

Bylaws for the Program in Neuroscience at Florida State University

These are the bylaws for the interdepartmental Program in Neuroscience at Florida State University. These bylaws were approved by secret ballot on June 18, 2017 by a two-thirds majority of the voting members of the Program in Neuroscience and on February 18, 2025 by the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement.

Record of Substantive Revisions and Amendments to these Bylaws

Amendments to III.C.2. (on procedures for selection of the Director) and III.C.3. (on the term of office of the Director) were approved on February 17, 2025 by a two-thirds majority of the voting members of the Program in Neuroscience.

Amendments to V. (on the annual evaluation of faculty on performance and merit) and VI. (on the promotion of faculty), and the addition of III.C.10 (the creation of a new Promotion Committee), Appendix I (Specialized Faculty Peer and Merit Evaluation Criteria and Procedures), and Appendix II (Standards for Recommendation of Promotion of Specialized Faculty at Florida State University) were approved on March 17, 2025 by a two-thirds majority of the voting members of the Program in Neuroscience.

The addition of a new committee (C.7. Undergraduate Training Committee) was approved on November 17, 2025 by a two-thirds majority of the voting members of the Program in Neuroscience.

I. Bylaws

A. Adherence with Other Governing Documents. At all times, Program policy shall adhere to and be consistent with all university policies found in the FSU Constitution, the BOT-UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement, the Faculty Handbook, and the Annual Memorandum on the Promotion and Tenure Process issued by the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement.

B. Bylaws Revision. Any three core training faculty, as defined in II.A below, may propose an amendment to these bylaws. To be adopted, a proposed amendment must receive an affirmative vote by two-thirds of the core training faculty. The amendment must be made available to the core training faculty at least two weeks prior to a vote. Approved amendments shall take effect immediately or as provided in the amendment itself.

C. Substantive Change Statement. Faculty and staff members are expected to be familiar with and follow the Florida State University Substantive Change Policy as found on the university web site <https://sacs.fsu.edu/substantive-change-policy/>.

II. Membership and Voting Rights

A. Faculty Membership. The core training faculty of the Program in Neuroscience shall consist of those persons holding (i) full-time appointments at the rank of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor, and (ii) Graduate Faculty Status (GFS) in Neuroscience. The process of awarding GFS in Neuroscience is overseen by the Graduate Training Committee, which requires that a prospective faculty member of the Program:

- a. Holds a full-time regular faculty appointment in a tenured or tenure-earning position.
- b. Has GFS in a home department at FSU.
- c. Has research and teaching interests in an area of neuroscience.
- d. Participates actively in training and other activities of the Program.
- e. Gives a scientific colloquium to the Program faculty and students. For new faculty hired into one of the participating departments, upon recommendation of the Graduate Training Committee, the job talk may fulfill this requirement.
- f. Be approved for inclusion by a subsequent ballot of current faculty in the Program.

If conditions (a) through (f) are satisfied, the Program recommends to the FSU Graduate School that the faculty member be awarded GFS in Neuroscience, which permits serving as a major professor for a doctoral neuroscience candidate. Core training faculty membership in the Program begins with granting of GFS in Neuroscience. The University's process for achieving GFS requires experience in research and training of degree-seeking graduate students. Once credentialed in Neuroscience, a faculty member normally retains their Faculty Membership status unless their neuroscience research interests or training commitment lapses.

B. Program Membership. In addition to the core training faculty defined in II.A Faculty Membership above, the following are members of the Program in Neuroscience: Specialized Faculty (evaluated and promoted by the Program), graduate students, postdocs, staff, and faculty affiliates. Faculty affiliates include individuals holding non-tenure-earning faculty positions (evaluated and promoted within the Program's participating departments) that meet criteria (c) through (f) in II.A above. Specialized Faculty and Faculty affiliates are eligible to serve in any elected or appointed committee and may hold Graduate Teaching Status for the Program. Faculty affiliates may also be recommended for Co-Doctoral Dissertation Directive Status (CDDS) if approved by vote of the core training faculty, as defined in II.A above. In accordance with university policy, CDDS must then be approved by the FSU Graduate School.

C. Faculty Voting Rights. All faculty members defined in II.A above have full voting rights on all matters related to the Program.

D. Non-faculty Voting Rights. Voting rights are not extended to Program members defined in II.B above.

III. Organization and Governance

A. Faculty Meetings. The Director shall call and preside over faculty meetings and prepare agenda for such meetings, including annual operating budget and financial reports. The Director shall call additional faculty meetings when requested to do so by any faculty member defined in II.A.

