

Bylaws of the Basic Sciences Faculty Steering Committee

I. Preamble

On May 4, 1987, the faculty of the basic sciences departments of the Duke University School of Medicine met as a whole and voted to establish and elect a Faculty Coordinating Committee for the Development of the Basic Sciences. The Coordinating Committee was charged with drafting a plan for the reorganization and development of the basic sciences departments. The Coordinating Committee's report, which was approved by a vote of the basic sciences faculty on October 9, 1987, furnished the blueprint for subsequent development and faculty governance in the basic medical sciences at Duke School of Medicine.

In adopting the Coordinating Committee's report, the basic sciences faculty replaced the Coordinating Committee with a permanent body of elected faculty representatives, the Basic Sciences Faculty Steering Committee, which serves as a faculty senate for the basic sciences. The job of the Steering Committee is to ensure that faculty opinions are ascertained, articulated, and voiced in all debates and decisions involving the interests of the basic sciences faculty.

Members of the Basic Sciences Faculty Steering Committee, including alternate representatives, shall be protected from any adverse actions taken by the School of Medicine administration in retaliation for their service on the Steering Committee, for positions they have taken, statements they have made, or votes they have cast in their capacity as representatives of the basic sciences faculty. If a committee member perceives such treatment, they may bring it to the attention of the Faculty Hearing Committee for adjudication.

II. Membership of the Faculty Steering Committee

The Faculty Steering Committee for the Basic Sciences shall consist of one member from each basic sciences department and one member from each section that has at least four tenure track faculty members in addition to its chairperson. Any tenure track faculty member with a primary appointment in a basic sciences department or section, other than the chairperson of that department or section, is eligible to be nominated and elected as its representative to the Faculty Steering Committee. In Basic Science departments where the number of tenure track faculty represents less than 50% of the total faculty, non-tenure track faculty members from that department are eligible to serve as its representative to the Basic Sciences Faculty Steering Committee.

In the event that a department or section ceases to exist, its representative to the Faculty Steering Committee shall continue to serve as a member of the committee at large until the next election of representatives to the Faculty Steering Committee. A member of the Steering Committee who becomes a temporary or interim chairperson of a department or section may serve out the remainder of his or her term if a majority of the other members of the Steering Committee vote to allow this. A member of the Steering Committee who is appointed to serve as the permanent chairperson of a department or section shall resign from the Steering Committee and be replaced by the alternate representative from that department or section, following the procedures in these by-laws governing the resignation of representatives to the Steering Committee.

III. BSFSC Nomination and Election Procedures

- a) The members of the BSFSC are elected to two-year terms, with an option for a two-year renewal. One cohort of the departmental members shall be selected in odd-numbered years and the remainder in even-numbered years to ensure continuity.
- b) Regular rank primary faculty of each department shall elect their representatives to the BSFSC.

The departmental BSFC representative will serve as overseer of the nomination and election process.

c) Nominations shall be solicited by the departmental BSFSC member, independent of the departmental chair. It is recommended that the current BSFSC representative call a faculty-only departmental meeting for the representative nomination process. Any eligible faculty member (IIIId) may nominate himself or herself. The willingness of a nominee to serve will be confirmed prior to the voting procedure. All eligible departmental faculty members will be provided with the names of all nominees, and an election will be performed by an anonymized voting process. The faculty member with the highest number of votes will serve as the BSFSC representative; the second highest vote number faculty will serve as the alternate. Tie votes will be resolved by a run-off election.

d) Only Associate and Full Professors are eligible for election to the BSFSC. This restriction is meant to protect pre-promotion faculty.

e) The Chair of the BSFSC shall be elected from among the members of the BSFSC by majority vote of all basic science faculty. This election will take place annually after the election of BSFSC members for the coming year. As with the representative nomination and election process, the willingness of a BSFSC member to serve as Chair will be confirmed prior to the voting procedure. Elections shall be conducted in the Spring term so that a Chair is in place at the beginning of the academic year. Voting will be performed by an anonymized voting process. The BSFSC representative with the highest number of votes will serve as the BSFSC Chair. Tie votes will be resolved by a run-off election. The Chair will be responsible for organizing the meetings, inviting members of the administration to provide updates, and preparing any responses that are needed from the BSFC.

IV. Duties of the Faculty Steering Committee

It shall be the responsibility of the Faculty Steering Committee for the Basic Sciences to consider and make proposals to the School of Medicine administration regarding all aspects of education, faculty development, faculty research and teaching activities, and other functions of the School of Medicine involving the basic sciences faculty. The Steering Committee will also serve as a conduit for the transmission and dissemination of ideas and issues between the School of Medicine administration and the basic sciences faculty. The Steering Committee will undertake to survey faculty opinion and form faculty committees when necessary to meet these responsibilities. Individual members of the committee are expected to keep the faculty of the departments and sections they represent informed on all matters of consequence that come before the committee.

The Chair of the Faculty Steering Committee shall attend the regular meetings of the Medical Center Executive Committee, representing the basic science faculty. When a new chair is elected, all listserv, survey and box folder ownership shall be transferred from the previous chair to the new chair.

The Faculty Steering Committee shall serve as a committee on committees for the basic sciences faculty. In that capacity, it shall nominate faculty to serve on standing and ad hoc committees in the School of Medicine and present these nominations to the administrative officer empowered to form the committees in question. Administrators are of course free to consult any faculty they wish on an individual basis, but should seek nominations and approval from the Faculty Steering Committee in all situations where the opinions of a faculty member are to be construed as representative of basic sciences faculty opinion. It is expected that an administrative officer will not appoint basic sciences faculty representatives to standing advisory committees without seeking nominations from the Faculty Steering Committee. The administrative officer may suggest nominees to the Steering Committee if he or she so wishes. If the faculty nominated by

the Steering Committee are unacceptable to the administrative officer, he or she should return to the Steering Committee to seek additional nominations.

Except in emergencies, it is expected that all major plans and decisions of the School of Medicine administration that significantly affect academic affairs will be submitted to the Faculty Steering Committee so that it can solicit and articulate faculty views before those plans and decisions are implemented or submitted to the university's president or Board of Trustees. The presiding officer of the Steering Committee will see to it that the faculty's views are represented to the administrators or trustees of the university when proposals involving the School of Medicine are presented to them for their consideration.

The Faculty Steering Committee shall be responsible for scheduling, announcing, and presiding over a general meeting of the basic sciences faculty of the School of Medicine at least once annually during the spring or fall semesters of the academic year. At that meeting, the presiding officer of the Steering Committee will report to the faculty on the committee's deliberations and actions during the preceding year. The chief administrative officers of the School of Medicine and the School of Medicine shall also be invited to attend this meeting and present reports on matters of faculty concern for open discussion.

- V. Procedure for amending the Basic Sciences Faculty Steering Committee bylaws
- Bylaws of the Basic Sciences Faculty Steering Committee may be amended by a majority of those members of the basic science faculty present at a meeting of the Basic Sciences Faculty Steering Committee, provided that the text of any proposed amendment has been circulated to the members of the basic sciences faculty at least two weeks prior to any such meeting.

Revision History

Version Date	Summary of Changes
09 October, 1987	Faculty Coordinating Committee creation
2018	Working version
22 July – 10 August, 2025	Updated nomination and election process (Section III) by vote of Basic Sciences faculty
08 September, 2025	Definition of voting eligibility and membership of Chair in MCEC by vote of BSFSC
23 February, 2026	Additional preamble paragraph to protect committee members. Definition of faculty eligible to serve (IIId). Chair transition procedure. Clarification of chair election procedure.