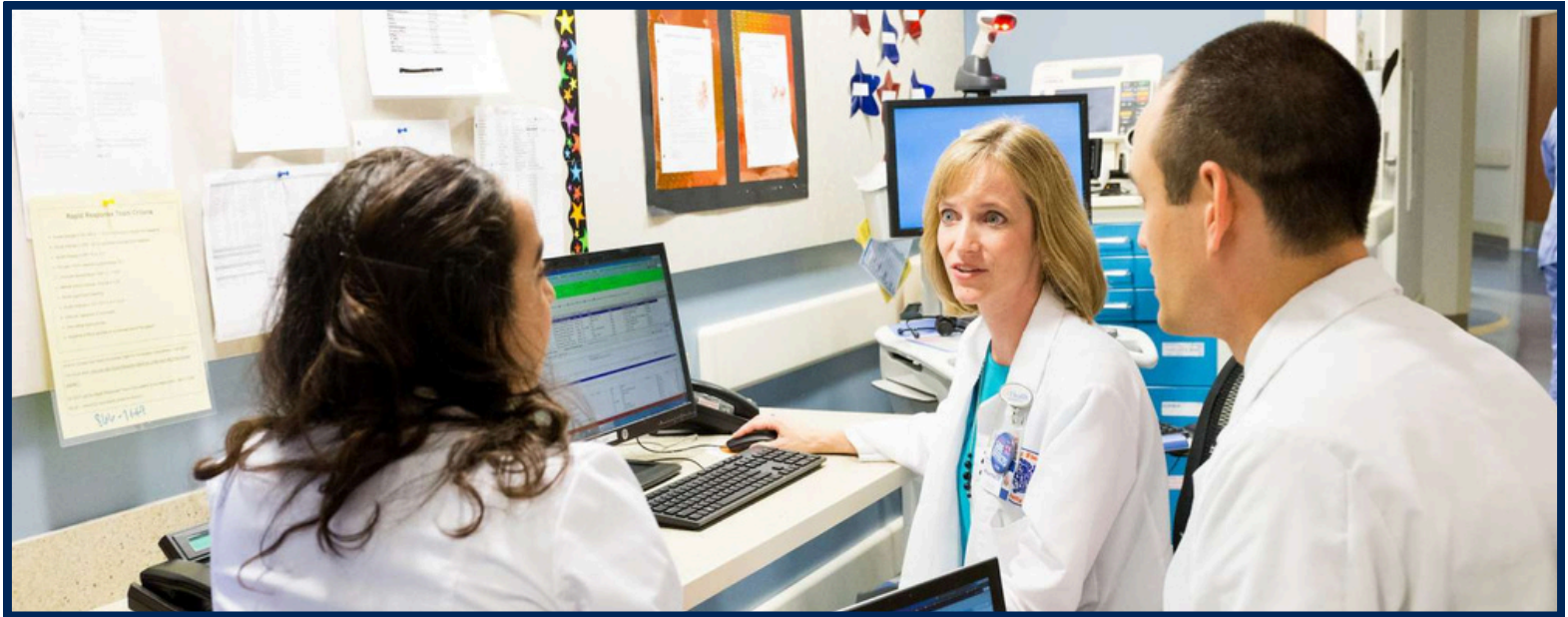


University of Florida College of Medicine

# Scientific Review Committee and Study Section



## Executive Summary

The University of Florida College of Medicine (UF COM) is committed to merit-based and fair allocation of research resources to stimulate extramural funding and innovative biomedical research. The Scientific Review Committee (SRC) oversees the scientific review of biomedical research awards in the College. The SRC facilitates the selection of innovative, collaborative, and scientifically sound studies with high potential to generate additional extramural funding. The SRC provides leadership for the scientific review process for the COM Office of Research Funding Allocation Program, ensuring that proposals receive substantive critiques in the development of strong research proposals.

