading the ECAC meetings including the first one in the academic year

following their elections. The ECAC Chair is ineligible for reelection for a period of two years following the term.   The Vice-Chair may be elected to the Chair's position in the year following election to Vice-Chair.

D.   STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL
      a.   The Staff Advisory Council (SAC) advises the Department Chair on issues with significant short- and long-term impacts on its members' work, careers, and development. SAC meetings will be announced to all staff members at least 14 calendar days in advance of the meeting date. The SAC consists of all Department staff members holding appointments of at least 50% time. The Chairs of the Faculty (IV.B) and Early Career Advisory (IV.C) Councils shall be invited to attend the SAC meetings as observers.
      b.   The SAC shall meet at least once per year. Additional meetings may be called by the SAC Chair or at the written request of at least three members of the SAC. The SAC Chair and Vice Chair will consult with the Department Chair to determine issues for the meetings, and will be in charge of setting the meeting agenda. The SAC Chair may invite to SAC meetings representatives of the other departmental groups when issues relevant to these groups are being discussed. Meetings must be widely advertised at least 14 calendar days in advance of the meeting date.
      c.   Each academic year a Chair and Vice-Chair of the SAC shall be elected by majority vote by all members of the Council from within the SAC body to serve single one-year terms. The SAC Chair (or Vice-Chair, if the Chair is unavailable) shall be responsible for convening and leading SAC meetings including the first one of the academic year following their elections. The SAC Chair is ineligible for reelection for a period of two years following the term. The Vice-Chair may be elected to the Chair's position in the year following election to Vice-Chair.

V. Standing Administrative Committees

The Department has Administrative Committees to assist with effective functioning of the Department. Some committees are requirements of the College and/or University, others are deemed necessary by the Chair and Department. Standing committees shall be constituted annually. Ad hoc committees shall be constituted as needed, following the procedures of Section VI.

The standing committees are:

A.   APPOINTMENT, EVALUATION, PROMOTION, AND TENURE COMMITTEES
      a.   Tenured/Tenure Track Faculty (APT Committee)
      The APT committee consists of all TTK faculty at or above the level into which the candidate would be promoted. The Chair appoints at least two TTK faculty members to prepare individual cases and to make presentations to the First- and Second-level reviews. Details of the review criteria shall be in the Plan's bylaws titled "Procedures and Guidelines for Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure of Tenure/Tenure-Track Faculty."
      b.   Professional Track Faculty above the first rank (AEP Committee)
      The AEP committee for appointments and promotions for PTK ranks above the first rank consists of all PTK and TTK at or above the level into which the candidate would be promoted. The Department Chair appoints at least two or more qualifying faculty to

prepare the case and make presentations to the First level and other reviews. Details of the review criteria shall be in the Plan's bylaws titled "Procedures and Guidelines for Appointments, Promotions for Professional Track Faculty."

    c. Professional Track Research Faculty at the first rank

The Department Chair will select a subcommittee composed of at least one research PTK and at least one TTK faculty to review and recommend appointments at the first rank. The subcommittee will make its recommendations available to the AEP committee. If, within 7 days of the distribution of the subcommittee recommendations, more than 1/4 of the AEP members request further information or object to the appointment a full AEP meeting shall be called to evaluate the appointment. In all cases the Department Chair consults with the appointment subcommittee before making these appointments.

    d. Other cases

Appointments to all other ranks will be made by the Chair. As appropriate, the Chair will consult with Department members, a sponsoring faculty member, or in the case of Adjunct and Affiliate titles, after discussion and recommendation from the appropriate APT or AEP Committee.

B. MERIT PAY COMMITTEES

    a. Tenured/Tenure-Track faculty

This committee shall be composed of a minimum of three TTK faculty selected in a manner consistent with University Policy VII-4.00(A). The committee will assist the Department Chair in determining merit pay according to University distribution guidelines and the Department's Merit Pay Distribution Plan. Details of the review criteria shall be in the Plan's bylaws titled "Procedures and Guidelines for the Merit Pay Distribution Plan for Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty."

    b. Lecturers above the first rank

Since teaching is the essential component of review for Lecturers, it is most appropriate that Lecturers shall be reviewed by the TTK faculty Merit Committee. Details of the review criteria shall be in the Plan's bylaws titled "Procedures and Guidelines for the Merit Pay Distribution Plan for Professional Track Faculty."

    c. Professional Track Research Faculty above the first rank (other than Lecturers)

This committee shall consist of a minimum of three PTK Research faculty above the first rank. If more than 1/3 of the PTK faculty work primarily off campus then one of the committee members must be elected from that pool. PTK are not covered by UM Policy VII-4.00(A), and details of the review criteria shall be in the Plan's bylaws titled "Procedures and Guidelines for the Merit Pay Distribution Plan for Professional Track Faculty."

    d. Staff, first rank PTK, postdocs, and all others not covered above

Merit pay reviews for staff, PTK first rank, postdocs, and all other department members not covered by Sections VI.B.a, VI.B.b, or VI.B.c will be the responsibility of the Chair, or the Chair's designate with the Chair's review and approval, in consultation with the department member's supervisor.

C. COMPUTER COMMITTEE

The Computer Committee responsibilities include but are not limited to: recommending Department policy on computer and network use and ensuring compliance with relevant University policy, making recommendations on significant computing initiatives, overseeing

local administration of departmental computers and network, and acting as liaison to the University's information technology unit. The Computer Committee is appointed by the Chair, and must include departmental system administrator(s) and representation from Tenured/Tenure-track faculty, Professional Track faculty, and the graduate students. The Chair of the Committee shall also formally supervise any of the department's exempt or non-exempt staff with significant responsibilities in computing or information technology. The Committee shall meet at least once per semester.

