Western Washington University
Computer Science Department
Operating Policies and Procedures

Approvals—Department (5/6/2026), PPBC (5/14/2026), Dean (7/30/2026), Provost (7/30/2026)

A Department Mission Statement

The mission of the Computer Science Department is to provide the highest quality education in computer science; to perform research that advances the state-of-the-art in computer science; to produce graduates that are knowledgeable, articulate, principled, innovative, confident, and able to think critically; to be engaged in local, state, and national issues to the benefit of both the public and private sector; and to maintain a diverse college community.

The applied nature of computer science necessitates involving students in software development projects, research projects, and/or internships as part of their learning experience. Undergraduate and graduate students are presented opportunities to investigate in depth those areas of computer science that correspond to faculty research, creative projects and interests, and are provided an understanding of the open questions in those areas.

The department provides courses to other undergraduate programs to meet their computing needs, and offers courses and programs in which knowledge and training in computing enhances and complements other majors.

Scholarly activities, software development, and research are an integral part of the department's instructional mission.

The department strives to provide leadership in computing to the university and community, and to serve the profession.

B Department Goals

1. Prepare students for successful careers in Computer Science and related disciplines.
2. Prepare students for graduate school.
3. Instill in students an understanding and appreciation of the need for life-long learning.
4. Establish and maintain an atmosphere that supports faculty development and growth.

C Department Membership

Department Members: the faculty and staff.

1. T/TT Faculty: Tenured and Tenure-track faculty
2. Sr. Instructor: NTT faculty whose appointment is for more than one year
3. NTT Faculty: Temporary faculty with annual appointments
4. Faculty: T/TT, and NTT (both sr. instructors and NTT)
5. Staff: Administrative and technical staff of the department, whether classified or exempt.

D Voting Rights

Department Meetings: Department members are eligible to sit as voting members. T/TT only can vote on personnel matters, while T/TT and sr. Instructors only can vote on curriculum matters. NTT and staff are given the opportunity to cast advisory votes on personnel and curriculum matters. If the advisory vote of NTT and staff would overturn the majority vote of the T/TT and sr. instructors , then the vote does not carry and there are continued discussions, followed by a second voting round. The TT/T and sr. instructors vote is final during the second round of voting.

Voting occurs at department meetings.

Committees: The committee definitions define membership and voting rights.

Selection of the Chair: All department members have voting rights during the chair selection process, which is advisory to the dean. Members on professional or parental or family leave may vote at their option and to the extent they believe appropriate, but they are not required to do so.

Except where noted otherwise in this document, all decisions of department meetings and committees shall be made on a simple majority of personnel with voting privileges.

E Department Meetings

The department shall meet regularly during the academic year, nominally every two weeks during each full month of instruction. A request for a department meeting in addition to a regularly scheduled one will be granted if requested by at least one-fifth of the members of the department.

A quorum at department meetings shall consist of a simple majority of the voting members, who are contractually required to attend meetings, and who are needed to conduct the business on the agenda. Members on leave shall not be counted in determining a quorum.

The agenda for a department meeting will be made available no later than the day before the scheduled meeting. If an agenda item requires a vote, the materials in support of the vote shall be made available at least 24 hours before the scheduled meeting.

F Student / Faculty Meetings

At least once per quarter the department shall communicate with students to apprise them of departmental decisions and directions.

G The Chair

The chair is a tenured faculty member who represents the department and its interests before the University administration and other constituencies. The chair summarizes the department's evaluations and writes an independent recommendation in the tenure and promotion process. The chair summarizes the department's annual evaluations of faculty and writes the general merit evaluations of tenured faculty. The chair encourages department faculty in their professional development to help them achieve their fullest potential. The chair assumes other duties as needed.

The chair shall preside at department meetings but may designate a substitute in the event of absence from campus.

The chair supervises the department's budget, approves all expenditures, oversees office work, record keeping and purchases of the department. The chair is responsible for seeing that all

decisions made by the department faculty are carried out. In the event of an absence from campus, the chair shall designate a substitute.

