

SJSU CS Department By-Laws

Adopted November 13, 2025

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1 Name and Affiliation

The San Jose State University Computer Science Department, hereafter, the CS Department, is a university department within the College of Science of San Jose State University (SJSU), a campus of the California State University (CSU) System, a university within the State of California, a state within the United States of America.

2 Purpose of this Document

This document describes the set of rules, policies, and procedures that the CS Department follows. If any of these by-laws conflict with a rule, policy, or procedure of the College of Science, San Jose State University, the California State University System, the State of California, or the United States of America, the latter rule, policy, or procedure shall prevail.

3 Department Members

The members of the CS Department consist of the tenured and tenure-track faculty, lecturers, student assistants, and office staff hired to work for the CS Department as well as students pursuing degrees offered wholly or in-part by the CS Department.

4 Offices, Administrative Assignments, and Committees

The CS Department has a number of single person offices and administrative assignments as well as multi-person committees. Committees are allowed to determine their own operating rules, policies, and procedures as long as they are consistent with department and larger governing unit rules, policies, and procedures.

4.1 Elected Offices

The CS Department has the following elected positions:

1. Chair,
2. Associate Chair,
3. Graduate Coordinator, and
4. Undergraduate Coordinator.

The election process for these offices is described under [7.8 Determine Elected Positions](#).

4.2 Elected Committees

The CS Department has the following committees where membership is determined by vote:

1. Executive Committee,
2. Retention, Tenure, and Promotion Committee,
3. Post Tenure Review Committee,
4. Lecturer Evaluation Committee,
5. Recruitment Committee,
6. Recruitment for CS-ED Committee.

The election process for these committees is described under [7.8 Determine Elected Positions](#).

4.3 Non-Elected Administrative Assignments

The CS Department has the following Non-Elected Administrative Assignments:

1. CS Assessment Coordinator,
2. MSCS/BSDS/BSCS-L Assessment Coordinator,
3. BS-CSL Program Coordinator,
4. Bioinformatics Minor Advisor,

5. MS Bioinformatics Program Coordinator,
6. MS Data Science Program Coordinator,
7. Cybersecurity Certificates Coordinator,
8. Basic AI Certificate Coordinator,
9. Advanced AI Certificate Coordinator,
10. Course Coordinator,
11. Writing Assessment Coordinator,
12. Internship Director,
13. CS Study Lab Coordinator, and
14. CS Club Liaison.

The procedure for determining these assignments is described under [7.9 Determine Non-Elected Administrative Positions](#).

4.4 PACCs - Program Admission and Curriculum Committees

These are interdepartmental committees. Each time the CS Department begins the process of creating a new program with another department a committee of this kind is created. The procedure for how membership in these committees is determined is described under [7.10 Determine Membership in PACC and Policy Committees](#).

4.5 Policy Committees

The CS Department has the following policy committees:

1. Assessment Committee,
2. Graduate Curriculum Committee,
3. Undergrad Curriculum Committee,

4. Industry Advisory Board,
5. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee,
6. Scholarship Committee,
7. Social Media Committee, and
8. TA Development Committee.

For all of these committees other than the Industry Advisory Board, the procedure for how membership in these committees is determined is described under [7.10 Determine Membership in PACC and Policy Committees](#). Membership in the Industry Advisory Board is determined by [7.11 Determine Industry Advisory Board Membership](#).

4.6 Course Committees

The CS Department has a number of course committees that are responsible developing and maintaining the courses offered by the department in a particular area. These committees are:

1. Programming, Algorithms, and Theory Committee,
2. Systems and Architecture Committee,
3. Software Engineering and Databases Committee,
4. Specialty Courses Committee,
5. Bioinformatics Course Committee, and
6. Data Science Course Committee.

The procedure for how membership in these committees is determined is described under [7.12 Determine Course Committee Membership](#).

4.7 Ad Hoc Committees

Ad Hoc Committees are volunteer committees that are created from time to time to talk about current policy issues within the department.

