

## **Department of Sociology Plan of organization**

### I. Members of the Department

#### A. Faculty Members

##### 1. Voting Faculty

- a. Consistent with principles in the Plan of Organization for Shared Governance at the University of Maryland, Voting Faculty members of the Department of Sociology include full-time appointees holding a title listed 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.
- b. Persons holding a full-time, permanent joint appointment elsewhere within the university are considered Voting Faculty members of the Department of Sociology if their appointments within the department are at least half-time.
- c. Voting Faculty members on leave, and those with 9-month appointments who are not employed by the university during the summer, remain Voting Faculty members during those periods of absence.
- d. Voting Faculty members are eligible to vote on departmental affairs, including at Departmental Meetings.

##### 2. Non-Voting Faculty

- a. Non-Voting Faculty include emeritus faculty, post-doctoral associates, junior lecturers, and visiting, adjunct, or affiliate faculty (as well as faculty with temporary joint appointments). Non-Voting Faculty may be invited to participate within the department as appropriate.
- b. Non-Voting Faculty are eligible to serve on and vote within most departmental committees, with the exception of the APT Review Committee.
- c. In some cases, Non-Voting Faculty may chair thesis and dissertation committees with permission of the Sociology Director of Graduate Studies, after consultation with the Dean of the Graduate School. Non-Voting Faculty may, in some instances, co-chair thesis or dissertation committees.
- d. Non-Voting Faculty may only vote in Departmental Meetings when such a privilege is approved by a majority of voting members at a Departmental Meeting.

## B. Staff

- a. The Staff consists of full-time classified employees with an appointment of at least half-time in the Department of Sociology.
- b. 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 Article IV.D.
- c. Staff may serve as voting members of departmental committees.

## C. Students

- a. Student members include currently registered undergraduate and graduate students pursuing a degree in Sociology.
- b. Students may serve as voting members of departmental committees.
- c. The Graduate Student Forum may designate a graduate student representative to attend Departmental Meetings. That representative is expected to represent and communicate the views of graduate students at Departmental Meetings, and will have voting privileges, subject to the provisions in Article IV.D and Article V.D.1.

## II. Department Chair

### A. Duties and Responsibilities

1. The Chair has those responsibilities and authorities assigned by the Dean of the College of Behavioral & Social Sciences and as established in university policy. The Chair's duties include, but are not limited to: preparing reports, overseeing the budget, assuring satisfactory clerical work and the general administration of the department, supervising the Director of Administrative Services, development, assigning faculty teaching loads and courses, overseeing preparation of teaching schedules, encouraging excellence in instruction and research, overseeing distribution of any merit monies in consultation with the merit committees, and administrating the department in an evenhanded, democratic way.
2. The Chair shall convene and chair Departmental Meetings.
3. The Chair shall appoint members of committees established in this Plan. The Chair may also create ad hoc committees and appoint their members, as appropriate.
4. The Chair may appoint an Associate Chair who will assist the Chair in their duties. In the absence of the Chair, the Associate Chair shall assume the Chair's responsibilities.
5. The Chair may appoint a Director of Graduate Studies, a Director of Undergraduate Studies, and any additional administrative officers deemed necessary.

6. The Chair shall appoint mentors under the terms of the Faculty Mentoring Policy.

B. Selection, Term of Office, and Evaluation

1. Any member of the Voting Faculty may serve as Chair.
2. The Chair is appointed by the Dean upon recommendation of the college search committee and following consultation with the Voting Faculty, in accordance with university policy and college procedures. Individuals may be nominated by other faculty members (of any rank) or may self-nominate.
3. In the final year of their initial appointment, any Chair who wishes to be considered for reappointment will be reviewed under the terms of the University of Maryland Policy on the Review of Chairs and Directors of Academic Units.

