

# Tenure-Track Handbook



Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Harvard University  
2023-2024





## DEAN'S LETTER

Dear Colleagues,

As Edgerley Family Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), I am deeply committed to the FAS's tenure-track system. All of our tenure-track faculty have been appointed because you have the intellectual ability, creativity, and drive to be excellent candidates for promotion to associate professor and then to tenured professor here at Harvard. This handbook is one tool that will help you accomplish these goals. Each of you goes through the same formal system of reviews with the same general criteria. This handbook outlines each stage of the process. I hope it will make the system more transparent and easy to navigate. I encourage you to consult this handbook not only at the beginning of your appointment, but throughout your time at Harvard.

In 2020-2021, the FAS undertook a major review of its tenure-track system, focusing on reviews for promotion to associate professor and to tenured professor. In 2021-2022, FAS faculty discussed the recommendations that came out of that review. Implementation of measures has since then been underway, and the changes are reflected in this handbook.

Among other things, these measures recognize continuity between the second-year review, associate review, and tenure review; more clearly differentiate teaching, advising, and mentoring; encourage full and constructive feedback to tenure-track faculty after reviews; support consistency across departments/areas and divisions/SEAS; and promote tenured-faculty engagement with promotion reviews and with the development of their tenure-track colleagues in general.

The department chairs, the area chairs of the Harvard John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, the academic deans, and I are committed to supporting your intellectual and professional development. You are the future of this institution and an essential part of our very lively present. With my best wishes for your time on the tenure track and my many thanks for all the ways that you contribute to our institution,

Sincerely yours,

Claudine Gay



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## OVERVIEW

The organization of this handbook mirrors the stages of experience for tenure-track faculty. We begin with the initial appointment, turn next to the array of questions new tenure-track faculty members face, and then describe the various reviews experienced by tenure-track faculty.

Your experience as a tenure-track faculty member begins with the search that results in your appointment. Following the acceptance of your offer and the start of your first appointment, you are on the tenure track: a member of the ladder faculty. Throughout the course of your appointment, department chairs or SEAS area chairs and other senior colleagues at Harvard and elsewhere will help you to develop your career.

A few definitions, to begin:

**Assistant professorship:** a tenure-track appointment held by individuals who have the promise to produce scholarship and teaching of the highest quality and who have the potential to be competitive for a tenured position in the department within seven years.

**Associate professorship:** a tenure-track appointment held by individuals who have demonstrated sufficient promise and achievement to potentially qualify for tenure at Harvard within three to five years. Appointments to this rank are usually made by promotion from an assistant professorship, though they are occasionally made by external appointment.

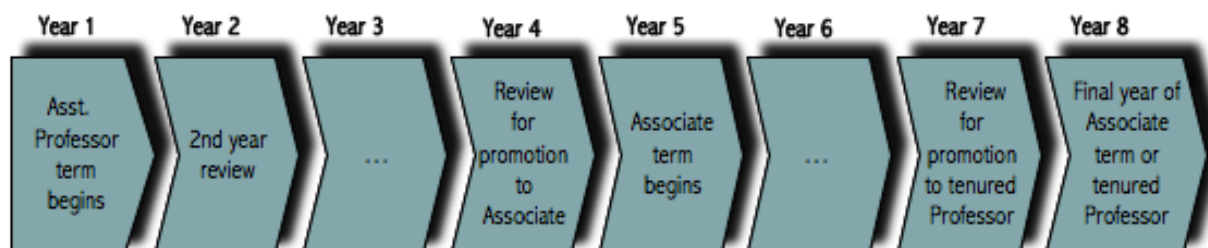
Note: These criteria for associate professor went into effect as of July 1, 2023, in keeping with the FAS's March 2022 [plan for implementing recommendations](#) from the FAS Tenure Track Review Committee (TTRC).

**Tenured professorship:** an appointment without limit of time at the rank of professor. Tenured faculty members are scholars of the first order of eminence who have demonstrated excellence in research, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship and who have the capacity to make significant and lasting contributions to the department(s)/SEAS areas proposing the appointment. Candidates for this position should evince scholarly achievement and impact on the field, intellectual leadership and creative accomplishment, teaching, advising, and mentoring effectiveness in a variety of settings with both undergraduate and graduate students (and, as appropriate, researchers), contributions to the University community and broader scholarly community, and potential for future accomplishments in all these realms.



