

## University Procedures for Mid-Probationary Review 2023-24

**Purpose:** The primary purpose of the mid-probationary review is to provide developmental advice to best support the candidate during the probationary period. The following procedures outline the process of careful consideration by the department and review by the dean and Provost to ensure fairness and consistency across the School and University. The procedures reflect the developmental intent of the mid-probationary review as described in Section 3.3.1 of the Faculty Handbook and do not change the standards for tenure and promotion as defined in Section 3.4 of the Faculty Handbook and as described in discipline-specific standards for scholarship. The mid-probationary review, as stated above, examines the professional trajectory of the candidate rather than directly measuring how close a candidate might be to meeting the standards. These procedures guide and ensure consistency in the review process.

**Overview:** According to Section 3.3.1 of the Faculty Handbook,<sup>1</sup>

*A probationary faculty member shall receive an especially thorough evaluation by the tenured faculty of [their] department after completing approximately half of the probationary period, at a time to be determined by the department chair in consultation with the dean. The written evaluation shall include an assessment of the faculty member's performance and development in each of the three categories of review.*

*The mid-probationary review is intended to be developmental and should ordinarily culminate in an advisory letter expressing the views of the tenured faculty as to what the candidate might do in the remainder of the probationary period to enhance [their] candidacy for tenure. However, in those instances where it is evident that a candidate's prospects for meeting tenure expectations are remote, the mid-probationary review may culminate in a recommendation of non-retention addressed to the dean. A favorable mid-probationary review does not bind the University to grant tenure.*

**Procedures:** Mid-probationary reviews are typically conducted during the third year of a seven-year probationary period. In the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic, if a faculty member has elected to extend their tenure clock by one year and the request has been approved by the Provost, mid-probationary reviews will typically be conducted during the *fourth year of an eight-year probationary period*. If the probationary period is more or less than the standard seven years (or eight for those electing the COVID extension), the candidate should discuss with the dean and chair whether there is any change in the mid-probationary review timing. Faculty Development Program resources for the tenure process, available in an online repository, may be helpful in preparing MPR material (<https://www.scu.edu/provost/teaching-and-learning/faculty-development/current-faculty-resources/reappointment-tenure-and-promotion/>).

Procedures for the mid-probationary review are described below. ***Interfolio will be used for the MPR process.***

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<sup>1</sup> The Faculty Handbook is available online at <https://www.scu.edu/provost/faculty-affairs/faculty-handbook/>.

## Important Dates and Deadlines

Available in Interfolio*	Due	Action
—	<b>December 6, 2023</b>	Info Session for MPR candidates 12:15-1:15 • Lucas 126
January 5, 2024	<b>January 31, 2024</b>	Candidate submits material in Interfolio
—	<b>January 25, 2024</b>	MPR Procedure Meeting for chairs & deans 2:00-3:00 • Lucas 126
February 2, 2024	<b>March 8, 2024</b>	Chair submits departmental evaluation in Interfolio
March 15, 2024	<b>March 25, 2024</b>	Dean submits evaluation to Provost in Interfolio
March 26, 2024	<b>April 8, 2024</b>	Provost notifies candidate via email <b>and</b> Interfolio of reappointment decision following the MPR, copying the dean and department chair
Outside of Interfolio	<b>April 17, 2024</b>	Chair submits draft departmental advisory letter to the dean for review and approval
Outside of Interfolio	<b>May 1, 2024</b>	Chair gives final departmental advisory letter to candidate
Outside of Interfolio	<b>May 15, 2024</b>	Candidates who received a successful review submit a request for a Junior Faculty Development leave following target dates for JFDLs

\* *The Interfolio tile on MySCU is accessible to you 24/7/365 for you to enter your courses and other teaching evidence, scholarly/artistic work, and service records in the Faculty180 module. The dates listed here refer to the availability of your “case” in the Interfolio RPT module, which pulls your records for the period under review and moves your materials through the evaluation process.*

## Procedures for the Candidate

The candidate should carefully review the *Standards for Promotion and Tenure* in Section 3.4.2 of the Faculty Handbook, the department scholarship standards, as well as any other relevant College, School, or departmental documents.