III. Other Key Personnel and Their Duties

- A. The Director of Graduate Studies shall be responsible for all aspects of the graduate program, including: recruiting new students, advising existing students, scheduling graduate courses, seeking additional funding resources, monitoring student progress, setting graduate assistantship assignments and communicating them to the department, scheduling comprehensive/specialty examinations and constituting exam committees, the general development of the graduate program, and other duties as assigned by the Chair. The Director of Graduate Studies will chair the Graduate Committee, whose functions are described in Article V.D, and will provide supervision of any support staff.
- B. The Director of Undergraduate Studies shall be responsible for monitoring the overall condition of the undergraduate program, preparing reports, and providing resources to improve the quality of undergraduate instruction. The Director of Undergraduate Studies oversees the Honors Program and coordinates student services (including career guidance, counseling, and tutoring), supervises peer counselors, determines what undergraduate courses will be offered and assists with the scheduling process, and advises the Chair on suitable undergraduate students for committee appointments. The Director of Undergraduate Studies will serve as a member of the Undergraduate Committee, whose functions are described in Article V.E, and will provide supervision of any support staff.

IV. Departmental Meetings

- A. Departmental Meetings serve as a forum for discussing issues deemed important by members of the department, and for considering proposals put forward by standing or ad hoc committees. Departmental Meetings are chaired by the Chair.
- B. Approval or disapproval of any issue is by simple majority vote of those present and eligible to vote (accounting for absentee votes submitted in advance). The voting period on personnel matters

will extend at least one business day beyond the meeting at which the matter is considered. Votes may also be conducted electronically over a period announced prior to the start of the vote.

- C. A simple majority of voting members constitutes a quorum.
- D. Voting members include Voting Faculty members, the Director of Administrative Services, and the graduate student representative. For any vote related to the hiring of a tenured/tenure-track faculty member, only tenured/tenure-track members of the Voting Faculty will be allowed to vote. Additional restrictions on votes involving personnel matters appear in Article VI.
- E. Departmental Meetings shall be conducted according to *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, subject to any procedures stipulated in this Plan.
- F. Minutes of all Departmental Meetings will be kept, along with copies of letters and reports, and will be made available to voting members upon request.
- G. Departmental Meetings will normally occur the second Wednesday of each month during the academic year, unless there is no business to conduct or the normal schedule is disrupted. Ordinarily, no meetings will be held in the summer months, or during winter break. Additional Departmental Meetings may be called by the Chair, or by petition of twenty percent of the Voting Faculty.
- H. The agenda for each Departmental Meeting will be set by the Chair in consultation with the Policy Committee and will be distributed in advance of the meeting. The agenda for any additional meeting called by the Chair or by a petition of the Voting Faculty will be distributed with the announcement for the meeting.
- I. Amendments to this Plan will be considered at Departmental Meetings according to the provisions in Article VII.

## V. Standing Committees

### A. General Provisions

1. The purpose of each standing committee is outlined below. Committees will develop their own operating procedures, as appropriate.
2. Faculty members may serve on no more than three standing or ad hoc committees in a given year. For most committees, appointments are for one year; terms for members of the Policy Committee are discussed in Article V.B. Non-Voting Faculty, Staff and Student members will be appointed for one-year terms. All standing committee members have voting privileges.
3. Each standing committee may appoint, with the Chair'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.

4. A simple majority of members constitutes a quorum.
5. The chair shall seek to ensure equity in representation while balancing workloads when appointing committees.
6. Unless otherwise specified below, committee chairs are appointed by the Chair.

#### B. Policy Committee

1. Membership of the Policy Committee includes the Chair (who chairs meetings), two full professors, two associate professors, and two assistant professors; one professional track faculty member; and one graduate student. Faculty members are elected by their respective ranks, while the graduate student member is appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Graduate Student Forum. Faculty members serve two-year terms and students serve one-year terms.
2. Policy Committee meetings will normally occur the first Wednesday of each month during the academic year, unless there is no business to conduct or the normal schedule is disrupted.
3. The Policy Committee formulates policy recommendations on matters affecting the entire department, helps the Chair set the agendas for Departmental Meetings, and reviews proposals from standing or ad hoc committees that involve policy changes. Proposals endorsed by the committee are then considered at a Departmental Meeting. The Policy Committee also screens any nominee or candidate for affiliate faculty membership, and makes a recommendation on the candidate, which is then considered at a Departmental Meeting. The Policy Committee also considers any revisions to the Plan in accordance with Article VII.
4. Outgoing members of the Policy Committee serve on the Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Merit Pay Committee, as addressed in Article V.F. The Chair will also select an incoming member of the tenured/tenure-track faculty, who serves on the PTK Faculty Merit Review Committee, as addressed in Article V.G.1