B. Director Selection. Faculty members of the Program are involved in all aspects of the process for selecting the Director. Faculty may nominate candidates for Director, serve on the search committee to elect the new Director, and vote via a secret ballot to elect the new Director.

C. Leadership and Committees. The Program in Neuroscience is overseen by the Director, who serves as the chief administrative officer of the Program. Service on Program committees is considered to be part of each faculty member's responsibility. Meetings of committees shall be held only when a majority of the voting members of the committee are present. Unless otherwise specified, all committee members serve in a voting capacity. The Director and faculty members will make every effort to form committees that include members from each major participating department when possible.

C.1. Authority and duties of the Director. The Director shall serve as the chief administrative officer of the Program.

- a. The Director shall appoint for one-year, renewable terms any other officers needed to administer Program affairs.
- b. The Director, in conjunction with the Executive Committee, shall establish committees for the conduct of Program affairs.
- c. The Director shall call and preside over meetings of the Executive Committee on a regular basis, at least once each term.
- d. The Director shall regularly report to the Executive Committee and the faculty the actions he or she performs in administering Program affairs.
- e. The Director shall be responsible for keeping a personnel evaluation file for all Program staff.
- f. The Director, serving as principal financial officer of the Program, shall:
 - i. supervise the receipt and expenditure of all moneys
 - ii. in consultation with the Executive Committee, prepare an annual operating budget
 - iii. in consultation with the Executive Committee, prepare an annual financial report
- g. The Director, in conjunction with the Graduate Training Committee, shall supervise and coordinate the recruiting of new core training faculty who have been recently hired by one of the participating departments.
- h. The Director, with the assistance of the Graduate Training Committee, shall coordinate all segments of the academic Program, such as degree requirements, curricular offerings, and catalog announcements and shall

determine and supervise, in consultation with appropriate committees and the departments concerned, such matters as the scheduling of classes and the assignment of duties to faculty members.

- i. Except when provided for otherwise, the Director or the Director's designee shall serve as liaison officer and Program representative to officers and bodies outside the Program.

C.2. Procedures for selection of the Director. Prior to the expiration of a term of the Director or upon the office becoming vacant from another cause, the Executive Committee shall request that the Dean appoint a nominating committee, who shall seek nominations for Director of the Program and conduct the secret ballot vote. This shall normally be done at the beginning of the third year of an incumbent Director's term. The nominating committee shall make a formal nomination to the Dean for approval and appointment after the nomination has been approved by a two-thirds vote of the faculty of the Program in a secret ballot.

C.3. Term of office of the Director. The Director's term of office shall be 3 years, normally beginning with the start of the fall term of the academic year. The term is renewable upon election.

C.4. Procedure for removing a Director from office. The Program may recommend to the Dean that a Director be removed from office. Such an action must be taken according to the following procedure.

- a. A petition calling for removal must be signed by a majority of the Core Training Faculty and submitted to the Dean.
- b. The Dean or the Dean's representative shall preside at a meeting of the faculty to consider the petition. A two-week notice shall be given of this meeting.
- c. To be adopted, a motion for removal must be supported by two-thirds of the Core Training Faculty in a secret, mail ballot.

C.5. Executive Committee.

- a. This committee shall be responsible for monitoring and discussing all budgetary matters and shall advise the Director and the Program members on these matters.
- b. This committee shall consider and discuss issues relating to long-range planning within the Program, including potential Program developments, justification for new faculty positions, etc.
- c. The elected members of the committee shall oversee the counting of any secret ballot called for in the by-laws or by other authority.
- d. This committee shall meet once each term or as often as needed. This committee shall consist of the following five Program Faculty:
 - i. the Director, who shall chair the Committee
 - ii. two other faculty appointed by the Director

- iii. two faculty elected by the Program from the ranks of eligible voters
- iv. the Office Manager is included as a non-voting member
- e. All appointed committee members shall serve one-year, renewable terms. The elected committee members will serve two-year terms except in the first year in which these bylaws take effect when one member will be elected for a two-year term, the remaining for a one-year term.

C.6. Graduate Training Committee.