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It may help to see a timeline of the course of your appointment. If your schedule does not include appointment extensions for medical leave (including childbirth), other personal reasons, or due to the Covid-19 pandemic (please see the Notes below), your appointment progresses as follows:<sup>1</sup>



We encourage you to review the materials that follow, both at the beginning of your appointment and then again as you progress through the steps of reviews and promotions. Any questions about these materials can be addressed to your department chair or SEAS area chair, your department administrator (or, in SEAS, the Director for Academic Area Support), the assistant dean for faculty affairs for your division or for SEAS, or your divisional dean or the John A. Paulson Dean of SEAS. The FAS Office for Faculty Affairs and the Office of the Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Diversity are also good sources of information and welcome your questions and feedback.

Note: With the significant disruptions to professional life resulting from the COVID-19 crisis, the FAS instituted in Spring 2020 a policy of extensions, allowing then-current tenure-track faculty the option of extending their appointment and postponing their promotion review for one semester or a year, depending on their eligibility. Similarly, FAS faculty whose appointments began in the fall term of 2020 were offered the option to extend their initial appointment by one year. In Spring 2021, recognizing the ongoing impact of COVID-19, the FAS encouraged any interested tenure-track faculty to contact their divisional dean/SEAS Dean if they wished to request an additional year of appointment and tenure-clock extension, for reasons of significant professional and/or personal disruption due to the pandemic. In January 2022, given the continuing impact of the pandemic, the FAS provided the option of a third appointment extension, for any interested tenure-track faculty who have not yet had their review for promotion to tenure and who feel that an extension would help them to address Covid-related impacts on their professional lives.

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<sup>1</sup> Tenure-track faculty are hired into one five-year term as an assistant professor. When an assistant professor is promoted to an associate professor in his/her/their penultimate year, the first year of the associate term supersedes the last year of the assistant term.



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In addition, the FAS stated in Spring 2021 that it will grant relief from teaching one course for any interested tenure-track colleagues (regardless of dependent-care circumstances) who were on the FAS tenure-track during the 2020-21 academic year and who teach in departments/areas that have a typical teaching load of two courses or more per year. These eligible tenure-track faculty can take this course relief any time before they come up for tenure.

Moreover, effective July 1, 2023, tenure-track faculty who take a medical leave lasting eight weeks or longer (including medical leave associated with childbirth) will have the option to take a one-year extension to their current appointment as well. During this one-year extension, the faculty member would be eligible for one semester of teaching relief. (For more information, please see Chapter 3H, “Other Leaves (Family [including Parental], Medical, and Personal) and Extensions.”)

For more information on how internal and external evaluators take into account these COVID-related measures (as well as appointment extensions due to medical or parental leave) during reviews for promotion to associate professor or promotion to tenure, please see the relevant sections of the *Tenure-Track Handbook* below. In particular, evaluators are instructed not to penalize tenure-track faculty for receiving such appointment extensions and/or teaching relief. In addition, this *Handbook* provides specific language that tenure-track faculty may include in their c.v.’s, if they wish, noting these FAS measures.

Note: As the COVID-19 pandemic and associated FAS precautions continue to run their course, please seek guidance from your department/area or division/SEAS if you have any questions. Some statements in the AY 2023-2024 *Tenure-Track Handbook* may be affected as circumstances change.



## START-UP ISSUES

You should retain a copy of your offer letter in an accessible place. Your offer letter is the official record of the University's commitment to you. There should be no confusion about the elements of the offer letter. If you have questions of interpretation, please contact your department chair or SEAS area chair or the Office for Faculty Development.

In the first summer after your appointment, you should attend the New Faculty Institute. This two-day program is designed to help ease your transition to the tenure-track faculty at Harvard by providing an introduction to teaching, advising, and mentoring students at Harvard, developing your research, balancing research and non-research work, your own mentoring and career development, and Title IX basics. We strongly recommend that you attend, not just for the content, but also for the professional connections and friendships that you will forge with your newly appointed colleagues.

If you need to set up a laboratory, you should work closely with your department administrator (or, in SEAS, the Director for Academic Area Support) and the sponsored-research staff to access start-up funds as necessary (in some cases even before your appointment begins) and to transfer any grants you may already have to Harvard. The [Office of Physical Resources and Planning](#) or [SEAS Office of Campus Planning and Design](#) will work closely with you to design and set up your office and laboratory space, and departmental staff will help you purchase equipment for your lab.

