

**DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES AND SOCIAL MEDICINE  
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF  
MEDICINE**

These are the bylaws for the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine (BSSM) in the College of Medicine (COM) at Florida State University (FSU). These bylaws were adopted on **September 5, 2023**, and last approved on **September 5, 2023**, by a majority of the applicable voting members of the department and on **February 6, 2024** by the Dean of the College of Medicine, and filed at the College and the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement on **March 7, 2024**.

**Preamble**

Departmental executive and administrative authority are vested in the Chair, appointed by the Dean of the College of Medicine. Certain executive authority, delineated herein, is delegated by the Chair to the faculty, through a system of committees.

**I. Bylaws**

**A. Adherence with Other Governing Documents.** At all times, department policy shall adhere to and be consistent with all university policies found in the FSU Constitution, the BOT-UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement (as applicable to the college), the FSU Faculty Handbook, and the annual Memorandums on the Promotion and Tenure process issued by the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement.

**B. Bylaws Revision.** Any three voting members may propose an amendment to these bylaws. A proposed amendment must be made available to all members at least two weeks prior to any scheduled vote on an amendment. To be adopted, an amendment must be approved by two-thirds of the eligible voting members of the Department.

**C. Policies:** Further, the members will adopt policies to govern particular facets of the life of the Department. These policies set forth the specific procedures, delineated in the Bylaws, of the various standing committees of the Department. These policies and procedures differ from the Department Bylaws in that they can be adopted or modified by a simple majority of all members eligible to vote.

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

**II. Membership and Voting Rights**

**A. Faculty Membership.** The faculty of the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine shall consist of those persons holding 9- and 12-month appointments at the rank of Teaching Faculty I, II or III; Research Faculty I, II, or III; Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor and specialized faculty at an equivalent rank.

**B. Department Membership.** In addition to the faculty defined in **II.A.** above, the following are members of the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine: all temporary or part-time faculty appointees, including visiting faculty appointees, courtesy appointees, adjunct appointees, postdoctoral fellows, professors emeriti, research associates, associates in research, assistants in research, and all administrative and professional (A&P) personnel, USPS personnel, and part-time and full-time graduate students.

**C. Voting Rights.** Only the following will be entitled to vote in faculty meetings or by mail or online ballot: all faculty members as defined in **II.A.** above unless otherwise specified.

**D. Non-faculty Voting Rights.** Non-faculty members of the department do not have voting rights.

### **III. Department Organization and Governance**

#### **A. Faculty Meetings.**

1. The members of the Department shall meet in regular session at least quarterly. The dates of the meetings shall be established by the Chair.
2. Additional, special meetings may be called by the Chair, or by a request of three members of the Department.
3. The Chair shall preside at faculty meetings. In his/her/their absence, the Vice Chair shall preside. If both the Chair and Vice Chair are absent, then another voting member designated by the Chair shall preside.
4. The Chair shall be responsible for preparing and distributing copies of the agenda prior to each regular meeting. The agenda for special meetings shall be prepared and distributed by the person or persons who called the meeting.
5. One-third of the voting members of the Department shall constitute a quorum at any faculty meeting.
6. The Department's Program Manager, or designee of the Chair, shall serve as meeting recorder. The meeting recorder will distribute copies of the minutes to all faculty members within a reasonable timeframe.

7. All voting members of the Department (Section II.C above) are expected to attend Department faculty meetings. In addition, one member of the permanent Administrative and Professional (A&P) staff and one member of the permanent University Service Personnel System (USPS) staff may attend the Department faculty meetings as voting members.
8. The A&P and USPS staff shall select representatives to attend faculty meetings on an ad hoc basis.
9. Copies of these bylaws shall be made available by request to BSSM chair and are available online on the BSSM and FSU websites.
10. A secret ballot may be requested by any voting member of the Department.
11. When necessary, any faculty meeting may be conducted through videoconference or internet-based technology consistent with the College of Medicine and University policy. When necessary, a vote may be taken electronically. Any vote conducted through the designated internet meeting service shall be deemed a valid vote, provided the provisions of the College and University policy and quorum requirements are met.

## **B. Department Chair Selection.**

Department chair selection and the procedures that provide for faculty involvement in the selection of the Chair/department head are undertaken by the Dean of the College of Medicine.

