

# **By-laws of the Doctoral Program in Planning and Public Policy, Rutgers University**

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## **I. Mission**

The doctoral degree in Planning and Public Policy, offered through the Rutgers School of Graduate Studies, is an advanced scholarly degree appropriate for students seeking a career in planning and policy research and development in the academic sector through university teaching and research, and through leadership positions in the public, non-profit, or private sectors. The mission of the doctoral program in Planning and Public Policy is to prepare students to pursue a variety of approaches exploring critical questions in planning and public policy and to shape innovative responses to those questions. The program prepares its graduates to competently respond to social, economic, and political problems and opportunities, to anticipate new and emerging challenges, and to teach others to do the same. To accommodate this mission, the Bloustein School's doctoral faculty has a diverse set of backgrounds in different disciplines, methodological approaches, and subject-specific expertise.

## **II. Purpose**

These by-laws govern the activities and affairs of the Doctoral Program in Planning and Public Policy (hereafter the "doctoral program"), and shall not be suspended except by way of amendment, consistent with Section VII, below. These by-laws shall be consistent with all applicable sections of Rutgers University's policies and regulations, as well as with the by-laws of the Rutgers School of Graduate Studies and of the Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy. In the event of a conflict between these by-laws and those of the University and Bloustein School, the University's and Bloustein School's by-laws and regulations shall control.

### III. Membership of the Graduate Program

#### a. Eligibility for Membership

All Rutgers faculty members may be nominated for Full or Associate Membership in the doctoral program. Credentials suitable to advise doctoral students in planning and public policy are required. Full members are tenure or tenure-track faculty; associate members are non-tenure track faculty, although associate members may be eligible for full membership. All doctoral program faculty members shall have full voting rights at all doctoral program faculty meetings. All members may serve on doctoral dissertation committees, only full members may serve as Chairs of doctoral dissertation committees.

#### b. Nomination and Appointment

Those nominated for membership must be approved by a majority vote of the doctoral faculty present at a regularly scheduled faculty meeting. The curriculum vitae of the nominee shall be circulated not less than one week prior to the meeting, together with a statement that a vote will be held to admit the nominee to the doctoral faculty.

#### c. Responsibilities, Review, and Termination

1. Members of the doctoral program faculty are expected to regularly participate in the program. Responsibilities include supervision and mentoring of doctoral students, scholarly collaboration with doctoral students, providing funding if possible, attending doctoral program events and meetings, and other activities that benefit the program and students.
2. The doctoral program members will be periodically reviewed for continuing eligibility, at least every five years. Those who are inactive will, by motion and vote of the doctoral program faculty, be asked to withdraw. The request-to-withdraw review process shall be administered by the doctoral program director and must include a statement of criteria agreed upon by the program's faculty, as well as a statement of the processes for notification, preparation of materials for review, right of rebuttal, and right of appeal.
3. Faculty leaving Rutgers or retiring may continue to serve as doctoral program faculty for up to five years, if actively serving on doctoral student committees. If not actively serving, they may be withdrawn at the discretion of the doctoral program director. Under appropriate circumstances, the doctoral program director may waive the five year limitation.

#### IV. Organization and Structure

##### a. Doctoral program director

1. The doctoral program director shall be a tenured faculty member in the Bloustein School and a full member of the doctoral program faculty. The director is responsible for administration of the doctoral program, including, but not limited to, the coordination of applicant review, admissions procedures, monitoring of student progress, and relations with the graduate school.
2. The doctoral program director shall work closely with other program directors in the Bloustein School to advance the mission of the doctoral program and of the Bloustein School. This shall include coordination of class schedules, faculty teaching assignments, and other program needs, including allocation of teaching assistantships.
3. The doctoral program director shall be nominated by the doctoral program faculty. An election of nominated candidates shall be held and the candidate for doctoral program director with a majority of votes shall then be recommended to the Dean of the Bloustein School for appointment to a three-year term. Per Article II, Section C of the Bloustein School by-laws, the Dean of the Bloustein School shall appoint the doctoral program director.

##### b. Committees

1. There are no standing committees of the doctoral program. Ad hoc committees may be appointed by the doctoral program director as needed or on the recommendation of other program faculty.

