

Biology Instructional Office (BIO)

Faculty Governance Committee (FGC)

Effective when approved through August 15, 2028

The FGC must review and approve a proposal of continuation or renewal of the Policy by the Expiration Date.

STRUCTURE

- **Name and type of unit:** This document details the structure and voting policies of the **Biology Instructional Office (BIO)** as it pertains to the Professional-Track Faculty (PTF) appointed by BIO.

The Biology Instructional Office (BIO) is an academic unit that serves three biology departments [Molecular Biosciences (MBS), Integrative Biology (IB), and Neuroscience (NEU)] in three ways:

I. Professional-track faculty: BIO serves as the primary home department for all PTF who teach courses administered by the MBS, IB, or NEU Departments, or by BIO. Every BIO faculty member has a secondary affiliation with either MBS, IB, or NEU.

II. Curriculum: BIO oversees the Biology BSA degree and houses four biology non-majors courses, two introductory biology courses, one introductory genetics course, one introductory biology lab, and one introductory genetics lab course.

III. Teaching logistics: BIO office staff schedule all undergraduate and graduate biology courses, appoint all teaching assistants, appoint all Professional-track Faculty (PTF), manage the teaching budget, and supervise the staff who prepare materials for the teaching laboratories.

- **FGC Type:** The FGC of BIO is of the Executive Committee type. BIO is governed by the Executive Committee (EC).

- **FGC Chair:** The FGC Chair is the BIO Director, who is appointed by the Dean of the College of Natural Sciences.

- **FGC Chair Voting Eligibility:** The FGC Chair does not vote on the recommendations made by the FGC.

- **Role of FGC:** The role of the FGC is to vote on recommendations. Final decisions related to responsibilities for which the FGC provides recommendations are made by either the dean, provost, president, executive vice chancellor, chancellor, or Board of Regents, depending on the action being taken.

• **FGC Membership:** The FGC of BIO consists of an Executive Committee (EC) composed as follows:

- > All BIO Full Professors of Instruction and Distinguished Senior Lecturers
- > All BIO Associate Professors of Instruction
- > The Associate Chairs for Undergraduate Education in MBS, IB, and NEU (They are all tenured Full Professors or Associate Professors.)
- > Three MBS Full Professors (appointed by MBS Chair for 3-year terms)
- > Two IB Full Professors (appointed by IB Chair for 3-year terms)
- > One NEU Full Professor (appointed by NEU Chair for 3-year term)

The MBS, IB, and NEU full professors above are faculty who have demonstrated teaching excellence.

VOTING POLICIES

• **Remote engagement and voting by faculty:** Synchronous, remote engagement, and voting is allowed for voting-eligible faculty who have been approved to work remotely (either for professional or personal reasons). Faculty who are on official travel and have filed an RTA approved by the BIO Director and/or their Department Chair are considered to have “approved professional commitments”.

> **For votes on promotion:** Eligible voting faculty on the EC with approved professional commitments and/or personal circumstances can participate and vote synchronously and remotely in the review of candidates.

> **For votes on hiring decisions:** In situations where materials relevant for the vote have been shared and a discussion is scheduled before the vote, eligible voting faculty on the FGC with approved professional commitments and/or personal circumstances are allowed to cast remote synchronous votes as long as they attend the discussion. If no discussion is scheduled before the vote, these eligible voting faculty are allowed to cast remote synchronous and asynchronous votes.

• **FGC Voting rights and procedures:** In meetings arranged by the Director, subgroups of the FGC vote to make recommendations for the following:

> **Continuation and changes to this policy:** All FGC members are eligible to vote on changes to this policy every three years. A simple majority vote is required to change the policy.

> **Annual Review of PTF:** Each year, all FGC members are invited to volunteer to serve on the Annual Review Committee. The Associate Chairs of MBS, IB, and NEU always participate. Annual Review Committee members evaluate only those PTF at the same or lower rank as themselves.