- a. This committee shall establish and help implement policies relating to Program-wide aspects of graduate admissions, training, curriculum, Program requirements, etc. This committee will also coordinate the selection of students for graduate awards and Neuroscience Fellowships.
- b. The committee shall consist of:
 - i. one faculty member appointed by the Director
 - ii. an elected faculty member from each major participating department (Biological Science, Biomedical Sciences, Psychology) to coordinate course offerings in the curriculum
 - iii. one graduate student elected by the Graduate Student Advisory Committee to serve as a member with full voting privileges (The student member will not be present during discussion of matters relating to the evaluation of another student, graduate student awards or student funding discussions.)
- c. All appointed members shall serve one-year, renewable terms. The elected committee members will serve two-year terms except in the first year in which these bylaws take effect when two members will be elected for two-year terms, the other(s) will be elected for one-year term(s).

C.7. Undergraduate Training Committee.

- a. This committee shall develop and help to implement policies relating to the undergraduate degree in Neuroscience and oversee and evaluate the curriculum. Recommendations for changes to policies or the curriculum will be brought to the faculty for a vote. This committee will also coordinate the selection of students for undergraduate awards.
- b. The committee shall consist of: (i) Director of Undergraduate Studies (Undergraduate Training Committee Chair), (ii) Program Director, (iii) Associate Chair for Academic Programs in Biology, (iv) Associate Chair for Curriculum in Psychology, and (v) one Neuroscience faculty member in Biology and one Neuroscience faculty member in Psychology appointed by the program Director.
- c. All appointed members shall serve one-year, renewable terms.
- d. The committee will meet at least once every fall and spring semester.
- e. A full review of the curriculum will be conducted at 5-year intervals and reported to the faculty.

C.8. Graduate Recruitment Committee.

- a. This committee shall be responsible for organizing the graduate student selection and recruitment activities. They will coordinate efforts to identify sources of funding for first year students.
- b. This committee shall consist of 3 members appointed by the Director.
- c. Members of this committee shall serve a 2-year term, except in the first year in which these bylaws take effect when two will be appointed to 2-year terms and the remaining member to a one-year term.

C.9. Program Publicity Committee.

- a. This committee shall be responsible for coordinating outreach and advertising activities such as development of brochures and oversight of the Program web site.
- b. This committee will consist of one appointed member and two elected members.
- c. The appointed member shall serve a 1-year term.
- d. The elected members of this committee shall serve a 2-year term, except in the first year in which these bylaws take effect when one will be elected to a 2-year term and the remaining member to a one-year term.

C.10. Graduate Student Advisory Committee.

- a. This committee shall consist of six full-time graduate students in the Program, including one member of an under-represented minority group, to be appointed by the director, if not otherwise elected.
- b. This committee shall discuss issues relevant to graduate students and graduate training in the Program and will serve as an advisory body to the Director and Program. This committee will meet with the Director at least once in each of the Fall and Spring semesters.
- c. Students are elected to one-year terms with an option to serve for a second year if the person desires. Election will occur at the end of the Spring term for induction at the beginning of the Fall term.

C.11. Promotion Committee.

- a. This committee will consist of 2 Specialized Faculty who are members of the Program in Neuroscience (evaluated and promoted by the Program). These members will be elected from the entire membership of this group by secret ballot. A simple majority will determine the outcome.

b. When there are not enough Specialized Faculty members of the Program in Neuroscience to constitute this committee (fewer than 4), the Director will work with other units outside of the Program (Biology, Biomedical Sciences, Psychology) to appoint a committee of 2 Specialized Faculty who will serve as the Promotion Committee. The members of this committee shall be charged with the responsibility of reviewing the binders of all prospective candidates for promotion who are Specialized Faculty members of the Program in Neuroscience annually and recommending action on the nomination of each candidate.

C.12. Other committees. The Director may establish other committees as needed to conduct the affairs of the Program. The functions and membership of each such committee shall be made known to the Program as soon as is practical in the Fall term of each year.

D. Faculty Recruitment. Not applicable – participating Program faculty are recruited through their home Departments.

E. Unit Reorganization. All faculty may suggest changes for reorganizing the Program and have full voting rights to enact any changes.

IV. Curriculum

All aspects of the Program curriculum (e.g., approval of new courses and course waivers) sequence) are overseen by the Graduate Training Committee as defined in III.C.7. Any changes to the curriculum must be approved by a vote of the core training faculty as defined in II.A.

V. Annual Evaluation of Faculty on Performance and Merit

This section is not applicable for Program Faculty (core training faculty defined in II.A. above) who are hired and receive annual performance and merit evaluation ratings by their tenure home departments.