### **Department Chair – Authority and Duties**

1. The Chair shall serve as the executive officer and chief administrator of the Department.
2. The Chair shall call and preside over faculty meetings and prepare agenda for such meetings.
3. The Chair shall appoint any other officers needed to administer Departmental affairs.
4. The Chair shall be responsible for maintaining a personnel evaluation file for each full-time member of the Department.
5. As principal financial officer, the Chair shall:

- a. Supervise receipt and expenditure of all departmental moneys.
  - b. Prepare an annual operating budget for submission to the Dean, and report to members of the department.
  - c. Prepare an annual financial report, and report to members of the department.
6. The Chair, in conjunction with the Department Executive Committee and Faculty Search Committee, shall supervise and coordinate the recruitment of new Faculty and staff.
7. The Chair shall make recommendations regarding annual performance of the faculty to the Dean in the form of annual faculty evaluations.
8. Except when provided for otherwise, the Chair or his/her designee shall serve as official liaison officer and Departmental representative outside the Department.

### **C. Department Leadership and Committees.**

**Vice Chair:** The Vice Chair, appointed by the Chair shall serve as chief advisor to the Chair, shall serve as the official designee of the Chair at events and meetings that the Chair cannot attend, and perform other Departmental functions as needed or requested.

### **Standing Committees:**

#### **Faculty Mentoring Committees**

1. A primary mentor selected from senior faculty members must be appointed for each new faculty member appointed at the rank of associate professor or below. Chosen by the emerging faculty member with agreement from the primary mentor following discussion with the Department Chair or Vice Chair, the primary mentor must be at the Associate or Professor level with a primary appointment in BSSM.
2. Requests to change the primary mentor must be discussed with and approved by the Department Chair.
3. The primary mentor should be chosen with consideration to the greatest benefit to the junior faculty member – scientific expertise is only one factor to consider.
4. Serving as a mentor is a significant time commitment and investment by the mentor and will be acknowledged as service to BSSM and the College of Medicine.

5. The Department Chair will not typically be a primary mentor.

### **Faculty Search Committee**

1. The Faculty Search Committee shall make recommendations to the Chair on matters relating to faculty recruitment.
2. The committee shall consist of a chair and at least three other members appointed at the discretion of the Department Chair, renewable annually.
3. The Department Chair may augment the committee on an ad hoc basis, with other appropriate members, as needed.

### **Promotion and Tenure Committee**

1. The Promotion and Tenure committee is charged with making recommendations on promotion and tenure for all full-time, BSSM faculty.
2. The committee shall consist of nine members: six (6) tenured and three (3) specialized faculty members of the Department. At least three members of the committee shall be tenured Professors. All members of the committee shall be elected by the Department from the ranks of the faculty entitled to vote.
3. A tenured Professor shall serve as chair of the committee. The committee shall elect its own chair who will serve a three-year term. The chair can be re-elected for one additional, consecutive three-year term.
4. Committee members shall be elected to three-year terms. Committee members are elected once every three years and can be re-elected.
5. No faculty member may serve on this committee during a year in which his/her own tenure is being considered.

See **Appendix A** for the complete Promotion and Tenure process policies.

### **Bylaws and Policy Committee**

1. The Bylaws and Policy Committee shall make recommendations to the faculty members on matters of policy and governance.
2. The committee shall consist of at least a chair and three other members appointed at the discretion of the Department Chair, renewable annually.
3. The Department Bylaws should be reviewed annually at a department faculty

meeting to ensure appropriate departmental governance.

4. A Strategic Planning Committee to address Teaching, Research & Service will be developed by the Chair (Fall 2023).

### **Other Committees**

The Chair may establish additional committees as needed to conduct the affairs of the Department. The functions and membership of each committee shall be made known to Department members expeditiously upon creation.

### **D. Faculty Senators.**

The allocation of College of Medicine representation in the University Faculty Senate is in accordance with current University policy. Senators serve for a term of two years and must be elected prior to the regularly scheduled April meeting of the Senate. The Faculty Senate Coordinator provides a list of the eligible faculty members in each college or school to the respective Deans by February 15 of each year.

