

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
COLLEGE OF BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

I. MEMBERSHIP IN THE DEPARTMENT

Regular Members of the Faculty

Consistent with the university Plan of Organization, regular members of the department include full-time appointees with a title in the UMD Policy and Procedures on Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure of Faculty. It does not, however, include post-doctoral associates, junior lecturers, or visiting, adjunct, or affiliate faculty. Their principal duties are teaching and research, supervision, advising or administration.

Persons holding a joint appointment within the university are considered regular faculty members of the Department of Sociology if their appointments within the department are at least half-time, and they are full time employees of the University of Maryland, College Park. Faculty members on leave, and those with 9-month appointments who are not employed by the university during the summer, retain regular member status during those periods of absence.

Regular faculty members are eligible to serve on standing committees, upon graduate school approval to serve as major advisors for graduate students, and have voting rights in departmental affairs.

Emeritus. Visiting. Adjunct. Research Scientists and Affiliate Members of the Faculty

Emeritus faculty, visiting faculty, junior lecturers, post-doctoral associates, adjuncts, and affiliate professors are invited to participate within the department. Indeed, full participation may occur in some (rare) instances when warranted and agreed upon by a majority vote of the regular faculty,

subject to the provisions in Section IV below. Non-regular faculty are eligible to serve on and vote within most departmental committees, the notable exceptions being Appointments, Promotion and Tenure and the Policy Committee. As a general rule, only regular faculty may chair thesis and dissertation committees or serve in the Graduate Committee, but in some (rare) cases, exceptions to this may be made by the Sociology Graduate Director after consultation with the Dean of the Graduate School. Affiliate faculty may, in some instances, co-chair theses or dissertations with regular faculty.

Staff Members

Staff consists of full-time classified employees of the university working at least half-time in the Department of Sociology. The Director of Administrative Services shall serve as a representative of the staff at departmental meetings, and is allowed to vote, subject to the provisions in Section IV, below. Staff may also request to have voting representation on committees that affect them.

Student Members

Student members are undergraduate and graduate students with a declared major in Sociology, currently registered in the university. They are allowed to serve on many departmental committees and to be voting members of those committees. There may be a graduate student representative at departmental meetings, with the right to vote, subject to the provisions in Section IV below.

II. FUNCTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR

The Chair of the department has those responsibilities and powers assigned by the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, and the university administration. The Chair is responsible for preparing reports, preparing the annual budget, assuring satisfactory clerical work, and the general administration of the department. Other major responsibilities include, but are not limited to, seeking funds beyond those budgeted, assigning faculty teaching loads and courses, preparing the teaching

schedules, encouraging excellence in instruction and research and administrating the department in an evenhanded, democratic way. The Chair shall call and chair departmental meetings.

When deemed necessary, the Chair shall appoint an Associate Chair who will assist in working on departmental objectives. In the absence of the Chair, the Associate Chair shall assume the Chair's responsibilities, unless otherwise noted.

The Chair shall appoint various standing and ad hoc committees charged with the responsibility to advise and assist the Chair in carrying out departmental activities.

Selection. Term of Office and Evaluation of the Chair.

Any tenured member of the faculty may serve as Department Chair. The selection process will be consistent with prevailing university and college procedures, thus the Chair is appointed by the Dean upon recommendation of the college Search Committee and counsel of the Sociology faculty. Individuals may be either nominated by other faculty (of any rank) or self-nominated. The term of office for internally chosen chairs will be for three years with a departmental review to be conducted in the fall of the third year; the current departmental Policy Committee will constitute the 3rd year Chair Review Committee and make a recommendation. If the then-Chair and the regular faculty (all of whom will have a vote) agree, additional terms may be held, initially for an additional 2 years. For Chairs recruited from outside the department, however, the term will be 5 years. A year prior to the end of the prescribed term (the end of year 2 for a 3 year term; the end of year 4 for a 5 year term), the Chair will inform the faculty of his/her desire to either continue for another term or to conclude his/her service at the end of the present term. The results of all departmental deliberations concerning selection and evaluation of the Chair shall be conveyed in writing to the Dean. Anyone holding the position for 5 years will be required to go through the university-mandated 5th year review.