A. Peer Involvement in Annual Performance and Merit Evaluation of Specialized Faculty. Each Specialized Faculty member's performance will be evaluated annually, relative to his or her assigned duties, using the following university rating scale:

- Exceeds Expectations
- Meets Expectations
- Official Concern
- Does Not Meet Expectations

The mechanisms for faculty involvement in the annual evaluation and merit evaluation are described in Appendix I: Specialized Faculty Peer and Merit Evaluation Criteria and Procedures.

B. Criteria for Evaluation of Specialized Faculty. Criteria for evaluation of Specialized Faculty in the position-relevant areas of 1) teaching, 2) scholarship/research, and 3) service are described in Appendix I: Specialized Faculty Peer and Merit Evaluation Criteria and Procedures.

VI. Promotion of Faculty

This section is not applicable for Program Faculty (core training faculty defined in II.A. above) who are hired and receive annual performance and merit evaluation ratings by their tenure home departments.

A. Progress Toward Promotion Letter for Specialized Faculty. Each year, every Specialized Faculty member who is not yet at the highest rank for their position will receive a letter from the Director that outlines progress toward promotion.

B. Peer Involvement in Evaluation of Promotion of Specialized Faculty. Procedures for faculty involvement in the evaluation process for the promotion of Specialized Faculty are described in Appendix II: Standards for Recommendations of Promotion of Specialized Faculty at Florida State University.

C. Criteria for Promotion of Specialized Faculty. Criteria for promotion of specialized faculty (beyond university policy) are described in Appendix II: Standards for Recommendations of Promotion of Specialized Faculty at Florida State University.

APPENDIX I: Specialized Faculty Peer and Merit Evaluation Criteria and Procedures

A. Procedures for Evaluation of Specialized Faculty

The Program's procedures for evaluation of Specialized Faculty are to be consistent with current policies and procedures of the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement at Florida State University, and in compliance with Article 11 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement and the criteria given below.

The performance of Specialized Faculty will be reviewed during the Spring semester by two representatives from this group, appointed by the Director and selected from the pool of Specialized Faculty in the Departments of Biomedical Sciences, Biological Science, and/or Psychology.

Specialized Faculty performance during the past calendar year shall be assessed by their peer-group representatives and the results of this review will be conveyed to the Director who will provide one of the following ratings for overall performance and performance in each area in which the faculty member has an assignment of responsibility (research, teaching, and/or service):

- Exceeds Expectations
- Meets Expectations
- Official Concern
- Does Not Meet Expectations

Meritorious performance is defined as performance that meets or exceeds the expectations for the position.

All Specialized Faculty will be reviewed for merit, regardless of their years in service. Any Specialized Faculty member not submitting their materials by the Program's set deadline will be placed at the bottom of the rankings and not be considered for a merit increase unless they submit a formal petition to the Director describing the extraordinary circumstances that resulted in the non-compliance (e.g., illness).

If a Specialized Faculty member receives a rating of "Official Concern" or "Does Not Meet Expectations", a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) must be initiated by the Director.

B. Items Required for the Annual Merit Review

Each Specialized Faculty member will submit the following items for the merit review evaluation: 1) a bulleted list of accomplishments for the past calendar year; 2) a CV using the Faculty Expertise and Advancement System (FEAS); and 3) their assignment of responsibilities for the past calendar year. Specialized Faculty in the teaching track will also submit student course evaluations (SPCI) and a personal statement of teaching philosophy.

Specialized Faculty are encouraged to keep their CV and accomplishment list updated throughout the year. Each faculty member is responsible for the accuracy and completeness of their own data.

C. General Procedures for the Annual Merit Review

Following review of each Specialized Faculty member's evaluation materials and peer-group evaluation summary, the Director will create a ranking of all Specialized Faculty that will be used to determine annual merit pay recommendations. Distinctive levels of merit will be recommended. Merit will be distributed from the pool of available funds.

D. Criteria to Earn a Specific Evaluation Rating

It is recognized that our Program's Specialized Faculty are exceedingly diverse in their expertise. Therefore, the suggested metrics to earn one of the two merit ratings (Meets or Exceeds Expectations) represent criteria that are consistent with performance in that bracket. They serve as concrete examples of expected performance within a rating but are certainly not exhaustive or exclusive. It is necessary to be flexible in a Specialized Faculty member's chosen creative output but evaluate whether this output is consistent with their defined assignment of responsibilities and professional rank for the period of review.