4.8 Non-Elected College Committee Representatives

The CS Department appoints a representative to each of the following College of Science committees:

1. Awards Committee
2. Curriculum and Instruction Committee
3. Safety Committee

These appointments are done according to ?? ??.

4.9 Elected-College College Committee Representatives

The CS Department elects a representative to each of the following College of Science committees:

1. Research
2. RTP
3. Sabbatical Leave

The college gets to decide duration of these committees. College RTP membership is 2 years, the others are 1 year. The election process is described under [7.8 Determine Elected Positions](#).

5 Voting

The base description of the voting policies and procedures of the CS Department are they are the voting policies and procedures as specified at the College of Science and University Level. This base description has been further clarified and specified at the CS Department Level by policies and procedures found under [6 Policies](#) and [7 Procedures](#).

6 Policies

This section lists all of the policies currently enacted by the CS Department and when they came into effect.

6.1 Policy on Secret Ballot Vote

(Adopted Aug 19, 2025)

Secret ballot votes will by default be done online using ADoodle (or similar set-up). To ensure voting times of email addresses and vote tallies cannot be correlated, faculty witnesses will be present at the creation of a poll to make sure the settings are correct.

6.2 Policy on Adding Program Votes

(Adopted Aug 19, 2025)

Adding programs will be done by a secret ballot vote.

6.3 Policy on RTP Committee Membership

(Adopted May 1, 2025):

Allow up to two associate professors on RTP committee.

6.4 Policy on Elected Department positions

(Adopted February 20, 2025)

In addition to the chair, the positions of Associate Chair, Graduate Curriculum Coordinator, and Undergrad Curriculum Coordinator shall be elected. These positions are for a 2 year term. All elected committee positions will now be for 1 year. The election procedure is described under procedures.

6.5 Policy on AI in 297/298/299 Reports

(Adopted November 12, 2023)

View as passing if turnitin.com score is < 30%, otherwise, grad coordinator works with faculty supervisor to get student to rewrite.

6.6 Policy on use of CS 185AC, CS 85AC in BSCS and BSDS

(Adopted April 13, 2023)

At most 6 units of CS 185AC and 85AC may be used for BSCS (and BSDS).

6.7 Policy on ABET Withdrawal

(Adopted Mar 15, 2023 email ballot, after Mar 9 Meeting)

As a department, we will still follow WASC accreditation

6.8 Policy on Maximum Number of CS297/CS298 Students Simultaneously Advised

(Adopted April 28, 2022)

At most 9 students/semester can be banked for payback. Maximum 15 students.

6.9 Policy on Committee Preference Voting

(Adopted April 29, 2021)

Department will use a Committee Preference Form to allow everyone to make their preferences known before voting.

6.10 Policy on CS200W

(Adopted Feb 21, 2019)

MS students should take CS200W in their first year.

6.11 Policy on Peer Evaluation Low Scores

(Adopted March 22, 2018)

Any peer eval with a 3 or lower must give an explanation as to why.

6.12 Policy on Enrollment in CS297

(Adopted October 8, 2015)

In order to enroll in CS 297, a student must be fully classified in the MSCS program.

6.13 Policy on RTP Committee

(Adopted May 4, 2007)

Associate and Tenured Associate Professors should be added to the Department RTP ballot.

7 Procedures

This section lists all of the procedures currently in use by the CS Department and when they first officially adopted.

7.1 Procedure to Maintain Department By-Laws

The initial set of By-Laws and the following procedure to maintain them were adopted at the Nov 13, 2025 meeting.

1. The initial set of by-laws will consist of the policies the department has previously voted on related to the functioning of the department (currently, listed under the policy tab of the wiki) together with the procedures currently listed under the procedure tab of the wiki. These procedures largely derive from current department practice, voted on procedures, and our previous 2006 attempts at By-Laws.
2. The initial set of by-laws will be made into a single PDF which will constitute our first By-Laws.
3. As new policies and procedures related to department operations are voted for, they will be added to the By-Laws.
4. Thereafter, the set of voted on policies and procedures related to department operations will be compiled into a single PDF each May after the last department meeting and serve as the By-Laws for the following year. If a policy or procedure is approved it takes effect immediately, but won't be in the By-Laws till the next time they are collated. By-Laws will be published at a link available to all faculty (both Tenured/Tenure-Track, and Lecturers).