##### c. Program meetings

1. Program meetings shall be called not less than once per semester. Doctoral faculty members may suggest agenda items, which shall be sent to the doctoral program director at least two weeks prior to a scheduled meeting, so that the doctoral program faculty meeting agenda may be distributed not less than one week prior to the corresponding doctoral program faculty meeting. The quorum to conduct business is 7 full members of the doctoral faculty. The foregoing notwithstanding, doctoral program faculty meetings shall be conducted following common parliamentary procedures; minutes shall be recorded by the program's administrative coordinator and shall be distributed with a reasonable time following the meeting at which they were taken.

2. At least one additional meeting shall be held each year in the spring semester to discuss doctoral program applicants and corresponding admissions decisions.

## V. Procedures

### a. Admissions

1. The doctoral program director shall organize a procedure for reviewing applicants to the program. A meeting shall be held once a year to discuss admissions as noted in Section IV(c)2 of these by-laws, above.

### b. Student requirements, advising, and progress

1. All student requirements and procedures shall be described in the doctoral program handbook, which shall include all relevant policies and procedures for course requirements, qualifying examinations, proposal and final dissertation defenses. The doctoral program handbook shall be accessible, at all times, at the doctoral program webpage on the Bloustein School's public website.
2. The doctoral program director shall assign all doctoral students a faculty advisor on admission to the program. The faculty advisor, who shall be a member of the doctoral program faculty, shall provide the advisee guidance on course selection, research topics, and other curricular and co-curricular matters. The doctoral student may change their advisor in consultation with the doctoral program director. The doctoral student is responsible for choosing their dissertation committee chair, who need not be the initially-assigned advisor.
3. Student progress shall be discussed at least once every semester at a regularly scheduled faculty meeting. The doctoral program director shall contact and take such action, as shall be reasonable and necessary, with regard to those students not meeting expected requirements. Program of study meetings, which shall be organized by the Bloustein School's graduate student coordinator, shall be held with all first and second year students during the fall semester; at least two faculty members and the doctoral program director shall attend each students' program of study meeting.

### c. Selection of Teaching Assistants and resources for students

1. The doctoral program director, in consultation with other program directors, shall assign doctoral students to teaching assistantships.

2. The doctoral program director shall make recommendations to the graduate school and the Bloustein School for funding of conference travel, pre-dissertation awards, and other opportunities.
- d. Revision of degree requirements
1. Any revisions to the requirements of the doctoral degree shall be proposed at a regularly scheduled meeting of the doctoral faculty. Members shall vote on whether the proposed changes should be considered; if there is a majority vote that the changes should be considered a committee shall be assigned to draft a formal proposal. This proposal shall be presented to the faculty at least one week prior to the next scheduled meeting, at which the proposed change shall require a majority vote of faculty present for approval and adoption.
- e. Appeals and grievance procedures
1. Students wishing to file a complaint about a course grade, or a grade received for a particular piece of work in a course, or any curricular action by an instructor, should first attempt to resolve the matter through discussion or writing with the instructor of that course no later than two weeks after notification of the grade or occurrence of the action. If the issue cannot be satisfactorily resolved between student and instructor, the student may specify in writing the basis for the complaint and request a review by the doctoral program director. A written complaint about a grade for work completed or an instructor's action while the course is in progress must be submitted to the doctoral program director no later than two weeks after final determination by the instructor. The foregoing notwithstanding, a student must submit a written complaint about a final course grade to the program director no later than four weeks after final determination by the instructor. A student who wishes to appeal the decision of the doctoral program director should further appeal in writing to the attention of the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs of the Rutgers School of Graduate Studies.
  2. Any faculty member asserting actions or inactions by the doctoral program director or the doctoral program faculty that adversely affects that faculty member shall first discuss the matter with the doctoral program director. If no resolution is forthcoming from that discussion, the faculty member shall bring the matter to the attention of the Dean of the Bloustein School.

**VI. Student Representation**

Doctoral students may bring issues concerning the doctoral program to the doctoral program director. At least once a year, the doctoral program director shall hold a “listening session” to provide doctoral students an opportunity to discuss all issues of concern to them with the doctoral program director.

**VII. Amendment of By-laws**

Amendments to the adopted by-laws shall be considered at a regular or special meeting of the doctoral program, provided that the amendments shall have been circulated at least one week prior to the meeting and providing the amendments have been moved by three or more members of the graduate faculty. Those present at the scheduled meeting shall vote on amendments. Approval requires a two-thirds majority vote of those present. The doctoral program director shall forward any such amendments, in the form of revised by-laws with an annotation of the data and section amended, to the Graduate School within thirty days of adoption.