



## **Boston University College of Arts & Sciences**

### **BOSTON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES TENURE-TRACK AND TENURED FACULTY EXPECTATIONS**

The College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (CAS) is the heart of Boston University, a world-class, globally engaged teaching and research university. The mission of the College and Graduate School is to nurture the discovery, creation, transmission and application of knowledge and understanding across the humanities and the social, natural, and computational sciences. This mission applies to all of the College’s members, from the most decorated senior scholars to our matriculating undergraduates, and unifies our three great core tasks of undergraduate education, graduate education, and pioneering research.

This document lays out the fundamental duties and obligations expected of all tenured and tenure-track faculty in the College of Arts & Sciences. It is not a complete enumeration of all expectations but rather, provides a framework. The details of how College of Arts and Sciences faculty might best fulfill their professional roles varies across disciplines and fields and across phases of a career, and the balance of activities varies to some degree from person to person, even within a discipline, and across years for an individual.

#### **1. Faculty Expectations Reflect the Mission of CAS**

In order to fulfill this mission, the students, faculty, and staff of the College must strive to be a vibrant, supportive, and productive learning community across the great diversity of fields, approaches, and experiences encompassed by the institution. We also must choose to be active, engaged citizens of the larger communities to which we also belong—the University, the region, the country, and the world—in order for this mission to succeed.

CAS is Boston University’s standard-bearer for the proud and successful tradition that is liberal education. The faculty and staff of the College are devoted to pursuing the values and practices of liberal arts and sciences education purposefully and vigorously. For CAS faculty in their capacity as teachers and advisors of undergraduates, the liberal education mission means that their core work is not just to train specialists in their field, but also to educate a diverse population of students in the fundamentals of what is interesting and valuable about the knowledge and approaches of their fields. The values and practices of liberal education and the liberal arts should also inform research and scholarship by endowing scholars with respect for diverse approaches to knowledge and an understanding that any one field is likely to yield only partial answers to fundamental and important questions. This framework for exploration and discovery should have practical effects on scholarship by advancing a broad vision, creativity, and the ability to participate in diverse and promising partnerships in the exploration, discovery, transmission, and application of knowledge.

All CAS faculty are expected to dedicate their work as members of the Boston University community to the ideals of the 1869 Boston University Charter that boldly dedicated us to encourage the pursuit of learning in the liberal arts and sciences regardless of race, gender, creed, class, or religion. All CAS faculty are also expected to pursue the fundamental commitments of the College of Arts & Sciences, as outlined in the 2007 BU Strategic Plan, *Creating Our Future: 2010-20*:

1. We will base our investment of human, financial, and physical capital on carefully developed priorities and a clear-eyed analysis of relevant data and information in the light of changing opportunities and challenges we encounter over time.
2. We will hire and nurture the careers of faculty members who are world-class leaders in research and scholarship, teaching, and other professional pursuits.
3. We will provide outstanding undergraduate education based on the principles of liberal education and the liberal arts, encompassing both the curricular or “classroom” experience and the co-curricular, broader life experiences that contribute to student learning, development, and success.
4. We will offer leading doctoral, postdoctoral, and masters programs within and across traditional disciplinary boundaries.
5. We will promote pioneering research and scholarship within and across traditional disciplinary boundaries.
6. We will strengthen our leadership as an urban and global research and teaching university, pursuing our research and educational missions in a manner that values and enhances BU’s citizenship in our local, regional, national, and international communities.
7. We will manage and enhance our financial resources and physical infrastructure with intelligence and creativity in a manner that supports our primary missions.
8. We will build wider and stronger connections with our alumni to our mutual benefit, providing them with life-long opportunities for continuing education, development, and community and ensuring that the Boston University community continues to grow and flourish.

## **2. Faculty Titles, Classifications, and Faculty Expectations**

Tenured and tenure-track faculty, the classification that is increasingly defined as those with unmodified professorial titles (i.e., Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor) are expected to uphold the standards of excellence in all three major faculty functions -- teaching, research, and professional citizenship and service -- that befit professorial appointment at a

world-class research university. Faculty who hold other teaching and research titles, such as Professors of the Practice, Research Professors, and Lecturers, are expected to uphold the standards of excellence that are appropriate to their particular professional domains, defined by their titles and contracts.

### **3. Teaching**

Both undergraduate and graduate education are central to CAS's mission. All tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to excel as teachers and mentors of students. Regardless of rank or level of achievement, they should consider the results of various means of assessment of their teaching, such as student and peer evaluations and analysis of student outcomes, and should seek to improve their teaching, including integrating updated "best practices" used in their disciplines and in higher education more generally.

#### **3.1. Teaching Load and Course Distribution**

3.1.a. The base-level teaching load for professorial faculty varies across disciplines. In disciplines with a base-level professorial teaching load of less than four courses per year, faculty who are no longer research active may be assigned higher teaching loads.