D. QUALIFYING EXAM COMMITTEE
The Qualifying Exam Committee will have an organizing Chair from the TTK faculty, with the remainder of the committee drawn from the TTK faculty who have taught coursework directly relevant to the Qualifying Exam. This committee will prepare and grade the Qualifying Exam that is required for candidates applying to the Ph.D. program.

E. SECOND YEAR PROJECT EVALUATION COMMITTEE
The Second Year Project Evaluation Committee shall have three members drawn from TTK faculty; one of the three will be appointed as organizing Chair by the Department Chair. This committee is responsible for evaluating written and oral presentations by graduate students as part of their second-year research projects. The committee Chair will prepare a written evaluation for each student and will report on the results when the students are considered for admission to the Ph.D. program.

F. GRADUATE ENTRANCE COMMITTEE
The Graduate Entrance Committee will consist of at least three TTK faculty. The Committee is strongly encouraged to involve current graduate students in interviews and campus visits. This committee identifies students who will be offered admission to the graduate program in Astronomy.

G. EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee responsibilities include but are not limited to recommending initiatives to raise awareness of issues related to inclusion and diversity in astronomy and related fields, recommending actions the Department can take to broaden participation of under-represented groups in the field, and identifying presenters for regular seminars on related topics. The Committee is annually appointed by the Department Chair and shall include representation from Tenured/Tenure-track faculty, Professional Track faculty, staff, and graduate and undergraduate students.

VI. Ad Hoc Administrative Committees

Ad Hoc Committees may be formed and charged for specific purposes by the Chair, the Astronomy Assembly, or any Advisory Council.

A. As necessary, the Chair will charge and appoint members to committees to conduct studies and reviews of department elements. Activities include, for instance, conducting reviews and modifications of graduate and undergraduate program curricula, forming search committees, providing broad overviews of student progress, and other tasks necessary to advance Department goals. These committees will report to the Chair.

B. The Assembly or any Council may form Ad Hoc Committees to study items of particular interest to the Committee. Ad Hoc Committees formed in this manner will report to the charging body. The quorum necessary to move to a vote to form an Ad Hoc committee shall be the 1/3 of the number of committee members eligible to vote, or 25 members eligible to vote, whichever is smaller. Committee members must attend either physically or be able to participate in relevant committee discussions via live electronic connection to vote. To properly capture the meaning of formal votes from these advisory councils, in all cases the number of pro, con, and abstain votes are to be recorded and reported, along with the number of potential and actual participants in the vote.

VII. Amendments to the Plan and Amendments to Bylaws

A. PLAN AMENDMENTS:
   a. Amendments to this Plan may be proposed by the Chair, an Ad Hoc Committee formed for this purpose, or by petition signed by at least 1/4 of members of the Astronomy Assembly.
   b. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the Chair. The Chair shall verify that the amendments are consistent with University and College policies.
   c. If the amendments are consistent with University and College policies, the Chair shall distribute the proposed Amendments to the members of the Astronomy Assembly and call a special meeting of the Assembly, giving at least 14 days advance notice of the meeting.
   d. Assembly approval of any proposed amendment requires a positive majority vote by those attending the meeting physically or via live electronic connection. Attendees must be able to participate in all discussions of the amendments during the meeting in order to have their votes recorded.

B. BYLAW AMENDMENTS:
   a. Amendments to the Bylaws of this Plan may be proposed by the Chair, an Ad Hoc Committee formed for this purpose, or by petition signed by at least 25 members of the Astronomy Assembly or more than 1/2 of the members of any of the Advisory Committees.
   b. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the Chair. The Chair shall verify that the amendments are consistent with University and College policies.
   c. If the amendments are consistent with University and College policies, the Chair shall determine which body shall vote on the matter, and ensure that the proposed amendments are available to all potentially voting departmental members for review and comment at least 14 days in advance of a meeting to discuss and vote on the amendments.   The Chairs of the FAC, ECAC, and SAC shall receive copies of the proposed amendments.
   d. Bylaws pertaining to the APT process and TTK merit shall be referred to the TTK faculty for discussion and vote. Bylaws pertaining to the AEP process and PTK merit shall be referred to the Faculty Advisory Council for discussion and vote. All other bylaws will be referred to the Astronomy Assembly for discussion and vote.
   e. Approval of any proposed change or addition requires a positive vote by a simple majority of those attending the meeting physically or via live electronic connection. Voting members must be members of the group entitled to vote on the matter (Assembly, FAC, ECAC, SAC, or TTK faculty) and who are able to participate in all relevant discussions during the meeting to have their vote recorded.

VIII. Review of Plan

A. Not less than five years and not more than ten years after approval of the Plan of Organization, the Chair will hold an election to form an Ad Hoc Committee to perform a full review of the Plan and its Bylaws. The Ad Hoc Committee for this review shall include representation from all constituents of the Department, elected by simple majorities of the voting constituent bodies. The Committee shall report the results of its review to the Astronomy Assembly in writing, identifying areas where updates or changes are needed, and proposing revisions to the Plan. The Astronomy Assembly will discuss the Plan and vote on proposed revisions and/or renewal of the unrevised Plan. A simple majority positive vote of the members of the Assembly attending physically or via live electronic connection is required to approve the Plan. Voting members must be able to participate in all discussions during the meeting.

B. Subsequent reviews of the Plan will occur on intervals of not less than five years and not more than ten years. The same procedure as in VIII.A will be followed in each such review.

IX. Dissemination of the Plan and Bylaws

A. A copy of the Astronomy Department's Plan of Organization and all of its Bylaws including APT and AEP Plans, TTK and PTK Merit Pay Distribution Plans, and other relevant departmental shared governance documents shall be easily accessible for download from the Department website.