The chair's duties are enumerated in Section 17 of the CBA. Procedures for the selection and term of office of the chair are also described in Section 17 of the CBA. See also Section V of the CSE COPEP.

H Workload Policy

This policy applies to tenure-track and tenured faculty. It is meant to ensure that the department can continue to serve students and the region by meeting the changing needs of the discipline, and to enable faculty to make significant desirable contributions to the university including the graduate program.

The standard teaching workload is 5 courses per AY.

Faculty when soliciting courses for the upcoming year will provide a record of their past recent achievements **or plans** for scholarship, service, or teaching duties for the upcoming year, to be considered by CS Exec for a possible course release.

A new faculty hire may have as part of their hire contract one or more course reductions. Teaching load may also be reduced due to course buyouts or leaves.

- The chair teaching load is agreed upon in consultation with the Dean of CSE.
- Directors of ABET-accredited programs receive a one course reduction each year, and a two course reduction during an accreditation year.
- The graduate program advisor receives one course release for serving in their role.
- Teaching the 6 seminar courses (Graduate Seminar I and II in each of 3 quarters) during an academic year counts as 2 courses.
- The chair in advisement with CS Exec determines whether a faculty's level of scholarship, teaching, or service warrants asking the CSE Dean for any additional course releases.

I Course Releases in Support of MS

These course releases in support of the MS program are contingent on availability of funds for replacement faculty.

The MS advisor and CS department chair will maintain a record that tabulates for each tenured and tenure-track faculty member the following:

- Number of MS students successfully graduated
- Number of MS core and/or advanced elective courses designed (e.g. preparing all course materials such as lectures, assessment components, etc.)

Accounting Mechanism and Prioritization

The number of MS students successfully graduated has greater weight (but not at the exclusion of) than the number of new MS core and/or advanced MS elective courses designed. While these are aspects that will be considered, there is no guarantee that designing a number of grad-only core and electives will result in a reduction. Stacked electives do not count towards a MS course release. A faculty member who graduates three or more MS students accumulating 45 or more

credits of CSCI 692 in the course of advising in a 2-year window, will be considered for a course release in support of the MS program. A faculty member who co-supervises a MS student will be recorded as having graduated a fraction of a student, as specified in the 692 advising form.

Course Release mechanism

1. Each year at the time when the schedule for the upcoming academic year is being constructed, the CS department chair will coordinate with the dean's office to determine the expected number of course releases (in support of MS) that will be available for the upcoming year.
2. The grad advisor and CS department chair will assign course releases to faculty based on the accounting mechanism and prioritization described above.
3. The chair will consult with the faculty member to get confirmation of their intent to receive the course release; a faculty member can defer the course release, but a deferment does not guarantee that a faculty member will receive the course release the following year.
4. Any faculty member who is awarded and accepts a course release has their advising and teaching record in the accounting mechanism and record reset to zero.

Course Release Eligibility, Exceptions

Tenured and tenure-track faculty will get less priority for an MS course release if any of the following apply:

- The faculty member is already a recipient of a course release for either being a program director, is the department chair, or has another existing course release approved by the dean's office.
- The faculty member is scheduled for one or more quarters of sabbatical. Such cases will be considered carefully by the department chair.

J Summer Course Assignment

This policy regarding offerings of courses for Summer Session and faculty assignments is utilized to meet the instructional needs of the summer program, assigning well-qualified faculty for each course.

- No later than by the start of the winter quarter the chair will solicit from all faculty their interest in teaching during the upcoming summer session. Faculty submit to the chair their summer course teaching requests ranked by preference.

- In the case that faculty seek to teach a summer course that has been taught in a previous Summer Session within the last 5 years, the chair will determine the need for the course by taking in account past average enrollment in the summer course, and the enrollment, capacities, fill rates, and wait lists for that course during the academic year.

- In the case that faculty seek to teach a summer course that has not been taught in a previous Summer Session within the last 5 years, the chair will solicit from the faculty a justification or curricular need to teach that course.

- The chair will work with CS Exec to determine which courses will be submitted to the CSE Dean's office for consideration.