Procedure for Electing Senators:

- a. Nominations: The Faculty Council receives from the Dean the list of persons eligible for election and sends this list to the eligible voting members of the faculty with an invitation for nominations
- b. Nominations are returned to the Chair of the Faculty Council at least three days before the date of the final ballot
- c. Ballots for the election are prepared by the Faculty Council and distributed to all voting members of the College, who then vote anonymously, via electronic methods, for the persons to be elected
- d. The nominees receiving the largest number of votes in this ballot are declared elected. Additional balloting takes place only in the event of a tie. The nominee (among those not elected) who receives the most votes will be the college alternate representative to serve whenever illness, professional travel, or other obligations make it impossible for the designated Senator or Senators to be present. A faculty member thus representing a unit shall have the full privileges of Senate membership.

## **IV. Annual Evaluation of Faculty on Performance and Merit**

**Annual Performance and Merit Evaluation.** Each faculty member's performance will be evaluated by the Chair on an annual basis relative to his or her assigned duties. A copy of this evaluation will be provided to each faculty member.

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

Substantially Exceeds FSU's High Expectations  
Exceeds FSU's High Expectations  
Meets FSU's High Expectations  
Official Concern

## **Appendix A**

### ***Promotion/Tenure Policies & Guidelines for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine***

#### **Election of Promotion and Tenure Committee Members**

Members of FSU Promotion and Tenure (P&T) Committees are responsible for advising which candidates meet the University criteria for promotion and/or tenure. These elected representatives should be among the most experienced and qualified faculty and committed to reviewing and evaluating the files of all candidates in an independent manner.

The FSU P&T Committee is composed of tenured faculty members only, with at least one elected representative from each college. Deans are not eligible for election to the University P&T Committee. The FSU Faculty Handbook (Section 5) and BOT-UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement (Appendix I.3.b) states that *“each department shall have an elected faculty promotion and tenure committee, of whom a majority of the members shall be tenured faculty.”*

According to departmental policy, nine members of the P&T Committee of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine (BSSM) are elected for a three-year period (with the option of being re-elected).

BSSM departmental faculty at the Assistant Professor/Assistant University Librarian level vote on the six tenured faculty members and three non-tenured faculty members representing the areas of Clinical/Educator, Research, and Librarians. Three of the six tenured faculty members on the committee must be at the Full Professor level. The chair of the BSSM P&T Committee is elected by the members of the P&T Committee and has to be one of the three tenured faculty members who are full professors. Tenured faculty P&T Committee members can vote on all promotions and tenure decisions. They also evaluate non-tenured faculty members. Following FSU College of Medicine criteria, non-tenure earning faculty do not evaluate tenure decisions. Note also that P&T Committee members can only vote for promotions at their equivalent rank and below.

#### **University Criteria for Promotion and/or Tenure**

**(FSU Faculty Handbook, Section 5; Office of Faculty Development and Advancement Memoranda)**

##### **University Criteria for Promotion:**

- Promotion to the rank of Associate Professor shall be based on recognition of demonstrated effectiveness in teaching, service, scholarly or creative accomplishments, and recognized standing in the discipline and profession, as attested to by three letters from outstanding scholars outside the University.

- Promotion to the rank of professor shall be based on recognition of superior teaching, service, scholarly or creative accomplishments of high quality and recognized standing in the discipline and profession, as attested to by three letters from outstanding scholars outside the University.
- Promotion is not automatic, nor is it regarded as guaranteed upon completion of a given term of service; it is based on demonstrated merit. Typically, an Assistant Professor is considered simultaneously for promotion and tenure during the sixth year of service. Promotion at an earlier time is possible with sufficient justification.

#### **University Criteria for Tenure:**

- The criteria for awarding tenure are the same as those for promotion to the rank to which the candidate is being considered for promotion (or the rank held by the candidate if the candidate is not being considered for promotion). Tenure, however, is guaranteed neither by promotion nor by previous attainment of the rank of associate or full professor.
- All individuals considered for promotion or tenure must also be evaluated in accordance with the written departmental and college policies, procedures, and criteria for faculty evaluation. The department promotion and tenure committee should advise the candidate of their readiness to be formally considered for promotion and/or tenure.
- Faculty members who are earning eligibility for tenure or promotion must be given assignments throughout this period of their career that provide equitable opportunities to meet the required University criteria and departmental college standards for promotion and tenure. These criteria include performance in all three areas of teaching, research or creative activity, and service.
- Evidence regarding scholarly and creative activities: For promotion to Associate Professor, the expectation is that the candidate clearly **is becoming** recognized nationally as a scholar or creative artist in their discipline; for Professor, the expectation is that the candidate **has become** so recognized.