## Organization

### Committee Composition

The SRC includes three co-chairs representing basic, clinical and data sciences, SRC Administrator, and one assistant dean from the Office of Research. This Committee oversees that COM Study Section which consists of subject matter expert faculty members. The Study Section represents a diverse group of reviewers spanning many disciplines, areas of expertise and personal backgrounds. Academic units include, but are not limited to the following:

- Aging and Physiology
- Anatomy and Cell Biology
- Anesthesiology
- Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
- Biostatistics
- Emergency Medicine
- Health Outcomes and BMI
- Medicine
- Molecular Genetics and Microbiology
- Neurology
- Neuroscience
- Neurosurgery
- OB/GYN
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine
- Otolaryngology
- Pathology, Immunology, and Lab Medicine
- Pediatrics
- Pharmacology and Therapeutics
- Psychiatry
- Radiation Oncology
- Radiology
- Surgery
- Urology

### Member Qualifications


Study Section members are required to be College of Medicine faculty members with a track record of extramural funding. Members need to represent a variety of disciplines and academic title levels (assistant, associate, and full professor)

### Appointment Terms


SRC co-chairs are appointed by the COM Senior Associate Dean for Research (SADR) for 2-3-year terms. Co-chairs receive an appointment letter and a copy of the SRC Charter. Study Section members will stay in the reviewer pool for 2-3 years. All COM faculty with a track record of funding are eligible to serve as ad hoc reviewers. Turn-over in faculty may necessitate adding new members during the academic year. SRC members will receive service credit for their participation in this activity. Reviewers can list their service on the COM Study Section as well.

## Member Roles and Responsibilities


### Co-Chairs

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- are appointed by the COM Senior Associate Dean of Research (SADR);
  - represent basic, clinical and data science areas of expertise;
  - assume other co-chair's duties as needed;
  - assign grant reviewers based upon appropriate expertise;
  - orient new reviewers to SRC policies and procedures;
  - work with Office of Research on all scientific review activities;
  - report to the SADR.

### SRC Administrator

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- is appointed by the COM SADR;
  - collects and reviews all submissions;
  - screens proposals for potential conflict of interest;
  - presents information to co-chairs;
  - maintains data on grants reviewed by the SRC;
  - assists investigators in preparing submissions;
  - ensures adherence of proposal submission formats and supporting documentation;
  - works with OR data team to obtain grant data if needed;
  - obtains annual feedback on the SRC Charter from SRC and Study Section members and SADR;
  - ensures that a copy of the current SRC Charter is available to the COM community.

### Study Section members

- 
- are appointed by the COM SADR;
  - lead scientific review using NIH-scoring criteria whenever possible;
  - review assigned proposals and submit written reviews, comments and scoring of assigned proposals according to timeline determined by review guidelines;
  - work with co-chairs and Office of Research on all scientific review activities;
  - report to their co-chair based on research discipline.

## Business Policies and Documentation

### Proposal Review Records

The SRC Administrator is responsible for keeping all required documentation associated with the review process and working with other members of Office of Research, SADR and SRC co-chairs on obtaining necessary records. The SRC Administrator will maintain records of all proposal submissions, the Study Section Reviewer's Forms, SRC decisions and correspondence to PIs. InfoReady is our preferred competition space and will maintain most proposals, reviews, and correspondence.

### Database

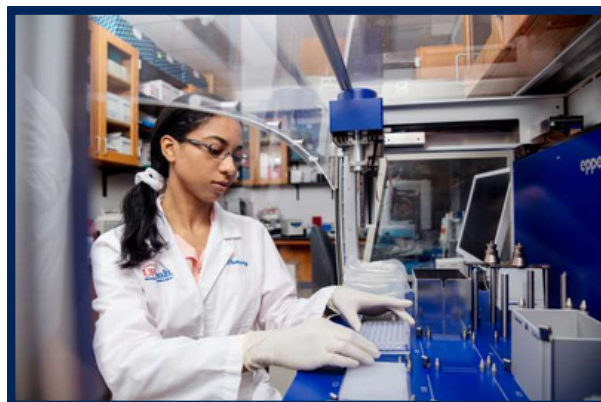
The COM Office of Research will maintain a database of information on all submitted proposals, eligibility and review criteria, and grant outcomes for up to 5 years after award start date. It will also have information on number of reviews conducted, names and titles of the reviewers, review dates, RFA and type of the review.

