

Discussion Points for Mentors and Mentees on 2- and 4-Year Evaluations

Early fall semester is a good time for faculty mentors to discuss the 2- and 4-year peer-evaluation process with mentees who will be reviewed that year. Different departments may follow somewhat different processes for 2- and 4-year reviews, so be sure to check your departmental documents to know what is required. All departments should adhere to the guidelines found in [the Faculty Handbook Section 4.3.5](#).

Mentees should consider what they want to get out of the peer evaluation process. Here are some points to help guide the discussion.

1. 2- and 4-year peer evaluations are themselves mentoring opportunities.

“Since promotion & tenure recommendations are heavily dependent on peer evaluations, it is essential that candidates have early indications from their colleagues regarding their progress in the areas of teaching, research and creative activity, and service.” (Faculty Handbook)

- Annual appraisals provide an opportunity for faculty members to receive regular feedback from their chairs on their professional advancement. Peer reviews are an opportunity to receive feedback from peers and colleagues.

2. The peer review process ought to reflect the P&T process as much as possible.

“The faculty member under review should assemble a dossier of materials that he or she regards as appropriate and convincing evidence of his or her abilities in the three major areas of evaluation.” (Faculty Handbook)

- Mentees may want to know more about what types of evidence are most effective and convincing in the areas of teaching, research, and service.
- Mentees may also want to discuss committee membership and other features of the review process.

3. Mentees have the right to provide whatever information they wish to be reviewed.

“Faculty members under review have the right to supply such evidence that they feel may be necessary to a fair evaluation of their merits. This should not preclude departments or others properly involved in the review process from soliciting and using other evidence, but in every such instance, the faculty member should be informed of the source of that evidence.” (Faculty Handbook)

- If your committee has requested minimal materials to review, you may submit additional evidence.

4. Alterations to the Peer-Evaluation Timeline.

There are a number of reasons why a faculty member’s P&T timeline might be adjusted – such as Stop-the-Clock (Faculty Handbook, Sections [4.1.6](#) & [4.4.15](#)) and the one-year COVID19 extension provided to all probationary TT and CT faculty (Provost communication, March 24, 2020). Formal mentors are encouraged to discuss with their mentees the specifics of these policies. Examples include:

- The universal COVID extension does not affect a faculty member’s eligibility to exercise “Stop-the-Clock” options; rather, it is in addition to those.
- Faculty are not required to present results from regular student evaluations of teaching from the Spring 2020 semester in their 2- or 4-year reviews, or future tenure and promotion applications. Mentors and mentees may want to discuss other ways to document teaching effectiveness.
- The effect of these adjustments on the timing of the peer review(s).
- If relevant, the effect of these adjustments on 3rd or 5th-year research leave.
- In both cases, mentees should be encouraged to discuss their plans with their chairs.