- After the CSE Dean's office determines which courses will be offered, the chair will assign faculty to the approved courses using the following criteria, with advisement from CS Exec:

- A new course which was proposed by a faculty member shall be taught by that faculty member.
- In absence of other considerations, faculty with higher priority have the opportunity to be assigned one course before faculty with a lower priority.
- If only a single faculty has requested a course for which they are qualified to teach, that faculty member will be assigned to that course.
- Only if all faculty who have expressed interest in teaching a course have been assigned a course, a faculty may be assigned to a second course. This may necessitate the chair proposing to those faculty who have yet to be assigned a course to consider teaching a course that they didn't originally propose to teach.

- Priority is established as follows from highest to lowest:

  - Department Chair
  - Program Directors
  - Faculty who wanted to teach a specific course in the immediately preceding Summer Session but which were not assigned to it, have priority over faculty who taught the specific course in the previous summer.
  - Faculty who would require a new prep to teach a course have lower priority than those faculty who have taught the course previously.
  - A faculty member in phased retirement.

K The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is composed of the department chair, the Directors of BS Computer Science, Data Science, BAE CS, and Cybersecurity, the Graduate Program Advisor, and a tenure-track probationary faculty member. The chair shall select each year the tenure-track probationary faculty member who will serve a 1-year term; no tenure-track probationary faculty will serve back-to-back terms. In the event of a resignation, a replacement for the resigning member shall be selected by the chair. The chair shall preside at meetings of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee shall be available to consult with the chair on matters of policy, budgets, and agenda for department meetings and assume other duties as necessary. As such the Executive Committee is the steward of the Department Operating Policies and Procedures. The members of the Executive Committee except the chair will function as an appeals committee on matters of procedure. The Executive Committee shall meet at the request of any member of the committee.

L Other Standing Committees

The standing committees of the department are: the Graduate Program Committee, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, the Computing Environment and Equipment Committee, the Personnel Committee, The Assessment and Accreditation Committee, and the Library and Outreach Activities Committee.

- All committees are composed of three or five voting members.
- Members are appointed as follows. Eligible department members are asked to submit their preferences for committees, usually at the start of the academic year. The chair determines committee membership based on those faculty self-nominations, and other factors such as service years to a committee to ensure continuity. The chair may consult with the program directors in making committee decisions. The graduate advisor is the chair of the graduate program committee.
- Committee meeting agendas will be published one working day before committee meetings. Minutes are required to be published within two working days after any committee meeting.

- Committee meetings are open to any department member.

Other Committees: The department may establish ad hoc or other standing committees at its pleasure. Such committees shall be constituted according to the procedures described in the section of this document headed Other Standing Committees.

1. The **Undergraduate Curriculum Committee** is comprised of T/TT; sr. instructors are eligible voting members. UCC administers all undergraduate programs including service offerings, and encompassing duties such as making recommendations to keep curriculum relevant and up-to-date.

2. The **Graduate Program Committee** is comprised of T/TT faculty, who have voting rights, and administers the graduate program, and encompasses such duties as:

   - Assigning TA appointments
   - Admission of graduate students
   - Review of courses, curriculum, student progress, etc.
   - Administering the Computer Science Honors program

3. The **Computing Environment and Equipment Committee** is comprised of faculty, and the Manager of CS support, who have voting rights, proposes policies for appropriate computing environments for faculty, teaching, research and students, encompassing:

   - Prioritizing equipment and software within budget constraints
   - Developing or reviewing laboratory, equipment and software proposals that would draw on department internal resources
   - Developing or reviewing laboratory, equipment and software proposals requiring external funding
   - Review the budget for expenditure of laboratory fees

   The departmental technical staff advise the committee as required.

4. The **Library and Outreach Activities Committee**, is comprised of faculty and staff, who have voting rights, and in conjunction with the Chair, has the following duties:

   - Maintains the library collection through interaction with the science librarian
   - Administers the department web page
   - Produces the department newsletter
   - Maintains contact with alumni and facilitates alumni events

5. The **Personnel Committee**, is comprised of 3 tenured faculty, who have voting rights, and has the following duties:

   - Administers the faculty mentoring program
   - Coordinates with the chair to advise probationary faculty on matters related to tenure and promotion
   - Oversees revisions to the CS addendum of the CSE COPEP

   Personnel Committee members serve either 2 or 3 year terms, and ideally membership is staggered so that not all three members are new members during any one year.