### Correspondence

Copies of all correspondence related to actions and conduct of the SRC will be maintained by the Administrator of the SRC.

### Annual Report

Annual report will be prepared by the SRC Administrator and will be submitted to the SRC Co-chairs and SADR at the end of each fiscal year. The SRC Annual Report will detail the activities of the SRC including proposal submissions and proposal reviews.



## Integrity and Fairness in Peer-Review

### Conflict of Interest

If a Study Section member serves as a primary or secondary investigator, a consultant (including a biostatistician), or co-investigator on a proposal that is submitted for SRC review, that individual will not be allowed to serve as a reviewer for that funding opportunity.

### Confidentiality

Every participant in the peer-review process shares responsibility in maintaining and upholding the integrity of review. Maintaining confidentiality is essential since proposals may contain unpublished results, privileged or confidential information. SRC will follow the NIH Policy on Integrity and Confidentiality in Peer-Review: [Integrity and Confidentiality in NIH Peer Review | grants.nih.gov](https://grants.nih.gov/integrity-and-confidentiality).

### Review Process

The mission of SRC is to ensure that grant applications receive fair, independent, expert, and timely scientific reviews so that College of Medicine can fund the most promising research. Reviewers play a critical role in maintaining the integrity and fairness of the peer review process, as their words and actions help shape the culture of peer review.

### Administrative Review

The SRC administrator will provide administrative review of all full proposals for completeness, adherence to the RFP and eligibility to minimize the burden of reviewing incomplete or ineligible proposals. Only proposals meeting these criteria will be forwarded for SRC review. The SRC Administrator prepares a summary of all eligible applications that includes PI(s), department(s), project title, abstract and key words (if available) and presents that to the co-chairs.

## Assignment of Reviewers

The SRC Administrator will review full proposals for conflict of interest and communicate that information to the co-chairs. Co-chairs will assign SRC members as reviewers based on their scientific expertise. When the expertise is not present in the SRC membership to give a peer-review of a proposal, ad-hoc reviewers will be asked to review the grant. On occasion the SRC may need to see ad hoc reviewers outside of UF.

Upon the receipt of this information, SRC co-chairs will be given 3-4 days to identify appropriate reviewers.

## Scientific Review

As soon as the reviewer roster has been finalized, all reviewers will be sent their assigned proposals and scoring sheets with a 2-3-week turnaround to submit their reviews. As much as possible, review requests will be sent via InfoReady. Review criteria are specified for each opportunity but will adhere to NIH guidelines as much as possible.

For most funding opportunities, assigned reviewers will score and critique the applications according to NIH criteria (See Section E4. Scoring) and provide a written summary of their scores using the appropriate form on the funding award's InfoReady page. The SRC administrator will collect each of the reviews and provide a summary of the reviews for the Senior Associate Dean of Research, who will make final decisions on funding.



## Scoring

Impact	Score	Descriptor	Additional Guidance on Strengths/Weaknesses
High	1	Exceptional	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses
	2	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
	3	Excellent	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses
Medium	4	Very Good	Strong but with numerous minor weakness
	5	Good	Strong but with at least one moderate weakness
	6	Satisfactory	Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses
Low	7	Fair	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
	8	Marginal	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses
	9	Poor	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses

For consistency with the NIH and other major funding agencies, the review panel will use the NIH 1-9 scoring scale as much as possible, with each single digit having a word descriptor to review and evaluate proposals. This is a well-established system and familiar to College of Medicine faculty:

Within 1 week after final decisions are made, all applicants will be notified of final decisions and receive written critiques of their proposals. Applicants whose proposals were not selected for funding, but still judged as having promise and impact may be encouraged to revise and resubmit at the next cycle. Final awardees will be featured on Office of Research website.

### Reporting Results of SRC Review

SRC Administrator is responsible with compiling the outcome of the review and sending the information to applicants, SRC, and Study Section.

### Changes to the Proposal after Submission

No changes to the proposal are allowed to proposal after submission.

If you have any questions about this document, please contact the Office of Research ([COM-Research@ufl.edu](mailto:COM-Research@ufl.edu)).