7.2 Change a Department Policy or Procedure

(Adopted Nov 13, 2025 meeting)

1. Contact the executive committee (exec-cs-group@sjsu.edu) with your suggested policy or procedure change.
2. After discussion, assuming it warrants department consideration, the executive committee forwards the item to the chair as an agenda item for the next department meeting.

7.3 Add a Department Agenda Item

(Adopted Nov 13, 2025 meeting)

1. Contact relevant department committee, get them to discuss it, and potentially bring to the department.
2. A week before department meeting, the department chair will ping for, or the committee chairs will send of their own volition, new agenda items.
3. The chair prioritizes items and chooses as many items as possible in order of this priority that will fit in a meeting. Items that miss the next meeting will have higher priority for subsequent meetings.

7.4 Create an Experimental Course - CS185 or CS286

(Adopted Nov 13, 2025 meeting)

1. Choose if you want to run the class at the undergrad (CS185) or grad level (CS286).
2. Send a syllabus to the relevant course committee and get it approved.
3. Get it approved by the UCC or GCC.
4. Get the chair to agree to schedule it. The earlier this is done in the semester previous to when the course will be taught the more likely the chair will agree to schedule it.

7.5 Add or Change a Course in the Catalog

(Adopted Nov 13, 2025 meeting.) The first step is getting the change approved by the department:

1. Get the course add/change approved by the course committee .
2. Get the course add/change approved by the UCC or GCC.
3. Get the course add/change approved by Department Vote.

Next you will need to go to curriculog: unfortunately this step keeps changing. The one thing that seems constant: after you launch the proposal you must go to decisions and approve the proposal yourself

7.6 Update a Canonical Course Syllabus

(Adopted Nov. 19, 2020/Nov 13, 2025 meeting)

1. Send Ad hoc requests for updates to syllabuses or changes to CLOs to the relevant course committee. Contact information can be found on the Committees Page .
2. In the November 19, 2020 Department Meeting (CS Dept Meetings), the following semesterly update pattern to syllabuses was enacted: Program committees update even numbered courses (if needed) by the end (last meeting) of the Spring Semester and update odd numbered courses (if needed) by the end (last meeting) of each Fall Semester. It is suggested course committees use the following procedure to do this:
 - (a) Read current canonical syllabus for a course. It is recommended committee members divvy up equally the courses to be considered for the semester and each take a few to look at. The course files are stored in Course Media . The links below this are to folders for each course committee. In each course committee folder, there is a sub-folder for each course the committee managed. Each course sub-folder should contain a sequence of one or more syllabuses named according to when that syllabuses was revised. Look at the most recent syllabus.
 - (b) Update a course if need be . If a course committee member finds a course that needs an update, to add a new version of the course, click the pencil icon to switch into wiki edit mode. Navigate to the media folder for the course. Then either use the Ellipsis icon and choose File Upload, or drag and drop the file from your desktop (can only do one file at a time). Be sure to name the file with the date it was adopted by the committee in the format: YYYY-MM-DD.ext where ext is one of html, txt, docx, or pdf. Ideally, you should use the accessible template from Canvas when you make new syllabuses. Do not delete old versions – these are an interesting historical record.
 - (c) Record your decisions for each course. From the committee assignment page, clicking on a particular course committee’s name takes you to that committees minutes. Click on the pencil icon.