#### **Who is Eligible for Consideration for Promotion and/or Tenure?**

- “Promotion-eligible” faculty members include all faculty members below the rank of full professor.
- “Tenure-eligible” faculty members are those who will be in their 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, or 7<sup>th</sup> year of tenure-earning service. Departments normally consider faculty for tenure during the 6<sup>th</sup> year of service, including any prior service credit granted at the time of initial employment or any visiting time agreed to count as tenure-earning.
- Departments may consider faculty members for *early tenure* during the 5<sup>th</sup> year of tenure-earning service, provided the faculty member submits a written request that is approved by the appropriate Dean. An explanation for early tenure is included in the Dean’s letter.
- Typically, Assistant Professors are considered simultaneously for promotion and tenure during the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) year of service.
- eBinders must be submitted for all faculty members in their sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) or seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) year unless a written request is forwarded to the Office of the Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement.

#### **Withdrawal from Consideration:**



A candidate may withdraw her/his/their eBinder within 5 working days of being informed of the results of the secret ballot vote of the committee, of the secret ballot vote of the tenured faculty, of the chair and/or dean, and the university committee, regardless of the results of the vote. The withdrawal request must be in writing.

**Main eBinder:**

- One main eBinder is prepared for each candidate, including those who are being considered for both, promotion and tenure. The main eBinder is produced within the online workflow system.
- Publications or Creative Activity Binder: Copies of the candidate's publications (or evidence of their creative activities) are placed in a separate hard-copy binder or electronic file. These materials are not forwarded to the University P&T Committee, but can be requested.
- Faculty members are not required to prepare their own eBinders; they are, however, expected to participate in preparation of the eBinder.
- The candidate is responsible for confirming that the eBinder is complete with their signature.
- The department chair (or dean) and the candidate will review the eBinder and will electronically sign the Summary Cover Sheet(s) before the eBinder is submitted to the next level of review. At this point, the eBinder is ready for review.
- During the review process, the only documents that may be added are the department chair's and/or dean's letter evaluating a candidate, the candidate's response to those letters if needed (with the exception of items described below) and the narrative explanations summarizing the meetings of each committee in the process.
- The only other acceptable additions by the candidate to the completed eBinders are: proof of an article accepted for publication, documentation of a new grant approval, or documentation that a creative activity has been accepted for viewing.
- Evaluations must be based on the record as revealed in the eBinder.
- It is inappropriate for anyone (including deans, department chairs, et al.) to submit materials independently or to request conferences with committee members reviewing an eBinder.
- Candidate opportunity to take action following results: Candidates will have 5 business days to upload a response to the department committee/department chair's decision and the area committee/college/Dean's decision.

**Recording Results:**

- The reason (or reasons, in case of a tie) cited most frequently for negative secret ballots from committee members will be recorded on the Reasons for Negative Committee Review Ballots page (only the official reasons designated by the University Committee for a negative ballot may be used).
- Results of the tenured faculty vote are only indicated on the Summary Cover Sheet for Tenure; no reasons for any negative ballots will be noted.
- Following the meeting, the chair of each P&T committee must prepare and upload a Summary of Discussion which explains the discussion and actions taken by the committee.

- If there are negative votes from the committee, the summary of discussion must elaborate on the reason(s) for the votes. Simply re-stating the numerical vote in the narrative is not sufficient.
- Abstentions and absentees:  
A faculty member who accepts election to the promotion and tenure committee at any level accepts the responsibility of reviewing and evaluating all eBinders considered by the committee. Abstentions are limited to situations involving real or perceived conflicts of interest (familial relations or substantial professional or financial entanglements that prevent judging the candidate objectively). Absences from campus that result in a failure to ballot during the review process should be recorded as “absent”.  
A spouse/partner/family member who serves on a committee shall also recuse themselves from the discussion of the candidate.

