

Department of Physiology & Biophysics

Policy on the Appropriate Treatment of Faculty, Staff, Students, and Trainees

The Department of Physiology & Biophysics at Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM) strongly values a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive academic community. The Department is committed to providing a supportive and respectful environment where **ALL** faculty, staff, students, and trainees can come together to achieve optimal teaching, learning, research, and professional development. Our core belief is that by nurturing a department that is diverse and representative of society we enhance our academic endeavours. The foundation of our policy is to ensure every member of the Department is treated equally regardless of **ANY** individual differences. The Department strives to attain the highest standards of conduct and thereby cultivate a departmental culture that supports the learning environment and faculty development.

Every member of the Department of Physiology & Biophysics is **expected to**:

- Contribute to a respectful and collegial academic atmosphere
- Respect individual differences and treat all with civility and fairness
- Encourage open inquiry and expression among community members while maintaining sensitivity and respect of all
- Encourage inclusivity while striving for excellence in our teaching and research missions
- Be trained in recognizing and responding (where possible) to comments or actions of members of the department that are clearly discriminatory or disrespectful
- Immediately report observations of discriminatory comments or actions to the department Chair (and/or the University Ombuds, the Title IX office, BUSM ATM committee, or EthicsPoint)

To maintain an environment conducive to learning and professional development, all members should be aware of the Department policy and the process to investigate reports of mistreatment, discrimination, or creation of an unwelcoming environment. The policy provides a mechanism for non-adversarial and respectful responses to complaints of mistreatment and discrimination by any member of the department, including graduate and healthcare professions students whom we teach. **ALL** reports will be taken seriously and responded to promptly and appropriately. In any situation where a member of the department engages in conduct that is explicitly prohibited (below), or acts in a manner inconsistent with our values and expectations, a report **MUST** be made (preferably the same day) to the Chair (and/or the University Ombuds, the Title IX office, BUSM ATM committee, or BU EthicsPoint). Based on each individual case, a decision will be made whether there are grounds requiring referral of the incident to the appropriate BUSM or University-wide committee (e.g. BUSM ATM committee, Equal Employment Opportunity, or Title IX office) for an investigation.

To ensure appropriate treatment of faculty, staff, students, and trainees, the Department **explicitly prohibits**:

- Verbal or written attacks on any individual, including: humiliation, harassment or intimidation
- Making derogatory and/or discriminatory comments, including “jokes” related to ethnicity, culture, color, religious beliefs, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, health status, or disability
- Making obscene comments or gestures
- Purposefully invading an individual’s personal space
- Lack of regard for faculty, staff and/or student safety
- Deliberate exclusion of others from reasonable learning or professional development opportunities
- Requests or expectations by faculty for students to perform personal services (e.g. errands or other favours)
- Refusal to grant reasonable and legitimate requests for time off
- Assignment of tasks or chores to punish or belittle students, trainees, staff or junior faculty

This policy is posted on our website and reviewed annually at a Department meeting.