

# Preparing for the Midcourse Review

Deb Franko

Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

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Northeastern  
University

# Faculty Handbook

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<https://faculty.northeastern.edu/handbook/appointments-promotion-and-tenure/tenure/>

## 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?

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- 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?

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- 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

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- Faculty Handbook: “During the third or fourth year....the unit will conduct a comprehensive review.....”
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year: Report should be completed shortly after spring term and sent to Dean in May
- 4<sup>th</sup> year: Report should be completed and sent to Dean by mid-October



# Faculty with interdisciplinary appointments

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- 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?

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- 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?

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- 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

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- 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

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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

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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



# The Model Midcourse Review Dossier: Appendices

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- **Teaching: *Supporting* documents**
  - ✓ Raw teaching evaluations (TRACE reports with comments, department-specific evaluations)
  - ✓ Advising activity (undergraduate/graduate)
  - ✓ Sample syllabi and teaching materials



# The Model Midcourse Review Dossier: Appendices

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- **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



# The Model Midcourse Review Dossier: Appendices

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- **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?

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- 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?

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- 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

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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



# Midcourse review as inflection point

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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

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*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?

