



Mid-Tenure Review Guidelines

(Revised May 2018)

Purpose

The Mid-Tenure Review for Questrom Assistant Professors is a developmental and evaluative intervention on the path to tenure. The review is performed at a time when there is both a sufficient stream of work to evaluate and adequate time for the faculty member to make adjustments prior to his/her formal evaluation for tenure and promotion at Boston University. The goals of the Mid-Tenure review are to:

- Evaluate the faculty member's progress toward achieving tenure in terms of research, teaching, and engagement in the service activities of the Department, School, and academic discipline.
- Provide diagnostic feedback to the faculty member on his/her research/teaching/service record, including suggestions for further development on all three dimensions in the light of the tenure decision.
- Provide information for Dean's Office and Department Chair decisions regarding whether the faculty member will be reappointed and whether he/she will be granted Junior Scholar Leave.
- Familiarize faculty with, and manage expectations for, the tenure review process.

The Role of the Mid-Tenure Review in Reappointment Decisions

As stated above, the Mid-Tenure Review provides evaluative information for Dean's Office and Department Chair decisions regarding faculty reappointments. The Mid-Tenure Review is implicated in two important reappointment decisions. Considering the likelihood of tenure and promotion given progress at the mid-tenure stage, the report justifies the possibilities of either reappointment through the tenure review year (year 7), or a terminal contract that ends in year 5. A second reappointment decision in year 6, if appropriate, looks back on the Mid-Tenure Review to assess progress against recommended action steps. Based on the progress made the second reappointment decision can result in a terminal contract that ends in year 7, or in the addition of a safety net year that assumes the faculty member will be standing for tenure.

Timing of the Mid-Tenure Review

Under a standard 7-year tenure clock, the Mid-Tenure Review is conducted during the fall semester of the faculty member's fourth year at Questrom.

Faculty members who join the School after service at another institution and a tenure review clock of two to four years will not have a Mid-Tenure review. Faculty who join with a tenure review clock of five to six years will have a Mid-Tenure Review in the third year prior to the tenure review year. For example, a faculty member who joins the school with a five-year clock will have a Mid-Tenure Review in his or her second year at Questrom. Under this model, all faculty will have at least 2.5 years to act in response to the feedback provided in the review.

If a faculty member's tenure clock is extended for any reason prior to the year in which the Mid-Tenure Review would ordinarily be scheduled, the Mid-Tenure Review will also be delayed by the same period. The Mid-Tenure Review will not be delayed for any leave that does not result in an extension of the tenure clock.

Mid-Tenure Review Committee

A three-person review committee assesses the faculty member's progress towards achieving tenure and promotion to Associate Professor at Boston University and suggests ways in which the faculty member can make further progress in Research, Teaching and Service to strengthen his/her case. The committee is composed of three senior (Associate or Full) tenured faculty members. It includes one member from the Department and two members from outside of the Department, chosen to bring a broader knowledge of academia and the School to provide meaningful advice. The Chair of the faculty member's department may not serve on the committee. This model reflects the realities of a diverse set of reviewers involved in the tenure process both within Questrom and at the University level. Further, it moves beyond ongoing mentorship and guidance offered within the faculty member's Department to allow new perspectives.

Content of the Committee Report

In order to be useful as both an evaluation and as a developmental tool, the report should provide a realistic and honest assessment of the faculty member's contributions to and progress in the domains of research, teaching, and service. Further, the report offers actionable guidance for enhancing the faculty member's tenure case. The committee in no way attempts to forecast the faculty member's ability to successfully meet tenure criteria. The report does however put forth summary opinions on the research, teaching, and service record that the Dean's Office and Department Chair that are pivotal in making reappointment decisions, as discussed above.

Research: Based on a deep reading of the body of work, the review committee evaluates the faculty member's record in its absolute and in terms of trends and progress over time, as gauged in the context of expectations of the field. The committee considers recent tenure cases as well as Questrom and disciplinary norms to judge whether there exists evidence of sufficient progress toward tenure and promotion. Commentary is provided on the contribution/impact, quality, productivity, and promise of the research record within the context of a narrative describing the corpus of the research. Among the factors the committee may consider in its analysis are:

The narrative of the case

- What problem(s) does the research address, and are these important problems?
- Is the work part of a stream of research for which the faculty member can develop recognition and a scholarly reputation?

Productivity and pipeline

- Has the doctoral thesis work been published and where?
- How many papers have been published so far and in which journal tiers?
- Has the faculty member established a pipeline of work that is progressing toward publication?
- How many papers are under review and what are the journal targets and stage of review for each?
- What is the status and journal target for working papers in development?
- Based on the pipeline, how do you rate his/her future promise and trajectory?

The quality and rigor of the work

- How does the review committee evaluate the quality and rigor of the research, including the research design, data, methods, presentation, and analyses?
- Are publications in (or targeting) top-tier disciplinary and field journals?

Impact and relative contribution

- What is the nature (e.g. contribution to theory, practice, method) and extent (e.g., incremental vs. substantial contribution) of the contribution?
- Is the work consistently accepted at conferences?
- Does the work have resonance for academics, practitioners, and/or government as evidenced in invited lectures and seminars, invitations to specialty conferences, and paid consulting?
- Does the work appear in or is it recognized by major news organizations?
- Has the faculty member been awarded grants and if so, what is the granting agency? What is his/her PI status?
- Does the record include any successful patent awards?
- Has the work been honored with awards or other recognitions?
- What is the citation record for the work?
- What insights are gained from considering sole authorship and order of authorship in published/in-progress works?
- Who are the collaborators on published and in-progress papers and what can we infer from their engagement?
- What is the role and engagement of the faculty member's doctoral advisor in published and in-progress works?