The candidate shall provide appropriate materials in Interfolio by the given deadline. The materials should include supporting documentation from the probationary period that provides evidence of the candidate’s developing a strong record of superior teaching and scholarly or artistic work and service that shows promise for the candidate meeting tenure expectations at the conclusion of the probationary period.

Supporting materials may be uploaded to the appropriate Faculty180 Activities section at any time during the year (Faculty180 sections are designated below with a ►). The materials should include:

- Personal Statement
  - Not to exceed 8 pages or 2,000 words
  - Examples can be found on the Faculty Development website under resources for promotion and tenure (<https://www.scu.edu/provost/teaching-and-learning/faculty-development/current-faculty-resources/reappointment-tenure-and-promotion/>)
  
- Course Reduction
  - Include copies of course reduction letters or evidence of course reductions given
  
- Academic Honors & Awards
  - Include copies of award letters (if you have received them)
  
- Professional Development
  - Include evidence of professional development (workshops and short courses designed to keep faculty up-to-date in their discipline)
  
- Teaching
  - Include evidence of teaching for each distinct course under the teaching section including:
    - Syllabus: course syllabi for each course<sup>2</sup>
    - Course Evaluation: SET reports<sup>3</sup>, narrative evaluations (if available)
    - Peer Evaluation: letters or other reports on the direct observation of teaching
    - Other: Any other materials that provide significant evidence of your teaching (e.g., major course materials such as customized course readers, exams and other assessments, and examples of assignments or in-class activities)

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<sup>2</sup> PDF format for course materials is recommended; see the guide for converting Camino course materials to PDF format (<https://www.scu.edu/media/offices/provost/faculty-affairs/evaluation-promotion/interfolio-guides/Converting-Camino-Pages-to-PDF.pdf>). If you link to online materials, we recommend pointing reviewers to specific artifacts using a Word document with links (in the video guide for uploading materials to Faculty180, you will find instructions at 3.17; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0PhrprRDaEU>). Please note: Academic Technology makes courses inaccessible on Camino after one year and one term, so a faculty member would have to request the course be reactivated, set the course end-date for the conclusion of the evaluation process, and make the course public, in order for a link to a public Camino course to work.

<sup>3</sup> W20 and S20 reports are not required; faculty are allowed to choose whether to include them in evaluation materials (Provost email, 4 August 2020, <https://www.scu.edu/provost/communications/special-announcements/update-on-winterspring-2020-sets/>). For other terms in the review period—and W20-S20 if you opt in—you are responsible to upload your individual SET reports for each class. The Provost's Office will supply a SET analysis that collates your numerical results across the review period (except for W20 and S20 results), comparing these to results in your department and school. This report will be uploaded to your case before your submission deadline, for your review.

- ▶ Other Teaching
  - Include ways you have contributed to teaching, learning, curricular development, and the learning environment for students
  - Describe any improvements to your teaching you have already made or plan to make during the next year
  - Include evidence of pedagogical development (workshops, short courses and events designed to help faculty improve their teaching)
  - Note any teaching awards
- ▶ Mentoring of students
  - Include evidence of mentorship (research, career)
- ▶ Advising Load
  - Include the number of students you have advised in your tenure at SCU thus far and descriptions of advising activity
- ▶ Scholarly Contributions and Creative Productions
  - Include copies of scholarly or artistic work; designate published, accepted or forthcoming, or submitted (internal and external grants have their own section, below)
- ▶ Scholarly Plans
  - Include plans for future scholarly work and descriptions of work in progress
- ▶ Grants-External
  - Include grant award letters from external sources
- ▶ Grants-Internal
  - Include grant award letters from internal sources
- ▶ University, School, or Department Service
  - Include descriptions of service contributions (committee, role, amount of time, resulting document, if any)
- ▶ Major Professional Service
  - Include descriptions of service contributions (organization, role, amount of time)
- ▶ Major Community Service
  - Include descriptions of service contributions
- ▶ Administrative Service
  - Include administrative assignment letters
- ▶ Historical FARs & FAR Evaluation Letters
  - Include your original FARs **and** your annual evaluation letters from the department

