Preparing for the Midcourse Review

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PRE-TENURE REVIEW

• During the third or fourth year, the unit will conduct a comprehensive review of performance relative to the university’s criteria for tenure. Each unit will develop procedures for this review.

• The review will culminate in a written evaluation that makes a recommendation for reappointment or non-reappointment. Where reappointment is recommended, the review must discuss strengths and weaknesses, and areas that require development toward tenure.

• The review will be forwarded to the dean. If the dean disagrees with the evaluation and/or recommendation of the unit, the dean transmits to the review committee the reasons for disagreement.

• The dean’s decision in this matter is final. The unit head will discuss the written evaluations with the faculty member and place a copy in faculty file.
WHAT is the midcourse review?

• A review of your work that takes place in the spring of the third year or early in the fourth year of the tenure clock

• Like the annual review, assesses tenure-track faculty member’s progress in all three areas of performance required for tenure consideration—teaching, scholarship, service
WHAT is the midcourse review?

• Review is conducted by unit tenure committee based on a dossier of work to date in format close to that of the final tenure dossier

• Committee writes report which you receive and is sent to the College Dean

• Outcome: recommendation for reappointment (may be with additional review) or nonreappointment by the dean
Think of the midcourse review as a “dress rehearsal” for tenure.
Timing of midcourse review

- Faculty Handbook: “During the third or fourth year.....the unit will conduct a comprehensive review.....”

- 3rd year: Report should be completed shortly after spring term and sent to Dean in May

- 4th year: Report should be completed and sent to Dean by mid-October
Faculty with interdisciplinary appointments

• The committee responsible for conducting a pre-tenure review includes one representative from each unit in which candidate holds a secondary appointment

• Representatives of secondary units have the same rights and responsibilities as other participants in review

• Secondary unit faculty selects representative (of appropriate rank and area of expertise)

• Dean of tenure home unit consults with secondary unit dean before making decision on reappointment
WHY is there a midcourse review?

• Takes a longer perspective than annual review of progress

• Thorough review at a point advanced enough to make evaluation meaningful, but early enough to change course to correct problems or change commitments

• Ensures that candidates have experience with dossier-building before crunch time

• In multi-unit colleges, provides the perspective of the dean beyond the department level

• In interdisciplinary appointments, incorporates perspective of all faculties and deans concerned
How do I prepare for the midcourse review?

• Talk to your mentor and your department head about department and college guidelines

• Ask about involvement of other units for joint appointments

• Become familiar with the University-wide dossier requirements embodied in the Model Tenure Dossier

  https://provost.northeastern.edu/app/uploads/Model-Tenure-Dossier.pdf
Midcourse review dossiers: Electronic

• Length for Midcourse review: Aim for ~40-50 pages

• Dossiers **must** follow order of Model Dossier checklist

• Order, organization, and page limits matter
Developing your materials efficiently

Looking towards your electronic tenure dossier, you should:

• Maintain files to be included in the tenure dossier in electronic formats (with backup!)

• Ask for documents (e.g., annual performance reviews) from your department/college in PDF format as well as paper, or scan paper documents you may already have on file
Model Midcourse Review Dossier

Materials supplied by the candidate:

• *Curriculum vitae*
• Candidate’s Statements and Supporting Evidence: IMPACT
  1. Teaching
  2. Research and Scholarship
  3. Service
• Performance Reviews
  1. Annual reviews
  2. Merit reviews
• **Teaching: Supporting documents**

  ✓ Raw teaching evaluations (TRACE reports with comments, department-specific evaluations)

  ✓ Advising activity (undergraduate/graduate)

  ✓ Sample syllabi and teaching materials
• Scholarship, Research, Creative Activity: **Supporting** documents

- Copies of all publications
- Book reviews, citations, other evidence of impact
- If work is collaborative, co-author letters about your specific contribution
- Research awards and honors
- Recommendations for publication, other evidence of work in progress
• **Service:** *Supporting documents*

  ✓ Evidence of committee-based contributions to dept/college/University

  ✓ Other contributions to dept/college/University

  ✓ Contributions related to your discipline outside of Northeastern
WHAT should I take away from the midcourse review?

• A long start on the documentation needed for tenure

• Reconstruct any missing pieces now rather than at crunch time

• Assess your record-keeping habits and make them serve you
**WHAT** should I take away from the midcourse review?

- A chance to stand back from your career to date and tell its story in your statements about teaching, research, and service.

- Tell the committee and your Dean about your **impact** in teaching and research.

- In response, deeply considered advice on how your story is advancing towards tenure. *Heed it carefully.*
Midcourse review as inflection point

What may be emphasized going forward?

• **Sustainability of research agenda**
  - External funding where appropriate
  - Timeline for realization of projects through publication
  - Pipeline of projects beyond dissertation research
  - Supervision of graduate students

• **Independence as investigator/scholar**
  - Lead authorship
  - Networks developing beyond dissertation director
What may be emphasized going forward?

• **Trajectory of educational contributions**
  - Slope and quality of teaching evaluations
  - Contribution to curricular innovation
  - Work with students outside the classroom

• **Trajectory of university and professional citizenship**
  - Entry into academically based, influential professional service
  - Slope of involvement in department, college, university
  - Emphasis on quality and impact
Midcourse Review

To summarize:

• Midcourse review is a time to show the work you’ve done over your first 3 years

• You get a review by your department colleagues to let you know how you are doing on your path toward tenure

• It’s your dress rehearsal
QUESTIONS?