



## FACULTY OF MEDICINE & DENTISTRY

### Basic Science Department Focus and Structure Working Group

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<b>Office of Accountability:</b>	Dean of Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry
<b>Office of Administrative Responsibility:</b>	Office of the Dean of Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry
<b>Approver:</b>	Dean's Executive Committee
<b>Scope:</b>	<b>Terms of Reference</b>

#### Overview:

The Basic Science Department Focus and Structure Working Group (referred to here as the Working Group) is advisory to the Dean, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry. The Working Group will use a consensus decision-making approach, and shall function in accordance with these Terms of Reference. **The primary purpose of this Working Group is to develop and oversee a review of the Basic Science Departments and consider changes that would ensure ongoing success in research and education, including the optimal focus of research and education and Department structure. The Working Group will lead the internal consultation and review, as well as the external consultation and review, and use the information to bring forward a final summary report and recommendations.**

#### Overarching question:

**Given the evolution of biomedical and health sciences, and the international, national and local higher education (research and education) environment, what is the optimal focus (research and education) and structure of Basic Science Departments in the FoMD, to build on our reputation and excellence in research and education?**

#### Guiding Principles in Considering Basic Science Department Focus and Structure:

- The Working Group will act in the best interests of the entire Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry
- The Working Group and process will be collaborative and transparent with broad consultation, communication and engagement
- Recommendations will be made based on data and evidence as much as possible, including both internal data as well as models from other faculties of medicine
- Recommendations will be future focused, ensuring that we build upon our reputation and excellence in education and research

- Recommendations will be made regarding Basic Science Departmental focus, structure and membership that ensures the future success of discovery/biomedical sciences and the Faculty overall
- Recommendations will consider the overall focus and structure of the Faculty to support collaboration in research and education, with an aim to create an agile and coordinated organizational structure, focusing on synergies and interdisciplinarity where appropriate to facilitate timely innovative response to the health challenges nationally and globally
- Recommendations will aim to empower faculty, trainees and staff to be innovative
- Efficiencies and savings through administrative restructuring have been undertaken and are ongoing, therefore consideration of cost-savings is not the primary purpose of this work
- Number of tenure-track faculty alone should not guide the decisions; consideration should be given regarding research expertise and educational programming, irrespective of tenure-track faculty number.
- Recommendations will consider involvement in teaching at both the undergraduate, as well as graduate and postgraduate levels

**Goals of Optimal Basic Science Department Focus and Structure:**

- An effective, efficient, sustainable and adaptive basic science ecosystem
- Enhance collaboration and partnerships, improve efficiencies, and minimize complexity
- Enhance opportunities for interdisciplinary teaching and research
- Build on our reputation and excellence in research and education

**Governance and Reporting:**

The Chair of the Working Group is the Deputy Dean. Updates will be provided to the Dean's Executive Committee, Department Chairs, Institute Directors and Faculty Council by the Chair.

**Membership:**

Chair: Deputy Dean

Members:

- 2 early-career basic science faculty members (within 10 yrs of appointment)
- 1 mid-career basic science faculty member (11 - 19 yrs post appointment)
- 1 senior career basic science faculty member (20-plus yrs post appointment)
- 1 basic science department chair (current or past)
- 1 clinical department chair (current or past)
- 1 undergraduate science training program coordinator (current or past)
- 1 associate dean graduate studies
- 1 vice-dean of research (basic)
- 1 institute director (current or past)
- 1 academic department manager
- 1 graduate student studying in basic science
- 1 postdoctoral fellow training in basic science

Individuals interested in joining the working group will self-nominate. If there are more than one per category, a faculty-wide vote will be taken. Additional appointments by the Dean may be required to ensure diversity of expertise and experience.

Other groups and Departments will be consulted and invited to meetings as relevant, to discuss and understand unique needs, such as the Mike Petryk School of Dentistry, Office of Education, Office of Research, Research Institutes.

Others may be invited to participate in various aspects of the Working Group activities, based on their expertise and experience.

The purpose of the Working Group is to solicit, collect and synthesize data to provide the Dean with recommendations. Membership and meeting attendance is not substitutable.

#### **Meetings Process:**

- The Working Group will meet weekly initially or at the call of the Chair.
- The quorum for all meetings will be 50% + 1 of the members. Quorum may be waived by consensus of the committee and approval of the Chair.
- All recommendations to the Dean will be made by consensus. If consensus does not emerge through discussion, then the Chair of the Working Group will make the final decision regarding the recommendations.
- A final report with recommendations will be provided to the Dean.
- Meeting minutes will be retained.

#### **Appendix:**

##### **Process and Activities of Working Group:**

1. Working Group develops and undertakes internal consultation and review. Activities may include:
  - Identification of materials and information required to inform the review – which would be put together by the Dean's office
  - Town hall(s)
  - Surveys of faculty, students and staff
  - Faculty Council and Executive Council – input and consultation
  - Round tables (by discipline, or other considerations)
2. Working Group oversees external review
  - External reviewers – at least 2 external reviewers with basic science and leadership expertise, as well as one 1 internal reviewer (external to FoMD but internal to the University of Alberta, to provide insight and input on UA policies, procedures etc).
3. Working Group develops final summary report with recommendations, taking into account both internal and external reviews

##### **Timeline Considerations:**

- November – consultation and input from DEC (Nov 4) and Department Chairs (Nov 13)

- November 28 – FoMD Townhall – consultation and input from faculty broadly
- December – TOR consultation and input from DEC (Dec 2) and Department Chairs (Dec 11)
- January – Expressions of interest for Working Group membership; Working Group established
- February – Internal review process launched
- May – external review
- September 30, 2025 – final report submitted to Dean, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry

**Considerations:**

- Alignment with partners: Research Institutes, undergraduate and graduate programs, other collaborators
- Alignment by discipline
- Ideal size for adequate support to be most effective
- Ideal support for PhD faculty (Pillar 1 basic; Pillars 2,3,4 clinical)