

**SIMPSON COLLEGE FACULTY HANDBOOK
PART VII: APPENDIX C**

GUIDELINES FOR MID-PROBATIONARY (THIRD-YEAR) REVIEW

The purpose of the mid-probationary review is to provide the candidate and the institution with an evaluation of her or his work midway to the tenure year. The review is conducted from the department's perspective, and the institution's perspective. The review is both formative and summative. A key purpose of the review is to provide the candidate with an objective assessment with regard to performance against the criteria established for tenure. By involving the FPC and the optional use of an off-campus evaluator, the third-year review is an opportunity for the candidate to become aware where he or she is succeeding against the criteria for tenure in time to address any outstanding issues before tenure, should it be necessary.

At the same time, a formal recommendation will also be made concerning reappointment for the following year. It should be noted that the mid-probationary review is not a mini-tenure review. It is a snapshot of the work of the candidate midway to the decision to tenure. The probationary period preceding tenure is just that, a probationary period when the tenure-track faculty member has the opportunity to establish herself or himself as teacher, advisor, professional within a discipline, and campus citizen. For this reason, during the six-year probationary period, the tenure-track faculty member is provided formative review each year. The third-year review is simply an annual reappointment review conducted on behalf of the full faculty and the institution. A recommendation to reappoint after the third year does not indicate a presumption to tenure.

The department is represented in the review by the department chair. The institution is represented by the division head and the Faculty Personnel Committee (FPC). The procedures for the mid-probationary review are outlined in Simpson College Faculty Handbook, Part III Personnel Procedures, Section 4. The following guidelines presume the review will take place in the third year of service. The timing of the review may be altered for faculty members who bring service at another institution to Simpson College as negotiated at the time of hire and outlined in the original contract.

SELECTION OF THE THIRD-YEAR REVIEW COMMITTEE

The composition and selection of the on campus review committee will follow the procedures outlined in Simpson College Faculty Handbook, Part III Personnel Procedures, Section 4. The chair of the third-year review committee will be a member of the FPC. The faculty member under review will provide the chair of the third-year review with the names of three Simpson College faculty members from outside the department, one of whom will be selected to serve on the review committee. The candidate will nominate faculty members she or he believes have some understanding of their professional discipline, and someone they believe can impartially review their work. Normally, the outside of the department committee member will be tenured. The role of the outside of the department member is not to serve as advocate for the candidate, but rather to be a trusted, objective participant in the review process.

The chair of the review committee will make the selection of the committee member from outside of the department. Before the committee membership has been finalized, the candidate will be given the opportunity to bring to the committee chair's (the member of the FPC) attention any real, or potential perceived conflict of interest.

SELECTION OF THE OFF-CAMPUS EVALUATOR

The selection process and expectations of the off-campus evaluator in the third-year review are outlined in Simpson College Faculty Handbook, Part III Personnel Procedures, Section 4. The faculty member under review will provide the chair of the third-year review committee the names of three possible off-campus evaluators. The prospective evaluators should be knowledgeable in the candidate's field and will normally come from a similar institution. The evaluator's role is to provide an impartial review of the candidate's work using the criteria established for tenure as described in the Simpson College Faculty Handbook. The off-campus evaluator also provides the perspective of someone well informed about the specific discipline of the candidate under review and as such may uniquely positioned to comment on the content of the courses taught by the candidate and the candidate's scholarship and other professional work.

The off-campus evaluator should not have a significant personal or professional relationship with the candidate. For example, the off-campus evaluator may have met the candidate casually at a professional conference or been on a panel with her, but they should not have conducted research together. The off-campus evaluator should be someone respected in the field who understands the challenges of being a faculty member at a place like Simpson College, but who doesn't need to be of national stature. The appropriate experience may come from being on the faculty of a similar small private college in Iowa or a surrounding state, or from previous experience at a place like Simpson College. Recognizing that new faculty may not have had the opportunity to develop professional colleagues outside of their graduate school mentors, it is expected that the department chair in her or his role as mentor to the candidate will discuss possible off-campus colleagues who may be approached to serve as off-campus evaluator. It is important that the candidate under review discloses the depth and nature of any previous relationship when presenting the chair of the committee with names for potential selection. It should be remembered that the reason to include the candidate in the process of selecting the off-campus evaluator is to make sure that the candidate feels comfortable with the person, believing that the individual is both knowledgeable and objective.

The actual invitation to the outside evaluator will be sent by the academic dean. The invitation will include the college's expectations for the review process, including a copy of the criteria for reappointment and tenure.

THE WORK OF THE OFF-CAMPUS EVALUATOR

The off-campus evaluator will normally be scheduled to visit campus for one or two days. Before the visit, the evaluator will receive a copy of the candidate's self-evaluation, vitae, and any other materials (publications, photos of creative work, etc.) approved by the chair of the committee.

The exact visit schedule will be determined by the chair of the review committee. Normally, the off-campus evaluator will

- a. meet with the candidate
- b. meet with the review committee
- c. attend at least one of the candidate's classes
- d. review the third-year file
- e. meet with other members of the department
- f. meet with the academic dean for one half-hour

Upon the conclusion of the visit, the off-campus evaluator will write a letter of evaluation of the candidate that addresses the criteria for reappointment and tenure. The letter should be essentially formative identifying areas of strength and areas of perceived weakness against the criteria. It will be particularly important for the outside evaluator to put the candidate's professional expertise and continuing development into context for the committee. Is the content in the candidate's courses appropriate and up-to-date? Are the assignments and learning objectives appropriate? Is there evidence that the candidate's research, scholarship, and/or creative work is respected by others within the discipline? The letter should not include a recommendation on reappointment.

The letter from the off-campus evaluator will be included in the candidate's review file.

THE REVIEW COMMITTEE'S LETTER

The procedures for the creation of the third-year review letter are outlined in Simpson College Faculty Handbook, Part III Personnel Procedures, Section 4. The committee's letter should be formative in nature and identify the perceived strengths and perceived weaknesses of the candidate as measured against the criteria for reappointment and tenure.

REAPPOINTMENT AFTER THE THIRD-YEAR REVIEW

The decision for reappointment for the year following the mid-probationary review is made by the academic dean upon the recommendation of the FPC following the procedures outlined in Simpson College Faculty Handbook, Part III Personnel Procedures, Section 4.

The reappointment process for subsequent years (normally for years five and six) will follow the procedures outlined in Simpson College Faculty Handbook, Part III Personnel Procedures, Section 2.