### **Unique to Tenure Candidates:**

- Vote of the tenured faculty - which will occur after the BSSM P&T Committee review: Recommendations for tenure shall begin with the faculty member's supervisor. They must also include a poll by secret ballot and a narrative explanation written by the department chair or college dean summarizing the discussion and actions of the tenured members of the faculty member's department or college. The review by the tenured faculty will be conducted before the eBinder is submitted to the next level and the results will be indicated on the Summary Cover Sheet for Tenure. After the secret ballot vote and narrative of the tenured faculty is compiled and uploaded, the candidate is provided five working days to withdraw his or her eBinder.
- Adjustments of tenure service record:  
Tenure service credit transferred from another institution must be agreed upon in writing by the dean of the college at the time of the original appointment, and must be explained in the Dean's letter. Prior to the time the faculty member becomes eligible to be considered for tenure (i.e., prior to their 5<sup>th</sup> year of service) by the department P&T committee, the faculty member has one opportunity to withdraw all or a portion of this service credit. Any agreement to adjust the tenure status of the candidate must be included in the Dean's letter. Agreements may include withdrawal of prior service credit, mid-year hire agreement, agreement to count visiting time as tenure-earning, parental leave agreement, Article VI agreement (for administrative assignment), or extension of the tenure-earning period due to a qualifying personal circumstance (e.g., childbirth or adoption, personal injury or illness, care of ill or injured dependents, elder care, death of closely related family member resulting in need for extended dependent care).
- Seven Year Rule:  
According to FSU Faculty Handbook, Section 5, no person “*may remain in the service of the University as a nonpermanent member of the faculty of any college, school, or other academic unit in any rank or combination of ranks for a total of more than seven years*” (Seven-Year Rule). This includes the instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor ranks, and visiting appointments in those ranks. The rule applies to all service time, whether tenure-earning or not. All or part of the time in visiting appointments at the rank of assistant professor or above may be accepted as tenure-earning if mutually

agreed upon in writing by the academic dean and the faculty member at the time of appointment to a tenure-earning position. If a faculty member has held a visiting appointment(s) for more than one year and transferred no tenure-earning time from another institution, it will be necessary to accept some of the visiting time as tenure-earning in order to make the faculty member eligible for tenure consideration before the seven-year maximum is reached.

## **Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine Promotion and Tenure (P&T) Committee Formation and Function**

### **Purpose:**

To facilitate the formation and functioning of a representative P&T Committee for the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine in conformance with College of Medicine and FSU guidelines.

### **Policy:**

The Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine (BSSM) P&T Committee shall be elected and will vote on promotion and tenure decisions for the Department.

### **Procedure:**

#### **Membership:**

##### **A. Promotion and Tenure Committee Elections:**

- The members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee are required to be elected. Faculty on the level of assistant, associate, and full professor (or rank-equivalent) of BSSM can vote on the six tenured faculty members and three non-tenured faculty members representing the areas of Clinical/Educator, Research, and Librarians. Three of the six tenured faculty members on the committee must be at the full professor level.
- All faculty members who are eligible and willing to serve on the Promotion and Tenure Committee will be put on the ballots.
- The Chair of the Promotion and Tenure Committee of BSSM will be elected by the members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee and has to be one of the three tenured faculty members who are full professors. The Chair will have a term of three years. This term is renewable for a second three-year term.
- The elections will be held every three years and the members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee can be re-elected.

##### **B. Promotions and Tenure Decisions:**

- Tenured faculty can vote on all promotions and tenure decisions. They shall evaluate non-tenured faculty members, but not vice versa. Individuals can only vote for promotions regarding the equivalent rank and below.

##### **Medical Librarians:**

- Medical librarians are considered non-tenured "specialized faculty". In order for a librarian to be promoted, the librarian should complete a promotion binder and submit it to the Director of the Medical Library.
  - Included in the binder should be letters of recommendation from Academy

of Health Information Professionals members, students, and other individuals outside of the Maguire Medical Library, because most of the work that librarians do benefits others.

- o Annual evaluation letters and the recommendations from the chair, are also components of a promotion binder. These binders will be available for the Promotion and Tenure Committee to review.
- In order to evaluate all faculty members fairly, clinical teachers shall be evaluated on clinician principles (scholarship and service) and not on publications and grants alone.

## **Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine Promotion and Tenure (P&T) Committee Formation and Function**

### **Periodic Review and Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed on a three-year cycle. The Department Chair in collaboration with a specially designated committee will revisit the policy and examine relevant outcomes, to assess their effectiveness and make any further recommendations or revisions to the Department as needed.

This policy is adopted by the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine on June 18, 2019.

**-End of Appendix A-**

**Note.** Additional Appendices will be added as they are adopted by the department (e.g., Search Committee policy)