



### I. Teaching

Teaching effectiveness should be assessed based on a variety of metrics, including but not limited to self-evaluation of strengths and weaknesses, evaluation of teaching materials, peer observation of class-lab-studio teaching activities, and Student Perceptions of Teaching (or Student Evaluations of Teaching). Given the raft of studies that suggest that student evaluation of teaching reproduces structural biases and is a poor indicator of teaching effectiveness, departments should not rely exclusively on student feedback, but intentionally develop a rich pipeline of sources that collectively inform the evaluation of teaching.

If teaching is an area of concern, the faculty member should be directed to resources both inside and outside of the department. These resources may include:

- Teaching mentor(s) inside or outside the department, as appropriate
- Teaching and learning center resources, as available
- Pedagogy-Teaching-Learning workshops or conferences, if resources can be made available
- Articles, books, podcasts, videos, and/or other resources to enable personal learning, reflection, and development

Department chairs and/or mentors should also work with the pre-tenure faculty member to pinpoint the nature of the concerns about teaching performance to help them accurately understand areas for improvement. This collaborative work with the faculty member should direct them toward appropriate resources, clarify departmental standards, and establish actionable benchmarks for subsequent reviews. The following questions can help facilitate this work. These questions include individual-focused questions related to personal faculty performance and structural-focused questions related to department-level decisions.

#### *Individual-Focused Questions*

- Can specific behaviors/actions be identified for improvements? For example, if students report that feedback is not returned in a timely fashion, what is a reasonable target timeline? If assignment guidelines/expectations appear to be unclear, what models can be emulated?
- Is the faculty member using a fixed mindset or a growth mindset in how they think about students' abilities and potential for success? Can resources be offered or conversations be had about mindset? Has the faculty member considered their learning objectives, and effectively articulated them in their syllabus and to their students?
- Has the faculty calibrated their teaching to the audience of students actually taking their courses so as to achieve the best possible learning for the most students possible?
- Is the faculty member's approach to teaching, assessment, and evaluation generally within the range of practices of their department? While individual differences are hopefully welcome, notably divergent practices might merit reflection and dialogue, including how their practices are implemented and/or conveyed to students.

### *Structural-Focused Questions*

- Is the faculty member ill-suited to teach a specific class assigned? Is the faculty member assigned courses that are harder to teach because of the topics and/or the audience? If so, is this faculty member the right person to teach this course?
- Can adjustments be made to the faculty member's teaching schedule so as to have them teach smaller or larger class, and/or different topics and/or at a different time?
- Are any "problems" similar across all of the faculty member's assigned courses? Or are concerns distinct to a particular course or set of courses?
- Can additional resources be provided to help the faculty member? A colleague to observe or teach in parallel with? A TA/UG peer tutor?
- Are departmental standards with respect to teaching well-articulated? Are these standards realistic?
- Are departmental standards with respect to teaching well-evaluated? Are these evaluation processes well-implemented?

Concerning responses to structural-focused questions require action by department chairs and others in a timely enough fashion to mitigate their impact on the untenured faculty member's next evaluation.

## **II. Scholarship**

For this toolkit, "scholarship" is intended to broadly refer to intellectual, artistic, and/or professional activity and achievement as appropriate to the faculty member and their department. Departments should make expectations for scholarship clear as soon as possible, ideally at the time of initial appointment. Subsequent evaluations (pre-tenure reviews, end-of-year letters, etc.) should clearly articulate whether a candidate has or has not met departmental standards for scholarship, including for the nature, scope, and volume of their work, and offer a clear description for the evaluation. In the event that performance standards for scholarship are not met, department chairs should work with the pre-tenure faculty member to identify the areas of weakness and develop a remediation plan which includes benchmarks and timeline for meeting these benchmarks.

Again, context matters. Discussion of performance should consider the work and life responsibilities and circumstances of those being evaluated, including both work-in-progress toward meeting performance standards and major life events that might result in temporary changes in performance.

Department chairs should also consider broader, more systemic trends in academia, including the following shared in Chapter 4 of Stewart and Valian (2018):

- Scholarly productivity can be affected by whether people publish many short articles versus fewer longer ones, and whether they cite themselves or not (men cite themselves more often than women).
- If an idea is new, it can take longer to publish.
- The speed at which men and women reach associate professor and full professor varies. Men generally reach these career milestones more quickly than women, except in computer science and psychology.
- Heterosexual women who have greater responsibilities at home (have children) spend as much time on research as do men and continue publishing at rates similar to other women.
- In mixed gender collaborations, sometimes men's contributions are valued more highly than women's contributions.

