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**TO:** Boston University Faculty and Staff

**FROM:** Gloria Waters, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer *G.W.*

**DATE:** September 17, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Formation of the School of Public Health Dean Search Advisory Committee and Appointment of Dr. Michael Stein as Dean *ad interim*, Effective January 1, 2025

This past spring, Dr. Sandro Galea [announced](#) he will be stepping down as dean of the Boston University School of Public Health (SPH) at the end of December 2024 to become the inaugural dean at a newly established school of public health at Washington University in St. Louis.

We will immediately begin to launch a national search to identify the next dean of SPH. The process, for constituting a dean search advisory committee, outlined in the BU Faculty Handbook, specifies that: *“the advisory committee shall consist of three faculty members elected by the faculty of the school for which a dean is to be selected, two faculty members elected by the Faculty Council from other schools, and as many as three members designated by the provost.”*

The faculty members who are appointed to serve on the advisory committee will have responsibility for directing the search effort and should be among our most thoughtful, engaged, and committed scholars, teachers, and leaders. Potential committee members should demonstrate the capacity to proactively attract and recruit outstanding candidates for the SPH deanship; the faculty most well-positioned to carry out this work will be actively engaged in significant ways in their professional communities and within their academic disciplines. Please note that no member of the advisory committee may be considered for the position of dean.

I am requesting that the faculty in SPH organize internally to solicit nominations and to elect three faculty representatives to the search advisory committee. The SPH Faculty Senate election subcommittee of Associate Professor of Environmental Health Kevin Lane, Associate Professor of Health Law, Policy & Management Timothy Callaghan, and Assistant Professor of Epidemiology Eric Rubenstein have agreed to organize the election to identify the SPH representatives. (Individuals who oversee the election within SPH are not eligible to serve on the dean search advisory committee nor be a candidate for the dean’s position.) I will meet with the SPH faculty at the School Assembly on September 24 to discuss the search effort as the election process gets under way.

Boston University’s Faculty Council will also be sending an email communication to all members of the faculty on both campuses requesting nominations of candidates external to SPH

to fill the two elected seats on the dean search advisory committee. Nominations or expressions of interest can be sent to the Faculty Council ([fafc@bu.edu](mailto:fafc@bu.edu)). Please note that membership on the Faculty Council itself is not an eligibility requirement for election to the search advisory committee by the Faculty Council. I request submission of the results of both of these elections no later than October 11. Following receipt, I will appoint additional members so that the committee will be assembled and prepared to begin its work.

The School of Public Health Dean Search Advisory Committee will be charged with responsibility for:

- Proposing refinements to the initial position description;
- Actively soliciting nominations for candidates from appropriate sources within the University and nationally;
- Actively recruiting outstanding candidates who have a record of administrative leadership and achievement and an academic profile suitable for appointment at the level of professor at Boston University;
- Evaluating the qualifications and assessing the strength of nominees and applicants;
- Consulting with the faculty of SPH and other school and University stakeholders on finalists; and
- Recommending the names of 3-5 qualified candidates to me, outlining the strengths and limitations of each, for final selection by the president and me, with approval by the Board of Trustees.

The members of the School of Public Health Dean Search Advisory Committee should not vote as part of its process and deliberations. Rather, the work should be accomplished by discussion and consensus. Ideally, the committee will conclude its work and submit its recommendations no later than March 7, 2025.

With this search expected to extend into the spring semester, I am pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Michael Stein, professor and chair of health law, policy, and development in SPH, as interim dean, effective January 1, 2025.

Dr. Stein is among our most distinguished faculty leaders and has been a member of the SPH faculty since 2016. He is recognized for far-reaching outcomes research in the areas of substance abuse disorders and AIDS, sleep and pain, mental health disorders, and the determinants of risk-taking. He has been among the top one percent of National Institutes of Health grant recipients over the past two decades. He is the executive editor of the online magazine *Public Health Post* and has published over 450 scientific journal articles, six acclaimed novels, and eight non-fiction books, including 2024's *The Turning Point: Reflections on a Pandemic*, co-authored with Dean Galea. Prior to his arrival at BU, he was director of HIV services at Rhode Island Hospital for two decades.

We are grateful for Dr. Stein's willingness to serve while we complete our national search and look forward to formally welcoming him to the role next January.

Please join me in thanking Sandro Galea for his service to Boston University and to the School of Public Health and in thanking Dr. Stein for agreeing to serve as dean *ad interim*. The formal appointment of the dean search advisory committee for SPH is forthcoming, and I appreciate your contributions to and support of the search effort.

cc:     Melissa Gilliam, President  
          Kevin Smith, Chair, Faculty Council  
          Provost's Cabinet