If your research and teaching interests overlap with those of one or more of the centers or standing committees at Harvard, you should feel free to reach out to them and draw upon their professional connections and resources. The Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs who works with tenure-track faculty can introduce you to the relevant colleagues.

While you are navigating your first year at Harvard, we urge you to remember the personal side of your life. Harvard, Boston, and New England offer a plethora of intellectual, cultural, artistic, athletic, gastronomic, and other opportunities for individuals and families that can provide a break from the routines of academic life.





## QUESTIONS TO ASK AND WHOM TO ASK

In your first year at Harvard, it will be important to get to know “the lay of the land” so that you can obtain answers to questions quickly and maximize your productivity. For example, you should learn how to buy equipment cost-effectively, strategically apply for external leave funding, and both name and schedule your classes to maximize enrollments. Department administrators (or, in SEAS, the Director for Academic Area Support), department chairs or SEAS area chairs, and colleagues all can help you in these efforts.

**Department Administrators or, in SEAS, the Director for Academic Area Support:** the first line of defense for general questions regarding day-to-day operations, staff support, and office basics (including, as relevant, furniture, supplies, and computers). In those instances in which they do not know the answer to your queries, they are adept at directing you to the appropriate person or office.

**Department Chair or SEAS Area Chair:** the source for formal advice on preparing for reviews and understanding promotion criteria, including scholarship, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship, as well as other policy and planning issues such as the timing of leaves.

**Colleagues/Mentors:** a resource for advice on research, the writing and planning of grant proposals and publications, what meetings or conferences to attend and how often, best practices for teaching, advising, and mentoring (including working with graduate students and researchers), and the management of relationships in the workplace (including with staff).

In addition, there are many others, both within and outside your department, who can provide valuable information. For example, the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) or the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) in your department can address questions about working with undergraduates and graduate students. The [Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning](#) and the [Office of Undergraduate Education](#) are great resources for formulating teaching strategies and answering other course-related issues. The table on the next page lists other resources for frequently asked questions.





## QUESTIONS TO ASK AND WHOM TO ASK

Issues	Resource & website links
Policies and procedures for reviews and promotions	If, at any point, you have questions or concerns about any part of the tenure-track process, please feel free to contact the <a href="#">Assistant Dean for Faculty Affairs</a> in your division/SEAS
Leave policies and eligibility (including leave for new parents, teaching relief, and appointment extensions)	The <a href="#">Assistant Dean for Faculty Affairs</a> in your division/SEAS
Mentoring of tenure-track faculty and professional development networks	Departmental/area point-person or committee in charge of mentoring; Divisional Deans/John A. Paulson Dean of SEAS; Standing Committee on Women
Teaching, advising, and mentoring of students (and, as appropriate, researchers)	<a href="#">Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning</a> ; <a href="#">Office of Undergraduate Education</a> ; <a href="#">Advising Programs Office</a> ; <a href="#">GSAS Advising Project</a> ; faculty colleagues/mentors
Research/Grants	Departmental Grants Administrator; <a href="#">FAS Research Administration Services</a> ; <a href="#">FAS Office of Finance</a> ; <a href="#">SEAS Research Administration Office</a> ; <a href="#">FAS Committee on the Use of Human Subjects</a>
Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Professional Conduct	FAS Title IX Resource Coordinators for matters concerning FAS faculty: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seth Avakian (<a href="mailto:avakian@fas.harvard.edu">avakian@fas.harvard.edu</a>, 617-495-9583)</li> <li>Danielle Farrell (<a href="mailto:farrell@fas.harvard.edu">farrell@fas.harvard.edu</a>, 617-495-0321)</li> <li>Johannah Park (<a href="mailto:jpark@fas.harvard.edu">jpark@fas.harvard.edu</a>, 617-495-9892)</li> <li>Kwok Yu (<a href="mailto:kwok_yu@harvard.edu">kwok_yu@harvard.edu</a>, 617-495-7483)</li> </ul>



## SECOND-YEAR REVIEW

Your second-year review is an informal assessment of your progress to date in research, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship. Your department or SEAS area conducts the review in the manner it finds most productive. The review is not an externally oriented assessment and is conducted only with reference to the opinions of your internal senior colleagues. Ordinarily, a small committee of your senior colleagues conducts the review.