Both undergraduate and graduate levels of education are core to CAS's mission, and all tenured and tenure-track faculty are generally expected to participate in both levels. With some exceptions, teaching and mentoring of graduate students is generally restricted to faculty with unmodified professorial track titles and, in some cases, research faculty. The exact distribution of a professor's teaching load across undergraduate and graduate courses depends on curricular needs in any given year.

3.1.b. The liberal arts and sciences mission of CAS and the liberal education mission of undergraduate education across Boston University place on every CAS department and program, and therefore on all faculty, the obligation to serve the educational needs of students across CAS and across the university. Faculty are expected to share in serving the educational needs of all of the university's students by teaching, depending on their expertise, gateway and upper-level courses; courses aimed primarily at majors; courses serving general education purposes; and courses serving interdisciplinary programs such as the Core Curriculum, Kilachand Honors College, and subject-based interdisciplinary programs.

3.1.c. CAS specifies minimum enrollments for undergraduate and graduate courses to ensure that programs engage in effective planning to serve the curriculum and students' needs well and to ensure that faculty share the workload of teaching fairly.

3.1.d. New faculty should have the opportunity to develop an appropriate teaching repertoire. This generally includes being able to teach in their areas of expertise, which may mean rotating course assignments among faculty over time, and teaching an

appropriately broad range of courses. At the same time, tenure-track faculty should not teach so many new courses that they are overburdened with preparing new courses and have little opportunity to repeat and improve courses in their repertoire.

3.1.e. Faculty do not have a right to teach on only a limited number of days per week or at only certain hours of the day. The design of the teaching schedule should first and foremost serve the needs of the curriculum and the students, as well as create a fair distribution and rotation of “preferred” teaching schedules among faculty.

3.1.f. All CAS departments and programs engage in an Annual Academic Planning exercise at the beginning of each year to map out the curriculum for the next three years and to plan the assignment of teaching according to these principles.

### 3.2. Course Development

Where appropriate, faculty members (especially tenured faculty) are expected to develop new courses in their fields and share in the development of cross-field and interdisciplinary courses. Faculty are expected to review their syllabi, course materials, and expectations on a regular basis, ensuring that their courses are fully up to date and incorporate new material, approaches, and innovative methods for improving teaching. The CAS Faculty Staff Handbook provides guidance on developing new courses and seeking approval for new courses.

### 3.3. Advising and Mentoring Students

Advising and mentoring students are essential to teaching and to the duties of all tenured and tenure-track faculty.

3.3.a. Faculty members who are the assigned advisor for particular undergraduate or graduate students are expected to carry out the associated duties with care. Such advising should never be limited simply to signing off on a student’s planned program of courses. Faculty members should, at a minimum, consult and discuss their advisees’ current academic records to ensure that advisees understand the requirements and expectations for completing degrees in a satisfactory way, are constructing and pursuing appropriate academic goals, and are pursuing the program that is best designed to help them attain those goals. Faculty advisors should make themselves aware of advisees who might be in academic difficulty or facing other challenges that might lead them not to complete their degrees successfully at BU, and help them devise strategies that will lead to success. Faculty advisors must therefore ensure that they themselves understand the most current requirements and best practices of advising.

Faculty advisors and mentors for graduate students should be especially diligent in helping their students complete the degree in a timely and successful way, seek grants and fellowship opportunities that are available to them, take on appropriate

professional activities as would be expected by the best graduate students in their field, and be well-prepared to seek high quality employment in their field.

3.3.b. Faculty members who are not the specifically assigned primary advisor for students should nonetheless be proactive in advising and mentoring the students they teach, as appropriate.

### 3.4 Supervising Doctoral and Other Theses

Research-active tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to supervise and participate in the oversight of doctoral dissertations. Faculty are also expected to supervise undergraduate research and honors projects as appropriate, and masters' theses where relevant.

## 4. Research

Professorial faculty are expected to be fully research-active according to the highest standards of excellence in their disciplines. They should be engaging in original research and discovery and contributing significant new knowledge and expertise by communicating their scholarship through peer-reviewed publication in highly-respected journals and through the most distinguished scholarly presses. The point is not just to *engage* in scholarship or even just to *publish* it, but to have a *demonstrable impact* on other scholars' research, on the knowledge base of society, and on scientific, cultural, or artistic lines of inquiry and innovation. A research university can have a distinguished national and international reputation only if its faculty have distinguished national and international reputations in their fields, thus assessment of faculty achievement in the processes of awarding merit, tenure, promotion, and awards will take account of national and international reputation and impact, as appropriate for the particular fields of study.