#### C. Executive Committee

1. Membership of the Executive Committee shall include the Chair (who chairs meetings), the Associate Chair, the Director of Graduate Studies, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and the Director of Administrative Services.
2. Executive Committee meetings will normally occur once a month during the academic year, unless there is no business to conduct.
3. The Executive Committee advises the Chair on solutions to administrative issues and coordinates the various administrative activities for which its members are individually responsible.

#### D. Graduate Committee

1. Membership of the Graduate Committee includes the Director of Graduate Studies (who chairs meetings), at least three Voting Faculty members, at least one graduate student appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Graduate Student Forum. Any graduate student members vote on all matters except those directly involving currently enrolled, individual students.
2. The Graduate Committee meets as needed to address committee business.
3. The Graduate Committee shall develop and oversee the graduate curriculum, select students for admission to the program, solicit nominations for graduate student awards and determine recipients, and deliberate on other matters relevant to the graduate program.

#### E. Undergraduate Committee

1. Membership of the Undergraduate Committee includes the Director of Undergraduate Studies (who chairs meetings), at least three Voting Faculty members (of which one should be a lecturer, to the extent of availability), one graduate student appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Graduate Student Forum, and one undergraduate student appointed in consultation with the Director of Undergraduate Studies.
2. The Undergraduate Committee meets as needed to address committee business.
3. The Undergraduate Committee shall develop and oversee the undergraduate curriculum, establish policies on advising, deliberate on other matters relevant to the undergraduate program, provide a forum for discussion of teaching-related issues, disseminates teaching-related information, and convene teaching-related seminars.

#### F. Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Merit Pay Committee

1. Membership of the Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Merit Pay Committee includes all outgoing tenured/tenure-track faculty members of the Policy Committee. Its chair will be selected by the Chair.
2. Each spring, the committee conducts its reviews according to the Department of Sociology Policy and Procedures on Merit Pay Distribution.
3. The Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Merit Pay Committee also conducts post-tenure reviews according to the Sociology Guidelines for Post-Tenure Review.

#### G. PTK Faculty Merit Review Committee

1. Membership of the PTK Faculty Merit Review Committee includes one incoming tenured/tenure-track member of the Policy Committee identified by the Chair, two members

elected by and from the PTK faculty, and the Associate Chair, who serves as a non-voting ex-officio member and coordinates the committee's work.

2. Each spring, the committee conducts its reviews according to the Department of Sociology Policy and Procedures on Annual Merit Reviews for PTK Faculty.

#### H. Awards Committee

1. Membership of the Awards Committee includes at least two Voting Faculty members, a graduate student appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Graduate Student Forum, and an undergraduate student appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Director of Undergraduate Studies.
2. The Awards Committee is responsible for nominating or selecting faculty and students for awards, primarily those offered at the campus level, and meets as necessary to complete its business.

#### I. Grade Appeals Committee

1. Membership of the Grade Appeals Committee shall include three tenured faculty members.
2. The committee meets on an ad hoc basis to consider undergraduate student grade appeals in accordance with the university Procedures for Review of Alleged Arbitrary and Capricious Grading--Undergraduate Students. All deliberations are confidential.

#### J. Equity and Justice Committee

1. Membership of the Equity and Justice Committee includes four members of the Voting Faculty, including both tenured/tenure-track and professional track faculty; one staff member; two graduate students appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Graduate Student Forum; and an undergraduate student appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Members serve two-year terms, and terms should be staggered, to the extent feasible, to ensure continuity. The Chair will identify a chair or co-chairs in consultation with the Equity and Justice Committee.
2. The committee is broadly responsible for leading efforts to enhance and expand the department's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to make it a more welcoming and supportive environment for all members of the department. Its responsibilities include the following:
  - a. Plan and deliver workshops and training opportunities in support of its overall charge, and maintain a growing repository of resources for faculty, staff, and students.
  - b. Develop recommendations for new and revised policies and procedures for consideration by the department.