Materials you are asked to submit include: a current *curriculum vitae*, with a list of any undergraduate and graduate student advisees and mentees (and postdoctoral advisees and mentees, as relevant, including those who moved to another research group)—informal advisees/mentees may also be included; copies of publications, including forthcoming and works-in-progress (or in art-making fields, copies, as appropriate, of creative works); a research statement, which succinctly summarizes the work you have accomplished, the impact you are having in your field, and your future research goals; a teaching/advising/mentoring statement (see below for more information); and a service/citizenship statement that reflects on any committee work or administrative work to date, your aspirations for contributions in this realm, and how you have contributed to diversity, inclusion, and belonging in all areas of your professional life, both to date and with regard to your future plans.

In addition, effective July 1, 2023, second-year reviews of assistant professors and externally appointed associate professors include peer observation of your teaching. This is a form of professional development and mentoring. The peer observation process is described in this memo, ["Peer Observation of Teaching in 2nd-Year Reviews."](#)

As the memo notes, member(s) of your second-year review committee complete peer-observation training at the Bok Center for Teaching and Learning. Peer observation then typically consists of 3 parts:

- “Pre-observation” conversation. The observer(s) meet with you prior to the observation to discuss your teaching approach and goals and come to a shared understanding of what to expect during the class session to be observed.
- Observation. Peer observation should take place in person; observers should not observe a taped version of the class.
- “Post-observation” meeting. The observer(s) and you, usually accompanied by a Bok Center facilitator, debrief on the class and discuss feedback. Faculty are encouraged to include a Bok Center facilitator, who can share pedagogical best practices and resources.

After the “post-observation” meeting, the observer(s) prepare a feedback letter and sends it to you and the 2nd-year review committee, so that the review committee can review it and incorporate it



## SECOND-YEAR REVIEW

into their overall 2nd-year assessment. The feedback letter on teaching summarizes your strengths and areas for improvement in teaching and offers concrete suggestions for how you can continue to develop as a teacher.

In addition to peer observation of your teaching, the department is also encouraged to informally gather feedback on your advising and mentoring.<sup>2</sup>

At the conclusion of the second-year review, your department chair or SEAS area chair will have a conversation with you about your progress, discuss your strengths and possible areas to work on, and offer specific advice. The FAS encourages departments to provide both positive feedback and concrete suggestions for how tenure-track faculty can improve and heighten their impact in research, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship. After this conversation, you will also receive a summary of the review in a letter from your chair. This letter is first reviewed by your divisional dean/SEAS Dean to ensure that the department/area is providing you with useful feedback.

The second-year review is the first of potentially three reviews in an assistant professor's time at Harvard.<sup>3</sup> As such, this review is an opportunity for you and your departmental/area mentor(s) and department/area chair to begin thinking together about elements that are common to all of the reviews and in relation to which your efforts will continuously build over the next several years.

You and departmental/area colleagues who are participating in the second-year review are encouraged to discuss together how to articulate your field. (Please see the next section in this handbook, "Review for Promotion to Associate Professor," for more on field definition.) You should all also assess and discuss, for your ongoing development, how you can heighten your impact in research, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship.

Your second-year review provides a good opportunity to initiate conversations with members of your mentoring and professional development networks, for additional advice about how to best invest your energy, develop your research portfolio, develop your skills as a teacher, advisor, and mentor, and become a contributing citizen of the FAS and the University.

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<sup>2</sup> Externally appointed associate professors with five-year terms also undergo a second-year review. In addition to the review materials described above for second-year reviews of assistant professors, confidential feedback on externally appointed associate professors' advising and mentoring is formally gathered by the department chair (or the chair's designee) from the associate professor's current and former undergraduates, graduate students (and, as relevant, postdoctoral fellows, including those who have moved to another research group).

<sup>3</sup> If you are an externally appointed associate professor, the second-year review is the first of potentially two reviews, with the second review being the review for promotion to tenured professor.



## SECOND-YEAR REVIEW

### Teaching, Advising, and Mentoring

As the terms “teaching,” “advising,” and “mentoring” are used throughout this handbook, here is what the FAS means by these terms for the purposes of 2<sup>nd</sup>-year reviews and reviews for promotion to associate professor or to tenured professor. The FAS recognizes that teaching, advising, and mentoring can be defined in many other ways outside these contexts.