All BIO PTF will be evaluated for their Teaching and for their Other Contributions. Three ratings will be assigned to each faculty member: An Overall rating, a Teaching rating, and an Other Contributions rating. Ratings assigned are: *Exceeds expectations; Meets expectations; Do Not Meet Expectations; Unsatisfactory.*

The Annual Review Committee may also make recommendations to the Director and the BIO Teaching Awards Committee concerning teaching awards.

A separate document available to all BIO PTF details the process for Annual Review.

> Third-year Review of PTF: Third-year review occurs in the 5th, 6th, or 7th semester of employment. A two-person Review Committee that includes at least one FGC member who is Full Professor in IB, MBS, or NEU is appointed by the Director. The materials reviewed include CES, peer and expert teaching evaluations, teaching observations, teaching reflections, and a teaching portfolio.

> Compensation of PTF: Salary recommendations are informed by the results of Annual Review and are determined by the BIO Director in consultation with the Associate Chairs of MBS, IB, and NEU.

> Promotion of PTF: All EC members with a higher rank than the candidate being considered are eligible to serve on promotion committees and to vote on promotions.

Assistant Professors of Instruction are eligible to initiate the process of promotion to Associate Professor of Instruction any summer after their 10th semester of employment at UT. Associate Professors of Instruction are eligible to initiate the process of promotion to Full Professor of Instruction any time after 10 semesters in rank.

The Director will advise faculty interested in promotion in a meeting initiated by the faculty member each spring following annual review. Faculty interested in promotion should consult with the Director annually to discuss their progress toward that goal. Initiation of the promotion process should occur through mutual agreement between the faculty member and the Director, in consultation with the Associate Director of Undergraduate Education of the department with which the PTF has a secondary affiliation.

Two EC members, appointed by the Director, will constitute the Promotion Committee. The Promotion Committee will include a Full Professor from the department with which the PTF under consideration for promotion holds a secondary affiliation. The Promotion Committee will evaluate the dossier and make a recommendation to the EC members eligible to vote.

> Hiring of PTF: All PTF who teach biology classes are appointed through BIO. The BIO Director or the Associate Chairs of MBS, IB, or NEU can initiate the process of hiring a new BIO PTF to teach courses in their department(s). That individual will appoint a search committee that includes BIO PTF in the FGC and can also include faculty outside the BIO FGC. Interviews should

include a short teaching presentation by the candidate. The search committee can make the hiring decision and inform the Director and the Chair of either MBS, IB, or NEU.

> PTF Contracts: The type and length of contract for PTF will follow University and CNS policies. Currently, Lecturers and Assistant Professors of Instruction have 1-year contracts, with an understanding that the intention of BIO is to renew the contracts of those PTF whose performance is excellent. Associate and Full Professors of Instruction have 3-year contracts, except for faculty newly hired at this level, who have 1-year contracts for a probationary period.

Decisions regarding non-renewal of contracts are made by the Director and the Associate Chair of the relevant biology department, in consultation with the CNS Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs.

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

- **BIO Course and Curriculum Committee (CCC):** The BIO CCC oversees the Biology BSA degree and all the courses with the BIO prefix.

The BIO CCC is chaired by the Director, who appoints the other members. Members of the BIO CCC include the Associate Chairs of the MBS, IB, and NEU departments, other members of the BIO FGC, the course coordinators for the Introductory Biology courses and Genetics, the Instructors for the Introductory Biology and Genetics Lab courses, and the faculty adviser for the Biology BSA degree.

- **Mentoring of New PTF:** The BIO Director will hold an orientation session for new BIO faculty each August. At this session, the new faculty meet the BIO staff, and are made aware of the expectations of BIO, CNS, and the University. For multi-section classes, the course coordinators and/or other instructors serve as teaching mentors. For other classes, the Associate Chairs of MBS, IB, and NEU will assign teaching mentors to new PTF.

- **Teaching Awards:** The Annual Review committee suggests nominees for BIO, CNS, and University teaching awards to the Director and the Teaching Award committee. The Director formally nominates faculty for these awards each year.