Letters from external reviewers obtained by the candidate are not normally part of the file unless approved in advance by the dean. The dean may specify additional materials to be provided by the candidate in College- or School-specific protocols.

Materials entering the process after it has begun shall be transmitted directly to the candidate's dean or, if the evaluations have proceeded beyond the dean, to the Provost. Such late materials need not be reviewed by the authors of completed evaluations unless, in the opinion of the dean or the Provost, they ought to be.

If the outcome of the MPR review is positive, the candidate will receive 1) a letter from the Provost congratulating the candidate on a successful MPR, and 2) an advisory letter from the department expressing the views of the tenured faculty members as to what the candidate might do in the remainder of the probationary period to enhance their candidacy for tenure (Faculty Handbook 3.3.1). [Please upload this letter in Faculty180 Activities at ► MPR & MPR Advisory Letters, so it is available for subsequent reviews.]

If it is evident that a candidate's prospects for meeting tenure expectations are remote, the Provost shall notify the candidate in writing, and the candidate shall receive a final one-year appointment for the next academic year following Section 3.5.3.1 of the Faculty Handbook. The candidate may request a meeting with the dean to receive the fullest and frankest statement of reasons that is consistent with the confidentiality of the specific recommendations and votes of those who have participated in the evaluation process.

### **Procedures for the department, dean, and Provost**

All tenured faculty members in the candidate's department are eligible and expected to participate in the review. Each tenured faculty member is expected to read the candidate's materials, participate in an evaluation meeting at the invitation of the department chair, and contribute to an advisory letter as appropriate. Faculty members on sabbatical or other leave may choose not to participate in the review process. A faculty member who chooses not to participate shall not be involved in any part of the process.

Before reviewing the candidate's materials, all faculty members participating in the review should carefully review *Standards for Tenure and Promotion* in Section 3.4.2 of the Faculty Handbook, the department scholarship standards (including the COVID rider), teaching standards (if any), as well as any appropriate College, School, or departmental documents (including the department statement on the evaluation of online teaching).

To ensure a rigorous and thorough review of the candidate's materials, the chair, in consultation with the dean, shall appoint a committee from the tenured faculty members of the department.<sup>4</sup> The committee will draft, in consultation with the tenured faculty, a written evaluation of the candidate's materials for the department to discuss as part of the review meeting. The chair may serve as a member of the committee and may appoint, in consultation with the dean, appropriate faculty members from outside the department to assist in drafting the evaluation. The evaluation letter should reference the discipline-specific standards for scholarship, including the COVID rider, teaching standards (if any), and the department statement on the evaluation of online teaching.

The chair shall schedule a review meeting of the tenured faculty to discuss the candidate's record and what the candidate might do in the remainder of the probationary period to enhance their case for tenure. The chair will distribute a draft of the written evaluation to all of the participating faculty members before the meeting. Since the intent of the mid-probationary review is developmental, a retention vote is normally not needed to formulate the departmental recommendation. However, in those instances where it is evident that a candidate's prospects for meeting tenure expectations are remote, any faculty member in the meeting can call for a vote at the conclusion of the meeting. If the motion for a vote is

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<sup>4</sup> The committee may be composed of the participating, tenured faculty members in a department, particularly in small departments.

seconded, the faculty should engage in further discussion before a ballot is distributed with two options: “recommend,” or “do not recommend” retention. A faculty member must be at the meeting to vote. After the review meeting, the committee should revise the draft written evaluation to reflect the faculty discussion and the recommendations of the department. If a retention vote is conducted, the unattributed results are reported in the written evaluation. The committee members drafting the evaluation must review and sign the final evaluation document. The department chair will prepare a cover page with signature lines for all participating faculty. The final written evaluation and ballot results, if applicable, are confidential and not shared with the candidate; however, aspects of the written evaluation may be used in the departmental advisory letter to provide context as appropriate.