Teaching: The review committee evaluates the faculty member's teaching record in its absolute and within the context of Questrom norms to judge whether there exists (1) evidence of quality and contribution to the teaching mission of the School and Department, and (2) sufficient progress and development in teaching toward tenure and promotion. The evaluation considers data from classroom observations, course syllabi, course materials, exams, and course evaluations. Among the factors the committee may consider in its analysis are:

- The number and type of different courses taught: required versus elective, team supported versus independent, undergraduate versus MBA versus specialty degree program
- Teaching performance as measured by both course and instructor ratings versus Questrom norms, and a qualitative analysis of student feedback
- Contributions to materials development and continuous improvements in existing courses
- Contributions to the teaching team, if relevant
- Trends in teaching performance over time
- Actions taken to improve as a teacher
- Adherence to Questrom teaching norms, as for example provision of timely and useful feedback, availability to meet with students, adherence to grading guidelines
- Development of new courses
- Plans for future teaching assignments and development
- Doctoral student mentorship and thesis supervision

Service to the Department, School, and Discipline: The review committee evaluates the faculty member's service record in its absolute and within the context of Questrom norms to judge whether there exists evidence of appropriate engagement. Activities at each level include:

- Department: leadership responsibility for department seminar series, engagement in department meetings, contributions to department projects, engagement with teaching team, engagement with doctoral students including attendance at presentations, contributions to qualifying exams, and service on doctoral student committees
- School: attendance at commencement and convocation, participation in faculty meetings, service on school committees
- Profession: regular attendance at annual professional meetings, service on academy or conference committees, ad-hoc journal or conference reviewing

Summary and Recommendations. The report narrative concludes with:

- A bullet summary of main insights from the analysis, including strengths and areas of concern
- Clear suggestions about specific action steps the faculty member may take to improve in each of the dimensions of Research, Teaching and Service

Overall Assessment of Progress toward Tenure and Promotion

In addition to the above narrative, the Mid-Tenure Review Committee Report Form includes an overall assessment of progress toward tenure and promotion in the domains of research, teaching, and service. These assessments are rendered using the rating scales below. Research judged to be “conditionally on track” recognizes that at the time of the Mid-Tenure Review, the faculty member may have papers in various stages of development and journal review, but that these papers may resolve differently than anticipated with the passage of time.

Research	<input type="checkbox"/> Very strong	<input type="checkbox"/> Conditionally on track	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not meet expectations
Teaching	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not meet expectations
Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not meet expectations

Deliverables and Elements of the Mid-Tenure Review Packet

- 1) Faculty Member’s Mid-Tenure Review Packet
 - Updated, accurate, and complete CV (please see [Faculty Website](#) for guidelines)
 - Personal statement (prepared using the report template provided by Faculty Actions). The personal statement should focus on research but also discuss teaching and service contributions. The research portion of the statement should describe the candidate’s research positioning, present a synthesis of the scholarly work, and define its contribution and impact to academics and practice.
 - Selection of up to five published or working papers
 - Sample of course materials and syllabi for courses taught
- 2) Mid-Tenure Review Committee Packet
 - Classroom Observation Report
 - Mid-Year Tenure Review Committee Report (completed using the report template provided by Faculty Actions)
 - Teaching Ratings Summary

Process & Timeline (See Appendix for Timeline)

- 1) *Identify Candidates for Mid-Tenure Review.* Each February, the Director of Faculty Actions will provide to Department Chairs a list of faculty who are currently in their third year at the School or are otherwise qualified under their hiring contracts for a Mid-Tenure review.
- 2) *Assign the Mid-Tenure Review Committee.* Chairs should meet with relevant department faculty to discuss and finalize the composition of the Mid-Tenure Review committee, including nomination of the Review Committee Chair. The faculty member can provide input on the composition of the committee but the final decision rests with the Department Chair. The Chair notifies the Director of Faculty Actions and the candidate of the composition of the review committee by March 1.
- 3) *Schedule the Classroom Observation.* If the faculty member is not scheduled to teach in the fall of the Mid-Tenure Review, the Review Committee Chair arranges classroom observations for the spring of the third year. Opportunities for junior faculty members to present at either Research or Teaching Day can also provide insights into the faculty member's presentation skills, but are complements to rather than substitutes for the classroom teaching evaluation.
- 4) *Faculty Submission of Mid-Tenure Review Packet.* By September 1, the faculty member should submit his/her Mid-Tenure Review Packet to the Review Committee and the Director of Faculty Actions.
- 5) *Committee Analysis and Report.* The committee meets to review the data and packet during September and October and completes its report (template provided) by mid-November.
- 6) *Faculty Debrief.* In December, the Review Committee chair meets with the faculty member in person to debrief and discuss the report. All committee members need not be present. After the meeting, the report may be amended to reflect clarification of issues discussed. Faculty should be encouraged to share the report with senior faculty and mentors for their additional feedback.
- 7) *Filing of the Report.* After the committee chair has met with the faculty member, a copy of the report is sent to the Department Chair, the Senior Associate Dean, and the Director of Faculty Actions.
- 8) *Debrief of Department Chair and Dean's Office.* In December-January, the Committee Chair meets with the faculty member's Department Chair to discuss the report and any recommendations. A debrief with the Senior Associate Dean is also held in the event of a weak review. The Department Chair and Dean's Office make decisions regarding reappointment and the granting of Junior Scholar Leaves based on information provided in the review.