Impact may be demonstrated in many different ways, but most typically through citation by other scholars and other sources, reviews of the work, invitations to give lectures and participate in major conferences, invitations to serve in major scholarly leadership capacities such as editorial or review boards or to hold offices in scholarly societies, and professional recognition earned from various honors and awards that are bestowed on individuals and works of great merit.

The record of publication in prestigious, peer-reviewed venues is the most important indicator of the quality of a faculty member's research, although this record must be judged in the context of other evidence of impact, such as citations and expert evaluations of the long-term significance of the research. Quantity of publications is not by itself a measure of scholarly significance in a given discipline, but is important to the degree that significance and impact are often built by sustained productivity.

All forms of scholarly productivity are important elements of a scholarly career, but normally the publication of original research is primary. In most fields the publication of edited volumes,

commentaries, encyclopedia entries, book reviews, textbooks, grammars, bibliographies, and translations, or the creation and distribution of software or databases are valuable but of largely supplemental status in assessing the quality of a tenured or tenure-track faculty member's research career. Such judgments, however, must take account of disciplinary differences. Thus, scholarly translations may play a central role for a scholar in a literary field while they generally do not for a historian. Likewise publication of a critical edition or the creation of certain software may have more standing as an original scholarly contribution in some fields than in others.

In the natural sciences and in some other fields, a substantial and sustained record of extramural research funding is also essential to a judgment of research productivity and quality.

In all cases the criteria for measuring scholarly achievement are determined by discipline-specific standards; departments are expected to inform higher levels of review about applicable criteria.

## **5. Professional Citizenship and Service**

Colleges and universities depend on faculty engagement in many activities aside from teaching and research. There can be no appropriate personnel review process without faculty participation in review; there can be no curriculum development without faculty participation in curricular review.

All faculty in the professorial ranks are expected to participate in professional citizenship and service within their department, college, and the university to a level appropriate for their rank. In CAS we endeavor to limit the service obligations of assistant professors; they should generally not be expected to be given the kinds of service obligations that are onerous enough to require course release or stipend in compensation.

All faculty are expected to take part in department meetings and to participate in the normal business of their departments such as faculty and graduate student recruitment, program reviews, curriculum development, reviews of graduate student progress, and the like.

Tenured faculty members are expected to participate in personnel reviews, to undertake leadership roles in their departments and the larger university, and generally to participate in professional citizenship and service at an elevated level.

All professorial faculty are also expected to participate in professional service in their disciplinary or other professional capacities outside the university as befits their rank, including reviewing manuscripts or grants, and taking part in professional organizations through committee work or other assignments.

Faculty are also encouraged to participate in public service that allows them to benefit others through the application of their professional knowledge, skills, and expertise. Examples include

doing lectures, presentations, or publication for public, non-scholarly audiences; participating in interviews in the press and public media; serving as consultants or expert witnesses on a voluntary basis; working with students or teachers at the PK-12 levels; and participating in other forms of educational service or volunteer work.

## **6. Faculty Participation in Multiple University Units**

University and academic life have increasingly become more interdisciplinary and less organized around faculty whose professional life is limited to one department or program. Indeed, Boston University and the College of Arts & Sciences *depend* on the ability and willingness of faculty to participate effectively in this new, more complex structure of higher education. Expectations about faculty professional activities and obligations, and our approach to judging the quality of those activities and obligations, must account for and reward faculty engagement in the interdisciplinary organization of academic life.

Although tenure-track faculty have a primary obligation to the department and college that serves as their home base, the quality, impact, and success of their work and contributions will be judged holistically, taking account of the teaching, research, and service contributions they make across multiple units. Thus the work of professors with joint appointments, or who are involved in a research center outside the home-base department, or in the Core Curriculum or Kilachand College, or other interdisciplinary programs should be assessed on the totality of their work. They should not be judged wanting for not contributing the same amount to the home department as other faculty who are not actively participating in different units. At the same time, interdisciplinary faculty are expected to engage in planning and discussion with the home department chair to create appropriate balances in their obligations and contributions. The Office of the Dean can assist in this coordination.

## **7. Ethical and Professional Standards**

All faculty are expected to perform their professional duties according to appropriate ethical and professional standards, and have the responsibility for being aware of the standards imposed upon them by federal and state laws and regulations, contracts to which they are a party, and the professional norms that apply in the academy and at Boston University.

## **8. For Further Information**

The governing documents defining faculty expectations and the processes related to supporting those expectations are the *Boston University Faculty Handbook* (<http://www.bu.edu/handbook/>) and the *CAS Faculty and Staff Handbook* (<http://www.bu.edu/cas/faculty-staff/faculty-staff-handbook/>). The former overrides the latter. This faculty expectations document should be regarded as an overview and summary. Faculty may seek further assistance in understanding faculty expectations from the Office of the Dean or Provost.