

Preparing for the Midcourse (third- or fourth-year) Review

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

2. Pre-tenure Review

During the third or fourth year of a faculty member's tenure-track period, the unit will conduct a comprehensive review of the faculty member's performance relative to the University's criteria for tenure. Each unit will develop procedures for this review, which must be approved by the dean and the Provost.

The review will culminate in a written evaluation that makes a recommendation for reappointment or non-reappointment and discusses the reasons for the recommendation. Where reappointment is recommended, the review must discuss the faculty member's strengths and weaknesses, and will identify areas that require development for continued progress toward tenure. The review will be forwarded to the dean. If the dean disagrees with the evaluation and/or reappointment recommendation of the unit, the dean transmits to the review committee the reasons for disagreement with the evaluation. The dean's decision in this matter is final. The unit head will discuss the written evaluations with the faculty member and place copies in the faculty member's academic unit 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-2018-Updated-July-31-2018.pdf>

Midcourse review dossiers: Electronic

- Length for Midcourse review: Aim for ~40-50 pages
- **Tenure dossier**: Your contributions should be 60-70 pages
- Dossiers **must** follow order of Model Dossier checklist
- Order, organization, and page limits matter

Electronic dossiers and you: 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
- Install Adobe Acrobat and take a quick tour of its features

Model Midcourse Review Dossier: Materials supplied by the candidate

- ***Curriculum vitae***
- **Candidate's Statements and Supporting Evidence: IMPACT**
 1. Teaching (TRACE summary sheet, sample course materials)
 2. Research and Scholarship (one exemplary publication)
 3. Service
- **Performance Reviews**
 1. Annual reviews
 2. Merit reviews

The Model Midcourse Review Dossier: Appendices (your supporting documents)

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

The Model Midcourse Review Dossier: Appendices

- **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

- **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 expect to 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 expect to 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

Midcourse review as inflection point: 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?