III. FUNCTIONS OF OTHER KEY PERSONNEL IN THE DEPARTMENT

The Director of the Graduate Program shall be appointed by the Chair. The Director shall be responsible for all aspects of the graduate program; recruiting new students, counseling existing students and helping them to plan their program, seeking additional funding resources, monitoring student progress, scheduling comprehensive/specialty examinations and constituting exam committees, and the general development of the graduate program. He or she will prepare the publicity relative to the graduate program and Chair the graduate committee whose functions are described below.

The Director of Undergraduate Programs shall be appointed by the Chair. He or she will be responsible for helping students with scheduling, career guidance, counseling, and tutoring. She or he will supervise peer counselors and assist the Chair of the Undergraduate Committee in his or her duties. She or he will be a member of the undergraduate committee whose functions are described below.

The Chair of the Undergraduate Committee will be responsible for monitoring the overall condition of the undergraduate program with particular attention to undergraduate majors and the preparation of reports relative to the undergraduate program.

The Director of Research shall be appointed by the Chair. He or she will be responsible for helping faculty and students identify and pursue funding opportunities for their research.

The Director of the Honors program will be responsible for providing leadership for the Department's honor program, as distinct from the University program. She or he will solicit student applications and (with the Director of the Undergraduate Program) screen them for admission. The Director will also teach the required honors course (SOCY 380) and help advise students on all aspects of their programs, to include assisting them with finding faculty to direct their thesis projects.

IV. MEETINGS

Departmental Meetings

The primary purpose of departmental meetings is discussion of all issues deemed as important by any individual or group of faculty or students including proposals brought forth by the departmental standing committees. Approval or disapproval of these proposals is by simple majority vote of regular faculty members, the elected student representative, and the staff representative, who are present, plus absentee ballots that are submitted before the vote. The notable exception to this is on personnel matters; then, one additional business day is provided for casting a ballot. Roberts Rules of Order Revised shall govern the assembly as applicable except as they may be inconsistent with rules of this plan of organization. All decisions of the standing committee are subject to review by the regular faculty, which retains ultimate authority for approval or rejection (except in the case of merit pay).

The Director of Administrative Services will keep minutes of all faculty meetings. Minutes will be kept on file, along with copies of letters and reports submitted to the faculty, and will be made available to faculty upon request.

Normally there will be a faculty meeting once a month, unless there is no official business to conduct. Ordinarily, no meetings will be held in the summer months, or during winter break.

One graduate student will be elected by their student's association. For discussion and voting on matters in which student participation would be inappropriate, an executive session of the faculty will be announced by the Department Chairperson.

For any vote related to the hiring of a tenured/tenure-track faculty member, only tenured/tenure-track members of the regular faculty will be allowed to vote. Additional restrictions on votes involving personnel matters appears in Section VI below.

In addition to regular department meetings, a meeting of the faculty may be called for by written petition of 20% of the regular voting members of the faculty.

V. STANDING COMMITTEES

The purpose of the standing committees is to fulfill functions as outlined below. The committees will develop their own operating procedures.

A faculty member may serve on a maximum of three department standing committees in a given year. Faculty members will be appointed for one year by the Chair except for the Policy Committee, whose members are elected by the respective ranks for staggered, two year terms.

Student members will be elected for one year terms on standing committees by graduate students and undergraduate student majors in the department. Each standing committee may appoint, with the Department Chairperson's concurrence, members of adjunct committees. Each adjunct committee must have at least one member from the appointing committee. Consent of members of the department will be obtained before appointing them to adjunct committee membership.

THE FOLLOWING ARE STANDING COMMITTEES

POLICY COMMITTEE

Membership: may include two full, two associate and two assistant professors, one PTK faculty member and one graduate student. Faculty members are elected by their respective ranks for two year terms; PTK faculty members and students are elected for one year terms. Generally, the Department Chair runs the monthly meeting of the Policy Committee, but the latter might choose to meet without the presence of the Department Chair to discuss departmental issues or to assess the work of the Department Chair. As needed in such circumstances, members elect a committee Chair whose term is one year.

Functions: to formulate general policy affecting the entire department. It may respond to policy initiatives from other units on campus, review and make recommendations on policy decisions generated from the department, or generate its own policy initiatives to be voted on in a faculty meeting. An additional duty is to screen any nominee or candidate for adjunct or affiliate faculty membership, and to then make a recommendation to the entire regular faculty.