6. The **Assessment and Accreditation (A&A)** committee is comprised of tenured and tenure-track faculty, and sr. Instructors, who serve as voting members, and administers all program assessment and accreditation, encompassing such duties as:

    - Measuring student attainment of student outcomes
    - Assessing student attainment of course outcomes,
    - Making recommendations to ensure student attainment of outcomes
      Raise concerns and make recommendations to ensure program accreditation

M Departmental Program Directors

The Department has five degree programs:

- Computer Science BAE
- Computer Science BS
- Computer Science MS
- Cybersecurity BS
- Data Science BS

Departmental Program Directors are internal to the department and form the Executive Committee to the Department Chair. These are different from the Academic Program Directors explained in Section 18 in the CBA. Departmental Program Directors Workload follows Section 9 of the CBA.

The Director and Graduate Advisor's responsibilities are as follows:

- Work with and advise the A&A Committee, and work with accreditation boards, on matters pertaining to assessment and curriculum governance
- Work with and advise UCC on matters pertaining to the curriculum of the program, or in the case of the CS MS degree in coordination with the graduate committee
- Coordinate with the Chair and Department Manager the allocation of financial, staffing, and space resources in support of the degree program
- Manage program student application review process and oversee admission decisions to the degree program
- Oversee listing of course fees, prerequisites, and other course attributes ahead of phase I of registration
- Attend and facilitate the new major orientation
- Advise the Chair in their representation of the degree programs to the Dean and Provost
- Work with the program coordinators and pre-major advisors to make sure that outreach and advising materials are up-to-date.

When a Program Director position needs to be filled, the chair shall solicit nominations, which may include self-nominations. If there are multiple candidates for a position, the chair shall conduct an advisory vote among all faculty and staff. Only tenured faculty can be Program Directors. The chair in consultation with the Dean shall select the Program Director.

Program Director terms are four years, and a Director can serve multiple, even successive, terms.

The Program Directors and MS Advisor serve on the Executive Committee.

N Course Coordinators

Every course offered by the department shall be presented by, or under the supervision of, a T/TT or sr. instructor faculty. For each course not presented by T/TT nor sr. instructor, the department chair shall assign a course coordinator to oversee and advise the instructor. The name of the

course coordinator shall be specified on the syllabus of each course presented by an NTT faculty member. The duties of the course coordinator include:

- Review of the course syllabus and all assessment item specifications of the course, prior to release to students.
- Provide a source of advice and guidance for the instructor.
- Attend occasional lectures in the course to observe the instructor's technique and performance in class.
- Provide the instructor with constructive comments on the management and presentation of the course.
- Ensure that the course and course information comply with assessment requirements.

O Faculty and Student Travel

The College of Science and Engineering supports faculty travel to attend and present manuscripts at conferences. Funding includes conference registration, along with travel, lodging, and incidentals, based on the location of the conference venue. Please see the Travel Policies document at the Procedures page of the CSE website for full details.

For upcoming faculty travel that does not qualify for college- or university-level reimbursement, or if a faculty member has depleted their allotted travel college-level funding for a fiscal year, the department may reimburse, budget permitting, allowed costs for attending a conference.

T/TT faculty members who have not attended a relevant conference or training session in 3 years, while faculty members of the department, are encouraged to identify a conference or training session relevant to their teaching or research interests.

Requests for professional travel from NTT and sr. instructors will be considered.

Each faculty can request that the department fund $500 for one student to travel to a conference each academic year to present their manuscript or poster.

All requests for travel support from the department should be made to the chair, who will make a final determination in consultation with the Executive Committee and Department Manager.

P Program Assessment and Improvement

The Computer Science Department is committed to continuous monitoring, assessment, and improvement of its degree programs. The department will continuously assess to what extent students achieve program and course outcomes. These assessment processes are conducted by the Assessment and Accreditation committee.