- People of color can be given extra (and often invisible) service that affects their career trajectory.

Department chairs and/or mentors should also work with the pre-tenure faculty member to pinpoint the nature of the concerns about scholarship to direct them toward appropriate resources, clarify departmental standards, and establish actionable benchmarks for subsequent reviews. The following questions can help facilitate this work and includes individual-focused questions related to personal faculty performance and structural-focused questions related to department-level decisions.

### *Individual-focused Questions*

- What resources does the faculty member have in support of their scholarship? Can additional resources be offered (e.g. summer funding, student research assistants, conference travel funds)? These resources are more likely to be available at the institutional rather than departmental level.
- Is the faculty member collaborating with others? If so, why have those collaborations not been sufficiently productive? Are the untenured faculty member's contributions being appropriately acknowledged? Perhaps the faculty member could be encouraged or helped to find new collaborators who could help with current or new projects.
- Is the faculty member attending any conferences or workshops, either in-person or remote? Are they presenting their work in an appropriate venue for their discipline? Are presentations of initial findings making their way to peer-reviewed submissions (or the equivalent)?
- If scholarship standards value grant submissions as well as publications as evidence of intellectual productivity, can the untenured faculty member submit grant proposals in lieu of or alongside other scholarly works?
- If scholarship standards value SoTL (scholarship of teaching and learning) projects or teaching resources (e.g., textbooks), can the untenured faculty member envision scholarship that connects with their teaching?
- If scholarship standards value work with diversity, equity, inclusion, and/or social justice, can the untenured faculty member envision scholarship, grant, or other opportunities that synergize with institutional goals in these areas?

### *Structural-focused Questions*

- Is too much or the wrong kind of teaching (see above) a contributing factor? Are faculty members "over-responding" to student feedback and investing too much time in unnecessary course renovations or pedagogical changes to increase student "satisfaction"? Are course releases, scheduling changes, or other structural fixes available to free up time for scholarship?
- Is too much service a contributing factor? Service burdens are not equally shared across the university community. Women and faculty of color are often asked to do more committee work and to do more community outreach. "Invisible" and informal service (also disproportionately borne by women, queer faculty, faculty of color and other marginalized groups) compound this inequality. Other questions regarding service responsibilities may include:
  - How can department chairs help faculty members be intentional and thoughtful in selecting their service? Such an approach includes empowering untenured faculty members to say "no" -- is that a safe, viable option?
  - Do service assignments align with faculty members particular interests? Can the process for committee assignments be revised to reflect individual interests?
  - What is the (real or perceived) ambient culture of the institution -- do folks have to do "everything" or can they do "something(s)" well?

- Are there personal or collective strategies for setting aside dedicated/protected time for non-service work?

Concerning responses to structural-focused questions require action by department chairs and others in a timely enough fashion to mitigate their impact on the untenured faculty member's next evaluation. Effective responses to some of these questions might require institutional investments that exceed the capacities of individual departments, and the department chair should seek ways to elevate such concerns to the appropriate administrative leaders.

### **III. Service**

Our institutions of higher education and our professional societies rely on the active contributions of faculty members to survive and thrive. For many faculty, "too much" service can negatively affect work in the areas of teaching and scholarship, even though the faculty member might be an exemplar in the area of service. On the other end of the spectrum, some faculty might fail to meet performance standards in the area of service. As with areas of teaching and scholarship, negative reviews in the area of service call for direct communication and the identification of clear benchmarks for meeting standards. Department chairs might consider such questions as the following:

- How can department chairs help faculty members be intentional and thoughtful in selecting their service? Such an approach includes empowering untenured faculty members to say "no" -- is that a safe, viable option?
- Do service assignments align with faculty members particular interests? Can the process for committee assignments be revised to reflect individual interests?
- What is the (real or perceived) ambient culture of the institution -- do folks have to do "everything" or can they do "something(s)" well?
- Is the faculty member investing sufficient time and effort toward fulfilling their responsibilities to committees or in other areas of service? Is the faculty member making positive contributions to the effective, well-functioning groups in their service, or are there ways they might modify their approaches