BYLAWS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH STUDIES

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC

APPROVED:

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Department of Health Studies (DHS) Mission:

The Department of Health Studies is educating the future leaders of the public health and health promotion industries. We are committed to improving health and reducing health disparities in the US and around the globe and ground this work in a life course framework.

Our faculty members are industry pioneers leading innovative research projects in health promotion, public health, nutrition, health sciences, epidemiology, psychology, and health policy. Faculty priorities focus on advancing knowledge through research and achieving optimal health for all. The faculty develop and apply a broad range of methods to research and professional practice.

Our students are dedicated to assuming leadership positions within the health promotion and public health industries and improving the health and well-being of individuals, communities, organizations, and societies. Skills emphasized in departmental training include: behavioral science, program evaluation, evidence based advocacy and the translation of research for programs and policy.

DHS Faculty

The department faculty comprise all tenured and tenure-track faculty members, including faculty on leave (both sabbatical and leave without pay), research faculty, faculty with joint appointments in other departments, and term faculty. The department faculty do not include emeritus faculty, adjunct faculty, affiliate faculty, or visiting faculty.

The department faculty are responsible for all departmental decisions and policies. The faculty formulate educational policy. The faculty make recommendations to the Chair concerning hiring priorities, the selection of job candidates, and the hiring of new faculty, although only tenure-line and tenured faculty may vote during the hiring process. The faculty formulate teaching-load policies, pursuant to the Faculty Manual and guidelines from the Dean of CAS. The faculty makes recommendations to the Chair concerning hiring priorities, the selection of faculty candidates, and the hiring of new faculty. The Chair submits these recommendations to the Dean of CAS.
Chair of the Department of Health Studies

The Chair reports to the Dean of CAS. Though responsibilities may be delegated, the Chair remains responsible for ensuring that all major departmental functions are carried out in such fashion that all interested parties are informed, that the obligations set by the office of the Dean of CAS are met punctually, and that University-stipulated procedures are followed.

The Chair's term of office is ordinarily three years. Subject to approval and appointment by the Dean of CAS, the department faculty may recommend that the Chair’s term of office be renewed for an additional three years. Under extraordinary circumstances, the Dean of CAS may be petitioned by a two-thirds vote of the Department Faculty to terminate the Chair's term of office at the end of any academic year.

The Chair is responsible for:

- Conceiving, shaping, advocating, and implementing existing and new academic programs in order to promote the improvement of the department and the department faculty.
- Enabling the professional development of the department faculty and staff.
- Running the department’s faculty meetings. The Chair coordinates all facets of departmental operation and oversees the administrative functioning of the department, including the budget, course scheduling and the hiring of term or adjunct faculty.
- Making departmental appointments, such as faculty advisor(s), honors coordinator(s), or chair(s) of tenure-line search committee(s) (with the approval of the CAS dean).
- Making recommendations for faculty hiring and reappointment, for faculty promotion and tenure, and for faculty merit.
- Communicating the recommendations of the Search Committee concerning the hiring of tenure-track, term, and adjunct faculty to the Dean of CAS, except where an individual committee makes a faculty recommendation.
- Managing the Department’s accounts, including the operating account, development account, student fee accounts and scholarship accounts.

Subject to approval and appointment by the Dean of CAS, the Chair of the department is selected by the tenure-line faculty in the department.
Responsibilities of Program Directors

Both tenured and term faculty members may serve as program directors of either an undergraduate or graduate program. Program directors are responsible for:

- Developing the schedule of course offerings and the faculty assigned to those courses, subject to final approval by the chair.
- Advising and mentoring students and prospective students.
- Supporting DHS, CAS and university marketing and retention activities.
- Developing initiatives and networks for the professional development of program graduates and alumni.
- Recruiting and screening prospective adjunct faculty, subject to final approval by the Chair.
- Recommending the reappointment of adjunct faculty to the Chair.
- Working with program faculty and others to support and enhance course and curriculum development, review and propose changes in program objectives and requirements.
- Providing oversight and evaluation of faculty teaching in the program.

DHS Faculty Meetings

The faculty will meet once a month during the fall and spring semesters. All members of the department faculty are invited to attend regular faculty meetings. Other people may be invited at the discretion of the chair and/or the faculty. When a vote is necessary, tenured, tenure-track faculty and term faculty who have been with the unit for longer than one year may participate in a department vote. No votes may be taken unless quorums of at least one half of the department’s faculty members are present. At the Chair’s discretion, faculty meetings may have an executive session where attendance and voting is limited. Faculty meeting dates will be announced at the start of the semester; every effort will be made to select a time when faculty are available to attend. Faculty agendas will be distributed at least five business days before the meeting. Minutes of the meetings will be taken by the DHS’s Senior Administrative Assistant and will be distributed no later than one week after the meeting.

Review of Faculty

Department faculty will be reviewed annually in the spring semester pursuant to the Merit Evaluation Guidelines of the department (available from the Chair) and the College. This review will be conducted by the faculty.
DHS Committees

Rank and Tenure Committee

All full-time tenured faculty members are voting members. Emeriti faculty may be invited by the dean to serve. The R&T Committee must have at least three members. If there are too few departmental members able to serve, then qualified members from other departments will be invited onto the Committee. To ensure that there is sufficient expertise in the field of study of an individual faculty member whose file for action is being reviewed, the Chair may appoint a faculty member(s) from another teaching unit in the College of Arts and Sciences to serve on the committee. These appointments must be approved by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The Chair of the Rank and Tenure Committee is appointed by the department Chair for a one year renewable term and is recommended to be a full professor. However, an associate professor may chair if the faculty action is for an assistant professor. Further, if no one from the Department is available, with consultation from the Dean of CAS, a faculty member outside of the unit may serve as chair.

Voting on all faculty actions for tenure line and tenured faculty must be by secret ballot, and no proxy or absentee voting is permitted. Voting by committee members must follow the procedures established by the College of Arts and Sciences and the University.

During the summer, or in emergency situations, the Chair may constitute an ad hoc subcommittee to recommend term appointments. Ad hoc subcommittees will normally have three or more members and will be chaired by the appropriate program director.

Responsibilities of the Rank and Tenure Committee include:

- Evaluating tenure line faculty for appointment, reappointment, tenure and promotion; evaluation of tenured faculty for promotion to a higher rank; evaluation of proposed leaves of absence.
- Evaluating term faculty for initial appointments, promotion and multi-year appointments.
- Term reappointments will be the responsibility of the department Chair in consultation with the Rank and Tenure Committee.
Honors Committee
The Honors committee will oversee all the processes related to the DHS Honors Program. This will include evaluating student applications, student course work, and independent student scholarly projects completed to achieve an honors designation.

Undergraduate Health Studies Committee
The Undergraduate Health Studies Committee will oversee all curriculum issues related to the Public Health and Health Promotion majors and minors. The committee will also be responsible for conducting and submitting annual assessment reports in October.

Graduate Health Studies Committee
The Graduate Health Studies Committee will oversee all curriculum issues related to the Health Promotion Management and Nutrition Education programs. The Committee will also be responsible for conducting and submitting annual assessment reports in October.

The faculty is empowered to create, modify and propose this (and other) department documents.