Faculty are required to participate in assessment activities as determined by the A&A committee, Program Director, or Department Chair. Assessment activities include providing course displays to course coordinators, meeting with A&A to review course outcomes, and providing outcome assessment items upon request.

Q Course Outcomes

In order to ensure some level of consistency in course presentation, the department maintains a list of educational outcomes for each required course in the BS Computer Science program.

The relationship of course outcomes to program outcomes for the BS Computer Science is described in the separate document "Assessment and Improvement of the BS Computer Science Program".

Each course outcome is a measure of student achievement in the course. Each course outcome is associated with suggested techniques for measurement of that outcome and performance criteria for assessment of attainment of that outcome. The syllabus for each course shall specify the department's educational outcomes and performance criteria for that course.

Faculty members have complete freedom in their presentation of each course, provided they give students ample opportunity to achieve the specified outcomes and provide measurement of the level of achievement of those outcomes.

Course outcomes may be changed only with department approval.

R Student Clubs

The department supports the many student clubs by providing faculty advisors, and by offering the resources for a web presence. At the discretion of the chair in consultation with the Executive Committee, the department will fund miscellaneous club activities. These may include funding student club members to attend professional off-campus club-related meetings and/or coding competitions, attending the Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing, or traveling to regional tech companies. Student clubs should make funding requests to the department chair.

S Student Employees

The department employs students in temporary, part-time positions as needed to assist with the department's operations and as enabled by financial resources.

The objectives of student employment are:

- To provide a temporary work-force to enhance the capacity of the department's full-time employees for specific, identified tasks;
- To help satisfy one of the objectives of the department's academic programs, in preparing students for professional careers.

Students may be employed as:

- Administrative Assistants, to assist the Department Manager in clerical tasks;
- Student Tutors, including a lead Tutor who facilitates the CS tutoring program;
- Research Assistants, to assist faculty in research projects;
- Teaching Assistants, to assist faculty in preparation, teaching, grading and tutorial services related to the presentation of undergraduate courses;
  Technical Assistants, to assist the Computer Systems Manager in the configuration and maintenance of the department's computing and laboratory resources.

Selection of students for employment in the department shall be based on the following criteria:

- Priority shall be given to students in the various BS and MS programs within the Computer Science Department.
- Suitability for the designated task.
- Where more than one student is considered suitable for the task, preference shall be based on the students' overall qualifications and suitability for the position.

- Conformance with the University's equal opportunity employment and affirmative action policy.
- Employment of students is subject to the policies of WAWU, the Western Academic Workers Union.

T Computer Science Support Group

The Computer Science Support Group (CSSG) is an integral part of the Computer Science Department (CSCI) supporting students, faculty, and staff through infrastructure, back-end development and maintenance, and support across 8 general use labs, and 14 research labs. The CSSG prioritizes the curricular and scholarly endeavors of students and faculty, ensuring that the infrastructure, back-end, and desktop components of CSCI's departmental asset inventory remains equitable.

The Computer Science Support Group Manager (CSSGM) works in coordination with the Department Chair and Department Manager, as the unit's fiscal authority, in the procurement of all infrastructure, desktop, and software needs for the operation of the CSCI department. The CSSGM works with the Department Manager in planning and assigning lab spaces for all quarterly scheduled classes, and is responsible for all lab scheduling changes and additions during the course of the year.

U Approval and Amendment of the Operating Policies and Procedures

The Operating Policies and Procedures shall become **effective** upon a two-thirds favorable vote of the tenured, tenure track faculty, and sr. instructors. The vote of the NTT faculty and staff will be advisory. If the advisory vote would overturn the majority vote of the tenured, tenure track, and sr. instructor faculty, then the procedures will not become effective.

The Operating Policies and Procedures may be **amended** by a two-thirds favorable vote of the tenured, tenure track, and sr. instructor faculty. The vote of the NTT faculty and staff will be advisory. If the advisory vote would overturn the majority vote of the tenured, tenure track, and sr. instructor faculty, then the amendment(s) are not adopted and discussion resumes. No amendment may be adopted at the meeting at which it is introduced.