- c. Receive, review, and process all incidents reported under the department's grievance policies, as well as any complaints of bias, harassment, bullying, microaggressions, or other behaviors inconsistent with the Department of Sociology's Equity and Justice Policy.
- d. Report annually on the state of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the department; collect and regularly report to the department data on appropriate metrics.
- e. Advise and collaborate with the Chair and the other standing committees on topics related to its overall charge.

#### VI. Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure (APT) and Appointment, Evaluation, and Promotion (AEP)

- A. Decisions regarding appointments, promotions, and tenure shall be carried out in a manner consistent with college and university policies and guidelines. In the event of conflicting provisions, the higher-level authorities will take precedence.
- B. All faculty will be provided a copy of the relevant promotion criteria upon hire.
- C. All faculty will be assigned mentors under the terms of the Faculty Mentoring Policy. Mentors will encourage, support, and assist the faculty member, and consult on matters of professional development. Aside from rendering assistance, mentors will be expected to be frank and honest when discussing a faculty member's progress towards attaining tenure and/or promotion. The Chair will provide annually their own informal assessment of the faculty member's progress. Mentors are purely advisory; any positive comments made by them do not guarantee a favorable tenure and/or promotion decision.
- D. Initial Appointments
  - 1. Recommendations of candidates to be considered for initial tenure-track faculty appointments will be made by an ad hoc search committee appointed by the Chair. All Voting Faculty at or above the rank of the appointment will vote on such recommendations, and from this vote a ranking will be established.
  - 2. Recommendations for appointments of affiliate faculty will be made by the Policy Committee to the department. The recommendation is then voted on a Departmental Meeting.
- E. Renewal of Assistant Professor Appointments
  - 1. Recommendations for renewal of assistant professor appointments will be made by a review committee appointed by the Chair from among the Associate and Full Professors.
  - 2. The candidate will provide the committee a CV; teaching evaluations; course syllabi; a statement of research, teaching, and service activities; and copies of selected published and under review papers.



3. The committee will review the written materials, evaluate the progress thus far, and recommend what future accomplishments might provide the best chance for promotion. The committee will observe and evaluate the candidate's teaching.
4. The committee will draft a report that includes a recommendation for renewal or non-renewal, which will be circulated among the tenured faculty. Members of the tenured faculty will vote on whether or not to recommend renewal.
5. The Chair will write an independent evaluation of the candidate's progress that will include the Chair's decision regarding renewal.
6. The Chair, the review committee, and the candidate will meet to discuss both the Chair's and the committee's assessments. The candidate will provide a written confirmation of receipt of the two reports and of the discussions with the committee and the Chair, and may submit a written response.

#### F. Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure (APT) Process

1. Reviews for promotion and tenure of Assistant Professors will be conducted by an APT Review Committee, whose members and chair are appointed by the Chair.
2. The APT Review Committee will maintain strict confidentiality throughout the process, and will follow college and university policies and guidelines in conducting its review.
3. Recommendations for tenure will be made by faculty who are at or above the rank for which the candidate is being considered, and require two-thirds of those voting to approve.
4. The Chair will share with the candidate the outcome of the review at the department level and the vote tallies. Under normal circumstances, the candidate should be notified a few days after the outcome is known, but will in all cases be notified within two weeks.
5. If either the Chair or the vote of the faculty supports the case, it will move forward to the college.
6. The chair of the APT Review Committee and the Chair shall meet together to convey each of their recommendations to the candidate.
7. If promotion was not recommended, the candidate will be furnished an explanation of the reasons for this action.
8. Promotion criteria for tenured/tenure-track faculty are as follows:
  - a. Assistant to Associate Professor

- i. 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.
  - ii. 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).
  - iii. 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.
  - iv. 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.).
- b. Associate to Full Professor
- i. 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

1. Amendments to the Plan of Organization may be proposed by any member of the department through the Chair or by submission to the Policy Committee.
2. 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.
3. 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.