Add a new level 2 heading saying the semester (for example, Fall 2024) and the words Course Updates. Beneath this for each course to be considered add one line with the name of the course and the action done. Below are some examples:

```
==Spring 2024 Course Updates==  
CS 174 revised syllabus  
CS 166 no change -- looks good  
CS 154 no change -- felt moderately guilty
```

7.7 Determine CS180 - CS280 - CS297 - CS298 Payback Status

(Adopted Nov 13, 2025 meeting)

The Chair and Analyst maintain a shared spreadsheet Faculty Payback Current Chair. This has one sheet/tenured/tenure-track faculty. To maintain this spreadsheet, once a semester, after the Workload Report Computer Science spreadsheet have been finalized (how the department reports to higher levels of administration how each faculty WTUs are being accounted for), the office analyst:

1. Adds lines for the previous semester CS180/CS280/CS297/CS298 credits to each faculty sheet
2. Adds a line for deductions to each sheet based on the Workload Report Computer Science spreadsheet
3. Emails each faculty member their current sheet
4. Faculty can then compare this with prior emailed sheets to understand the update

7.8 Determine Elected Positions

(Adopted February 20, 2025)

1. Elected officers and committee memberships are determined each year by paper ballot vote conducted between the April and May department meetings.

2. At the April Department Meeting candidates will be given a brief opportunity to pitch their candidacy.
3. Both tenure/tenure-track faculty and lecturers can vote.
4. For a given position, the candidate receiving the most votes from tenure/tenure-track faculty wins. If there is a tie, the lecturer vote tallies are used to determine the winner. If this is still a tie, then the chair (or for the chair position, the dean) chooses the winner.
5. If only one person is nominated, they win by unanimous consent without a vote.
6. If elected, one's term begins with the start of the immediately following academic year.
7. The terms of office for different positions are as follows:
 - (a) The Chair term is for four years.
 - (b) Elected Officers terms are for two year terms, but may be recalled sooner at the chair's discretion.
 - (c) Elected College Committee positions and Elected Department Committee positions are for a single year (prior to 2025, some were for two years).
8. In the event that an elected position or office becomes vacant before the end of a term, the chair can choose an interim replacement to fill out the remainder of the term.
9. Eligibility for Elected College Committee positions and Elected Department Committee is restricted to tenure/tenure-track faculty and may be restricted to associate or full professors depending on the committee. In particular, the RTP committee and the Post Tenure Review committee are restricted to tenured faculty per university policy.
10. If you are eligible for an Elected College Committee position or Elected Department Committee, you can be elected to that position in a given year, regardless of your desire to run or the fact that you served previously. You can indicate your relative preferences between such committees on the annual committee preference form. Preferences will be indicated on the ballot.

11. Elected offices are open to either tenure/tenure-track faculty or lecturers.
12. To be considered for an elected office, you must either:
 - (a) Be the current incumbent office holder and not explicitly request of the chair not to continue serving.
 - (b) Nominate yourself by adding your name for the desired office to the next academic year section of the Elected Officer Nomination Page or by emailing the chair to add your name in the correct place.

7.9 Determine Non-Elected Administrative Positions

(Adopted Nov 13, 2025 meeting)

Administrative assignments to individuals are made by the chair.

7.10 Determine Membership in PACC and Policy Committees

(Adopted Nov 13, 2025 meeting)

All appointments are annual by the chair who should consult the Committee on Committees (aka the executive committee's name for one meeting in the Spring), but in some cases where continuity is desirable reappointments are common. I.e., if the committee skips the matter when doing assignments, the previous year's assignments are assumed to be still in effect. For PACCs (program admissions and curriculum committees), which are between departments, there may be a guiding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two departments which can further constrain the committee selection, usually in size.

7.11 Determine Industry Advisory Board Membership

(Adopted Nov 13, 2025 meeting)

Membership is at the invitation of the Chair.

7.12 Determine Course Committee Membership

(Adopted Nov 13, 2025 meeting)

CS Dept Committee Structure and Governance)): Course committee membership is determined by the Committee on Committees (aka the executive committee's name for one meeting in the Spring). All appointments are annual.

7.13 Determine College of Science Representatives

(Adopted Nov 13, 2025 meeting)

All appointments are annual by the Committee on Committees (aka the executive committee's name for one meeting in the Spring).

7.14 Find University Level Procedures that Effect the Department

University Personnel documents a number of Procedures for the Governance of Academic Departments. This includes procedures for electing department chairs as well as members of various college level committees.