Faculty members of the committee in their second year will act as the department's Merit Committee, an advisory role to the Chair. The committee will meet with the Chair to deliberate the contributions made by each full-time, regular faculty member. The committee, meeting jointly with the Chair, will allocate 80% of the department's merit money. The remaining 20% will be allocated by the Chair, especially to reward unusual contributions to the development of the department as well as for promotions and equity. This group will also conduct post-tenure reviews. Informed by the committee's deliberations, the department Chair shall meet individually with all tenure-track faculty to discuss their standing and/or progress toward tenure and/or promotion.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Membership: shall include the Department Chair, the Associate Chair, the Director of the Graduate Program, the Director of the Undergraduate Program, the Director of Research and the Director of Administrative Services. The Department Chair serves as Chair of this committee.

Functions: to handle administrative problems as they occur and to assure the smooth coordination of the various separate administrative activities for which its members are responsible.

GRADUATE COMMITTEE

Membership: may include at least 3 faculty, 1 graduate student, and the Director of the Graduate Program who is Chair of the committee. Students may vote on all matters, except those directly involving individual current students.

Functions: to develop the graduate curriculum, to select students for awards and for admission to the programs, and to deliberate on other matters dealing with the graduate program.

UNDERGRADUATE COMMITTEE

Membership: may include at least 3 faculty (at least one of whom should be a lecturer), 1 graduate student, 1 undergraduate student, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and a chair (appointed by the Department Chair).

Functions: develops the curriculum, creates policy on advising, collaborates with the Associate Chair to schedule courses and appoint graduate students as teachers and deliberates on other matters dealing with the undergraduate program.

PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE

Membership: may include at least 2 faculty, one who serves as Chair (appointed by the Department Chair) and 1 graduate student.

Functions: responds to university and departmental issues or requests relative to the protection of human subjects. It may also make recommendations about policies and procedures relative to this.

GRADE APPEALS COMMITTEE

Membership: shall include 3 tenured faculty.

Functions: responds to undergraduate student grade appeals and all other student grievances that require a departmental committee. All deliberations are confidential and the committee follows university procedures and guidelines for all its actions (See Appendix of Undergraduate Catalog).

AWARDS COMMITTEE

Membership: may include at least 3 faculty, a graduate student, and an undergraduate student.

Functions: selects faculty and students for awards, primarily those on the campus.

TEACHING COMMITTEE

Membership: may include at least 3 faculty, a graduate student, and an undergraduate student.

Functions: provide a forum for discussion of teaching-related issues; disseminates teaching-related information; and convenes teaching related seminars. May provide suggestions for pedagogical changes in both undergraduate and graduate curricula. May nominate individuals for teaching-related awards.

THE FOLLOWING ARE AD-HOC COMMITTEES

RECRUITMENT, TENURE, AND PROMOTION COMMITTEE

As need be, a committee will be appointed to deal with recruitment, tenure, and promotion. Recruitment committees shall be determined by faculty discussion and consensus. The committee develops advertisements for positions, initially screens candidates for appointment, and selects candidates for campus visits. Ads will be circulated prior to publication to solicit faculty input. Tenure and promotion committees shall be appointed according to the University, UMCP campus, and BSOS college policies and procedures.

VI. DEPARTMENT PROCEDURES

APPOINTMENT, PROMOTIONS, AND TENURE

Decisions regarding appointments, promotions, and tenure shall be carried out in a manner consistent with University, UMCP campus, BSOS College, and department policies and procedures. Recommendations for appointments to the rank of adjunct professors, visiting professors, and affiliate members, will be made by the Policy Committee to the department. Upon a majority vote of the department, such appointments will be recommended by the Chair to the Dean.

Recommendations for initial appointments to the faculty will be made by the ad hoc Search Committee involved. All regular faculty will vote on such recommendations, and from this vote a ranking will be established.

Recommendations for renewal of assistant professor appointments will be made by a Review Committee appointed by the tenured faculty. The recommendation to renew or not renew a tenure-track appointment shall be reviewed by a vote of the entire regular faculty above the rank of the appointment involved and require two-thirds of those voting to approve. Recommendations for tenure will be made by regular faculty who are at or above the same rank for which the candidate is being considered. Tenure cases and promotions will be handled in accordance with University and College procedures as outlined in existing University guidelines, except for the following deviations. Promotion will be recommended by at least a two-thirds vote of the regular faculty casting ballots above the rank of the person being considered for promotion. Tenure decisions, independent of promotion, will be voted on by the tenured faculty who are at or above the same rank for which the person is being considered.

