



FACULTY OF MEDICINE & DENTISTRY
Biomedical Science Working Group

Original development Date: November 1, 2024

Most Recent Approval Date: March 2, 2025

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

Overview:

The Biomedical Science 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 Biomedical Science in the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry and consider changes that would ensure ongoing success in research, education and service. 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 health sciences, and the international, national and local higher education (research, education and service) landscape, what is the optimal environment for biomedical science (research, education and service) in the FoMD, to build on our reputation and excellence in research, education and service?

Guiding Principles in Considering Biomedical Science Environment:

- 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 research, education and service
- Recommendations will be made regarding a biomedical science environment that ensures the future success of biomedical science and the Faculty overall

- Recommendations will consider the overall environment of the Faculty to support collaboration in research, education and service, with an aim to create an agile and coordinated environment, 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, educational programming and service needs, 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 Biomedical Science Environment:

- An effective, efficient, sustainable and adaptive biomedical 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:

- 3 early-career biomedical science faculty members (within 10 yrs of appointment)
- 1 mid-career biomedical science faculty member (11 - 19 yrs post appointment)
- 1 senior career biomedical science faculty member (20-plus yrs post appointment)
- 1 biomedical 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 administrative/technical support staff (subsequently added by working group)
- 1 graduate student studying in biomedical science
- 1 postdoctoral fellow training in biomedical science

Individuals interested in joining the working group will self-nominate. If there are more nominations than positions available in a 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 biomedical 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, considering both internal and external reviews

Timeline Considerations:

- November – consultation and input from DEC (Nov 4) and Department Chairs (Nov 13)
- November 28 – FoMD town hall – 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-June – 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 biomedical; Pillars 2,3,4 clinical/health services/public health)