

## Starting on the Tenure Track: Some Questions to Ask Early

*General questions about process:*

When exactly do reviews happen?

What is the process for each review? (Who is involved? What does my file need to contain? When do I need to submit the file? When and how will I hear the outcome?)

What materials should I be gathering, producing, saving in anticipation of compiling a review file? What materials will be included by other people?

What is the relative importance of the evaluation criteria (i.e., teaching, research/scholarship, and service) in the tenure review? Is this relation different in a pre-tenure review?

Are there precise quantitative standards (e.g., one book, three peer-reviewed articles) for tenure? If not, what qualitative standards do the evaluation committees use?

What sorts of pre-tenure research support (e.g., guaranteed time off from teaching, conference funding, summer stipends, grant application support) are available for junior faculty?

Who will provide guidance and feedback along the way, and in what form? How will I know whether I am “on track” between formal reviews?

*Some more context-specific questions, or questions for later in the process:*

What weight are student evaluations given in determining teaching effectiveness? What other sorts of measures of teaching effectiveness are used?

How important are external grants in evaluating the quality of my research?

(How) are external letters solicited for tenure, and how much do they matter?

How are collaborative efforts (teaching or research) evaluated?

If I have an interdisciplinary or joint appointment, how are my review committees constituted? How are my contributions to different departments weighed?

Under what circumstances can the timeline to tenure be changed?

Can research on teaching (SOTL) “count” as part of my scholarship?