The committee on tenure and promotion shall invite the candidate to submit a complete record of teaching, research, and service activities, to provide a personal statement about their activity to date and expected activity in the years ahead, and to present any other relevant information the candidate wishes. Additionally, the candidate will be given an opportunity to speak to the committee if he/she wishes.

Conveying information to the candidate about the outcome of the review at the department level will be consistent with prevailing university policies and procedures. Under normal circumstances, the candidate should have to wait no longer than a few days after the committee votes. The Chair of the initial review committee (appointed by the department) and the Department Chair shall meet together to convey each of their recommendations to the candidate. If promotion was not recommended, the candidate will be furnished an explanation of the reasons for this action.

Mentoring

The Chair shall assign a senior tenured faculty member to each assistant and associate professor. The mentor's role will be to encourage, support, and assist the person and consult on matters of professional development. Aside from rendering assistance, mentors will be expected to be frank and honest when discussing one's progress towards attaining tenure and/or promotion. The mentor should meet each semester with their advisee. The Chair will provide annually his/her own informal assessment about the person's progress. The mentor's role is purely advisory; any positive comments made by them do not guarantee a favorable tenure and/or promotion decision.

Criteria for Promotion

From Assistant to Associate Professor: Candidates must demonstrate excellence in research, teaching and service and a level of productivity deserving promotion with tenure in a highly ranked department at a major research university.

Research. Two things must be clear: First, a candidate's published research must create a sense (among scholars on and off the campus) that the individual has established him/herself as a scholar of note in one or more areas of expertise and, second, the record must foster a sense of a research trajectory that gives confidence about the individual's research in the years ahead.

There may be variable ways by which this is demonstrated, and types of scholarly output may vary by subfield within the discipline. While refereed journal articles are the clearest example of this, books, book chapters, book reviews, grants, important reports, invited lectures and addresses, and other forms of public comment will also be considered. As a general rule, it is refereed publications that are weighed most heavily. Ideally, candidate will have some publications in widely regarded (and-cited) major journals; also highly valued are research monographs published by a major press (usually associated with a university).

Teaching. Candidates must exhibit high quality teaching, shown best by course syllabi, exams, assignments and evaluations. All faculty are encouraged to develop teaching portfolios in which such information may be found. Relevant teaching activities include both graduate and undergraduate education, as well as advising.

Service. Service is gauged in a variety of ways, but especially via (1) a general sense of citizenship within the department (e.g., serving on department committees, attending important department meetings, etc.) and, as appropriate, on campus (e.g., serving on college/university advisory committees); and (2) citizenship/service to the profession (e.g., reviewing journal manuscripts, serving on program committees, participation in sections and meetings of professional associations, etc.).

From Associate to Full Professor: Candidates must have an exemplary record in research, teaching, and service. One's published research is of paramount importance since the promotion is meant, primarily, to reward scholarship. The candidate should be widely regarded as a scholar. For this promotion, there should be a continuation of earlier research activity --being active in the research community in one's areas of expertise with relatively more citations to one's work, and the subsequent recognition of the candidate's prominence as a result. It is expected that candidates will demonstrate considerably more involvement in graduate teaching, advising (serving on and chairing student thesis and dissertation committees) and service to the profession (e.g., having been a candidate for or elected to office in professional associations; serving on editorial boards or grants reviews panels; or other forms of public service).

VII. AMENDING THE PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

Amendments to the Plan of Organization may be proposed by any member of the department through the Department Chair or by submission to the Policy Committee. The Policy Committee will review any proposed amendment, revise as it deems appropriate, and vote on whether to place the proposed amendment on the agenda of the next Departmental Meeting. Proposed amendments must be shared with the department at least one week in advance of the Departmental Meeting at which they will be considered. A two-thirds majority of those eligible to vote in Departmental Meetings is required to pass an amendment to the Plan of Organization. Proxy votes are not permitted. Absentee ballots submitted in advance of the meeting are permitted, but will not be counted if the proposed amendment is revised at the Departmental Meeting prior to the vote.