Meets Expectations: The Specialized Faculty member demonstrates the requisite knowledge and skills in the field of specialty and completes assigned responsibilities in a manner that is both timely and consistent with the high expectations of the university.

Exceeds Expectations: The Specialized Faculty member exceeds expectations during the evaluation period by demonstrating noteworthy achievements in teaching, research, or service, which may include the following:

- High level of research, instructional, or creative activity above normal expectation based on assigned responsibilities
- Secures external funding
- Receives professional awards, recognitions, or achievements
- High level of commitment to serving students
- High level of commitment to serving the overall mission of the Program
- Engages in professional development activities and utilizes strategies learned to enhance the Program

Specialized faculty will not be eligible for merit pay if their overall ranking falls within one of the following two categories:

Official Concern: The Specialized Faculty member has difficulty in completing assigned responsibilities.

Does Not Meet Expectations: The Specialized Faculty member fails to complete assigned responsibilities.

Appendix II: Standards for Recommendations of Promotion of Specialized Faculty at Florida State University

This sets forth Program standards used to recommend Specialized Faculty for promotion. It is intended to supplement college- and university-level guidelines (<https://fda.fsu.edu/faculty-development/promotions-for-specialized-faculty>). Promotion is awarded at the university level by the President, but the actions begin within the Program. Specialized faculty fall into one of five categories, only two of which are represented in the Program in Neuroscience. The Program's Specialized Faculty members hold a wide range of differing responsibilities and thus the promotion criteria are designed to reflect this range.

A. Criteria Applicable to Promotion of all Specialized Faculty in the Program

All Specialized Faculty promotions shall take into account:

- 1) The individual's annual evaluations,
- 2) The individual's work as aligned with their annual assignment of responsibilities,
- 3) Evidence of the individual's sustained effectiveness relative to opportunity and according to their assignment.

B. Program Standards for Promotion to Teaching Faculty II

Evidence must be presented demonstrating sustained delivery of well-planned and delivered courses or educational activities and effective oversight of the undergraduate degree in Neuroscience. Such evidence may include: peer evaluations, lesson plans, laboratory exercise descriptions, student activity descriptions, Power Point presentations, formative and summative assessments, and/or syllabi or program descriptions. Further evidence may be supplied by summaries of data from Student Perceptions of Courses and Instructors (SPCI) and/or other student or participant surveys designed to collect data on teaching/course effectiveness.

C. Program Standards for Promotion to Teaching Faculty III

Evidence must be presented demonstrating an increased level of commitment to excellence in the delivery of well-planned and delivered courses or educational activities and oversight of the undergraduate degree in Neuroscience.

Additional evidence may also be presented regarding other teaching, research, and service related activities, such as instructional innovation, involvement in curriculum development, authorship of educational materials, research on educational materials or teaching innovation effectiveness, and participation in events and/or professional organizations related to the area of instruction.

D. Program Standards for Promotion to Associate in Research

Evidence must be presented demonstrating dedication to the support of research such as sustained productivity related to the assignment of responsibilities, collaborations with Program members, training of students, postdocs, and staff affiliated with the Program, and efforts to continue professional growth. This can be substantiated through letters from collaborators, career development/training certifications, and positive annual evaluations.

E. Program Standards for Promotion to Senior Research Associate

Evidence must be presented demonstrating a strong dedication to the support of research through expanded responsibilities or sustained productivity beyond that of the Associate in Research level. This may be endorsed through recognitions by the Program, the college, or university; publications (authorship or acknowledgements); collaborative grant awards; and taking on a leadership role within the Program, college or university.

F. Program Standards for Promotion to Research Faculty II

Evidence must be presented demonstrating dedication to research such as sustained productivity related to the assignment of responsibilities, collaborating with Program members, training students, publishing research papers in journals and book chapters, attending scientific conferences, and contributing to grant applications. This can be substantiated through letters from collaborators, career development/training certifications, and positive annual evaluations.

G. Program Standards for Promotion to Research Faculty III

Evidence must be presented demonstrating strong dedication to research such as sustained productivity related to the assignment of responsibilities, collaborating with Program members, publishing research papers in peer-reviewed journals, presenting research at scientific conferences, collaborative or independent grant awards. This can be substantiated through letters from collaborators, career development/training certifications, and positive annual evaluations.