The chair will submit to the dean a single document within Interfolio containing: 1) a cover sheet that contains the signatures of the participating faculty to record those who participated in the review and 2) the final written evaluation signed by the chair and the committee members. Candidate materials will flow through Interfolio.

The dean will review the materials provided by the department. If the dean agrees with the department’s recommendation, the dean submits a written recommendation to the Provost in Interfolio.

In the rare case where the dean is considering a decision different from the recommendation of the department, the dean will discuss the case with the department chair and other participating tenured faculty members before submitting a written recommendation to the Provost.

In the rare case where the Provost is considering a decision different from the recommendation of either the dean or the department, the Provost shall meet with the department chair, participating tenured faculty members, and the dean to discuss the case. The Provost will render the final decision regarding retention and shall notify the candidate of the decision in writing.

If the chair is notified that a positive decision has been made, the tenured departmental faculty serving on the evaluation committee along with the department chair shall prepare a draft departmental advisory letter. The departmental advisory letter should include an assessment of the faculty member’s performance and development in each of the three categories of review (teaching, scholarship or creative activity, and service) as well as the views of the tenured faculty as to what the candidate might do in the remainder of the probationary period to enhance their candidacy for tenure (Section 3.3.1). The advisory letter should reference the discipline-specific standards for scholarship. The dean shall review the draft advisory letter and may also provide comments as needed. The final departmental advisory letter is reviewed and signed by all departmental faculty members participating in the mid-probationary review. Only the advisory letter is given to the candidate.

If a candidate’s prospects for meeting tenure expectations are remote and a decision of non-retention has been made, the Provost shall notify the candidate in writing. A departmental advisory letter is *not* prepared in this case. A candidate’s prospects for meeting tenure expectations may be judged as “remote” in cases where it is evident, after careful and thorough review of a candidate’s materials by department, dean, and Provost, that the candidate has a disqualifying weakness and is unlikely to meet the tenure and promotion

standards in the remaining probationary period. The candidate may request a meeting with the dean to receive the fullest and frankest statement of reasons that is consistent with the confidentiality of the specific recommendations and votes of those who have participated in the evaluation process.

### **Procedure for the Reconsideration of a Negative MPR decision**

Whenever a candidate receives in writing a negative decision by the Provost concerning their mid-probationary review, the candidate has 30 calendar days to file with the Provost a petition for reconsideration by the Provost. The petition shall be submitted in writing and list the reasons for the request for reconsideration. The Provost shall respond within 30 days of receipt of the request. Requests for reconsideration of a negative mid-probationary review decision are restricted to the following grounds:

1. the existence of significant and relevant new material that has become available since the candidate's application was considered; or
2. significant inconsistency in the application of standards or procedures between the candidate's evaluation and others within the same college or school and during the same year.

Upon receiving a valid request to reconsider a negative mid-probationary review decision, the Provost shall ask for recommendations on whether to reverse or to reaffirm the decision from the participating faculty members from the candidate's department, the department chair, and the dean.

The participating faculty members from the candidate's department, the department chair, and the dean shall make their recommendations in writing directly to the Provost, who, at their discretion, may discuss the case with any or all of them or with anyone else, including the candidate. The Provost shall then form and communicate their decision in writing to the candidate, which shall be final.

The burden of proof for a reconsideration request rests with the candidate.

*Originally approved by the Provost on February 9, 2016 on the recommendation of the Faculty Affairs Committee. COVID accommodations approved by the Provost October 22, 2020 with Faculty Affairs Committee consultation.*