

Department of Sociology Policy and Procedures on the Periodic Review of Tenured Faculty

I. Purpose

This policy establishes the process and guidelines by which the Department of Sociology conducts periodic, comprehensive evaluations of the performance of tenured members of the faculty (hereafter “post-tenure reviews”), in accordance with the University of Maryland Policy on Periodic Evaluation of Faculty Performance ([II-1.20\[A\]](#)) and the University System of Maryland Policy on the Comprehensive Review of Tenured Faculty ([II-1.19](#)). The purpose of these reviews is to recognize meritorious performance, improve the quality of contributions in all domains of faculty activity (research, teaching, and service), and uncover and remedy impediments to faculty productivity.

II. Policy

Post-tenure reviews shall ordinarily be conducted in the fifth year following the most recent post-tenure review, or in the fifth year following promotion to Associate Professor or Professor. This schedule will be adjusted according to the following parameters.

- Any period during which a faculty member is on sabbatical or is at <50% FTE will not count towards the five-year window.
- Any period during which a faculty member is on an administrative appointment outside the department of between 50% and 100% FTE will have that portion of their time excluded from the five-year window. For example, one year at a 50% FTE appointment in the Dean’s Office will only advance the clock by half a year.
- Any period during which a faculty member serves as Department Chair will not count, given they are reviewed annually according to the University of Maryland Policy on the Review of Department Chairs and Directors of Academic Units ([I-6.00\[C\]](#)). Their five-year clock will begin again immediately following the end of their appointment.
- If two consecutive merit reviews under the terms of the Department of Sociology Policy and Procedures on Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Merit Pay Distribution indicate that a faculty member is materially deficient in meeting expectations, a mandatory post-tenure review will take place the following year. For the purposes of this policy, “materially deficient” means a numeric score of less than “3” in two or more of the activities being evaluated (research, teaching, and service).

In accordance with the Department of Sociology Plan of Organization, the Department Chair will determine the membership of each Post-tenure Review Committee in consultation with the faculty member being reviewed (hereafter “candidate”). The committee will ordinarily be composed of three members at or above the rank of the candidate, subject to availability, but will in no cases contain fewer than two members. The chair will work to ensure committees are formed of faculty

who can conduct an unbiased review and, when feasible, are familiar with the candidate's research interests and methodologies.

III. Roles and Responsibilities

A. Responsibilities of the Candidate

1. Compile a dossier that includes, at minimum, the following:
 - A current CV, generated through Faculty Success.
 - A bulleted list or narrative summary (not to exceed one page) of activities describing the candidate's contributions to research, teaching, and service over the period since the last review or promotion. The document should be divided into three sections (research, teaching, and service).
 - A narrative identifying goals and objectives that the candidate intends to pursue over the next five years.
 - Copies of publications released over the period since the last review or promotion.
 - A list of all courses and enrollments taught over the period since the last review or promotion, pulled from Faculty Success.
 - A one-page (maximum) summary providing a small sample of student comments selected by the candidate, and a brief (1-paragraph) statement describing how the candidate has worked to improve their course(s) and/or teaching, either in response to student concerns or due to some other need for innovation. Candidates should also indicate if they have taken any courses through the Teaching and Learning Transformation Center.
 - (Optional) A brief explanation (not to exceed 500 words) of student course feedback to provide additional information necessary for contextualizing or interpreting the content (e.g., first time teaching a course, significant revision to course, significant events that impacted the instructor's ability to teach, etc.).
2. Review the report produced by the Post-tenure Review Committee (see III.B.2 below). The candidate may write a written response to the report that will be shared with the Department Chair.

B. Responsibilities of the Post-tenure Review Committee

1. The Post-tenure Review Committee will be responsible for the following activities:
 - a. Establishing and communicating a timeline for the review process and ensuring the candidate is aware of this policy and their responsibilities.

- b. Reviewing materials provided by the Department Chair, including:
 - information on any alternative workload arrangements created under the Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Workload Policy;
 - results of all merit reviews conducted since the candidate's last post-tenure review or promotion, including both materials the candidate submitted and the merit scores assigned;
 - all peer observations conducted under the Department of Sociology Teaching Observation & Evaluation Policy & Procedures; and
 - all data from the Student Feedback on Course Experiences surveys covering the period since the last review or promotion.
- c. Reviewing the Post-tenure Review Dossier provided by the candidate.
- d. Evaluating the candidate's performance and writing a Post-tenure Review Report, which will be provided to both the candidate and the Department Chair.

2. The Post-tenure Review Report

- a. The report produced by the Post-tenure Review Committee should assess the candidate's performance using the expectations for promotion to their current rank as established in the Department of Sociology's Criteria for Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure (hereafter "APT Criteria").
- b. For each domain of faculty activity, the committee must assign a rating of Below Expectations, Meets Expectations, or Exceeds Expectations. When assigning ratings, the committee should consider the following:

i. Research

The APT Criteria addresses both research productivity and research impact, and the committee should consider both when conducting its evaluation. In addition to making qualitative assessments based on the APT Criteria, the committee should consider the numerical scores assigned in past merit reviews.

ii. Teaching

The committee should assess evidence of high-quality teaching as described in the APT Criteria, and should review any information on teaching quality provided in the course of the merit review process. It should also consider whether the candidate is consistently meeting the teaching obligations established in the Workload Policy (or in any revised workload agreement). The extent and quality of mentorship must also be considered.

iii. Service

The nature and extent of service should be assessed using the expectations established for the relevant rank in the APT Criteria.

- c. The report must begin with an overall summary statement about the candidate's overall performance, and should assign an overall rating of Below Expectations, Meets Expectations, or Exceeds Expectations. It must also include a section with a brief, narrative evaluation for each activity that supports the rating it has assigned for each. For any rating of "below expectations," the narrative should be more extensive and should be written in a manner that will facilitate a constructive and collaborative conversation with the Department Chair about ways to remedy any deficiencies.

C. Responsibilities of the Department Chair

1. In addition to providing materials to the Post-tenure Review Committee (listed in III.B.1.b above), the Department Chair is responsible for reviewing both the Post-tenure Review Report and any written response provided by the candidate.
2. The Department Chair will meet with the candidate to review the Post-tenure Review Report and discuss goals and objectives for the next five years.
 - a. For any domains where the candidate received a rating of "Below Expectations," they will jointly determine a course of action with specific expectations and a timeline, including a determination of whether a follow-up review in advance of the next scheduled post-tenure review is needed.
 - b. For any domains where the candidate received a rating of "Exceeds Expectations," the Department Chair will explore ways to recognize the meritorious performance, such as the initiation of promotional opportunities, nominations for internal and external awards, and additional salary increases from the Department Chair's portion of the merit pool, as discussed in the Policy and Procedures on Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Merit Pay Distribution.
3. The Department Chair and the candidate will develop a written plan that discusses agreed upon goals and objectives for the next five years, and documents any specific actions as described above. This plan, along with the Post-tenure Review Report and written response (if applicable) will become a part of the candidate's personnel record, and will be shared with the Office of Faculty Affairs.