- **Teaching:** refers to classroom teaching of undergraduates and graduate students.
- **Advising:** refers to the many ways that faculty provide intellectual guidance to undergraduates and graduate students outside of the classroom, and to postdocs. This includes, and is not limited to, such things as (for undergraduates) senior thesis advising or concentration advising and (for graduate students) dissertation advising, advising on Ph.D. oral exams, etc.
- **Mentoring:** in contrast to the intellectual advising described above, refers to faculty efforts to support the professional development and career development of undergraduate students, graduate students, TFs, and postdoctoral fellows.

The FAS endorses a *developmental* view of tenure-track faculty members’ teaching, advising, and mentoring—that these activities are learned over time, and as important as “achievements” in these areas are the effort, thoughtfulness, and willingness to improve that a faculty member demonstrates. The FAS encourages departments to take an expansive view of all the different ways that people can contribute to the teaching, advising, and mentoring missions. Faculty have different strengths and inclinations and contribute to these missions in different ways.

Thus, in your teaching/advising/mentoring statement, you are encouraged to not only provide a brief summary of your teaching so far and any advising and mentoring work you did with undergraduate and graduate students, TFs, and postdoctoral fellows, but to also assess and reflect on your efforts in teaching, advising, and mentoring, including aspects of your professional progression and on how you are addressing any areas of concern.

Regarding the courses you teach, teaching portfolios should contain different types of courses to show that you can contribute to a range of teaching needs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The courses should span a range of formats such as (and without needing to be all-inclusive) seminars, lectures in introductory courses, required courses, and electives. However, portfolios should not be so broad as to prohibit faculty from teaching a course more than once, as teaching a course multiple times can help to show the trajectory of a faculty member’s development.



## PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Your review for promotion to associate professor (which is an untenured rank at Harvard) ordinarily occurs during the penultimate year of your appointment as an assistant professor.<sup>4</sup> During the review process, the department or SEAS area will assemble a dossier – including external evaluations – of your work. After carefully reviewing your dossier, the department/SEAS area will assess your research; teaching, advising, and mentoring of undergraduates, graduate students (and, as relevant, postdoctoral fellows); and service/citizenship, and will make a recommendation to the divisional dean/SEAS Dean based on the following criteria: whether you have demonstrated sufficient promise and achievement to potentially qualify for tenure at Harvard within three to five years.<sup>5</sup> The divisional dean/SEAS Dean closely monitors the process to ensure that it is fair and consistent with FAS policies. Your associate review is a rigorous process that you should take seriously, even though the majority of assistant professors are successfully promoted. It is the first opportunity to gather formal feedback from scholars outside of Harvard and will help guide you to focus on specific areas as you move forward to your tenure review.

As a general principle in promotion reviews for tenure-track faculty, there is no formula at the FAS for the relative weights of research, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship in promotion decisions. The FAS is looking for high-impact contributions in each of these areas, and “impact” can take many forms.

As noted in the “Overview” section of this *Tenure-Track Handbook*, in 2020, 2021, and 2022 the FAS instituted policies granting appointment extensions and one-time teaching relief for eligible tenure-track faculty, due to the significant disruptions to professional life resulting from the COVID-19 crisis. The FAS also grants one-year appointment extensions to eligible tenure-track faculty due to the birth, adoption, or foster-placement of a child.

Moreover, effective July 1, 2023, tenure-track faculty who take a medical leave lasting eight weeks or longer (including medical leave associated with childbirth) will have the option to take a one-year extension to their current appointment as well. During this one-year extension, the faculty member would be eligible for one semester of teaching relief. (For more information, please see Chapter 3H in the FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook, “Other Leaves (Family [including Parental], Medical, and Personal) and Extensions.”)

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<sup>4</sup> Assistant professors with calendar-year appointments (appointments that end on December 31 in a future year) ordinarily follow a review timetable based on the calendar year. This timing is described in the footnotes.

<sup>5</sup> As noted in the “Overview” section of this handbook, these criteria for appointment to associate professors went into effect as of July 1, 2023. Prior to July 1, 2023 the criteria were, “An associate professorship is a tenure-track appointment held by individuals who have demonstrated sufficient promise and achievement to qualify for tenure at a major research institution within three to five years.”



## PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Internal and external evaluators in associate reviews should evaluate candidates by using the standard criteria for associate professor provided above. Evaluators should assess a faculty member's aggregated scholarship, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship without any penalty if the faculty member received teaching relief and/or appointment extension(s) due to the pandemic, medical, or parental leave. For example, if a candidate for promotion to associate professor was given a one-year clock extension and thus came up for associate promotion in the fifth (rather than the ordinary fourth) year after their initial appointment date, their body of work should be evaluated as if they had had four years to work towards associate promotion. Similarly, and for example, if a tenure-track faculty member was given one course of teaching relief, they should be evaluated for associate promotion as if they had taught the course for which they received relief. Clock extensions and teaching relief related to the pandemic, medical leave, or parental leave should not be counted against candidates in any way.

### The Associate Review Process

Note: SEAS follows the same policies as the FAS divisions in reviews for promotion to associate professor. Because SEAS has its own organizational structure as a School within the FAS, the SEAS individuals who perform associate-review tasks differ at times from the individuals specified in the process below. Please see the "Note" on page 21 for more information on SEAS process. You may also consult SEAS for further information.

Below we describe the process for promotion (and the relevant individuals in the FAS divisions). Each step is described in detail directly following the outline.

- (1) **Promotion Dossier:** Proximate to July 1<sup>6</sup> of your penultimate year as an assistant professor, your divisional assistant dean sends you a letter informing you that July 1 is the official start of your review, that you should meet with your department chair to discuss the review process and any questions you may have about the materials needed for the review, that your dossier materials are due by September 1 (or the next business day, as appropriate), and that the *FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook* contains further information. You should contact your chair to schedule a meeting to occur in July.
- (2) **Committee Review:** Your chair appoints a committee to review your dossier and recommend to the department whether to proceed further with the evaluation.

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<sup>6</sup> For calendar-year appointees, your divisional assistant dean sends you this letter proximate to January 1, and your dossier materials are due by March 1 (or the next business day, as appropriate). You should contact your chair to schedule a meeting to occur in January.



## PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

- (3) **Evaluative Letters:** Your chair sends out requests for “arm’s length” external letters, which assess your scholarly and other achievements and are included in your dossier. Optionally, the department may also solicit letters from collaborators and mentors.
- (4) **Departmental Vote:** Your committee shares the dossier and its evaluation with the department. After a discussion, the department votes on whether to recommend promotion.
- (5) **Decanal Review:** In the case of an affirmative vote by the department, the divisional dean with an FAS Committee on Appointments and Promotions (CAP) subcommittee review your case and decide on the final outcome. In some cases, the entire CAP may review the dossier and advise the Edgerley Family Dean on the outcome.
- (6) **Review Summary:** Your department gives you a letter summarizing feedback from the review. Further feedback is provided at an in-person meeting with you, the review committee chair, the department chair, and your formal mentor. (If, at any point in the process, the department decides not to proceed with your review, the divisional dean must still review the department’s decision and the reasons behind it.)

(1) **Promotion Dossier:** Proximate to July 1<sup>7</sup> of your penultimate year as an assistant professor, your divisional assistant dean sends you a letter informing you that July 1 is the official start of your review, that you should meet with your department chair to discuss the review process and any questions you may have about the materials needed for the review, that your dossier materials are due by September 1 (or the next business day, if September 1 falls on a weekend or a holiday), and that the *FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook* contains further information. You should contact your chair to schedule a meeting to occur in July. This letter also informs you that September 1 (or the next business day, as appropriate) is the deadline for eligible tenure-track faculty to notify their divisional/SEAS assistant dean that, due to the pending birth or adoption of a child, they would like to receive the FAS’s automatic one-year appointment extension and review postponement that are granted to expecting parents. In particular, expecting parents whose birth- or adoption-date falls no later than one month after their dossier-materials deadline must notify their divisional/SEAS assistant dean by the dossier-materials deadline that they wish to have this automatic appointment extension and review postponement. For information on this policy, please see Chapter 3.H.3 in the [FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook](#) (i.e., the sub-section titled, “For Tenure-Track Faculty: Childcare Appointment Extension and Postponement of Review Policies”).

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<sup>7</sup> For calendar-year appointees, your divisional assistant dean sends you this letter proximate to January 1, and your dossier materials are due by March 1 (or the next business day, if March 1 falls on a weekend or a holiday). You should contact your chair to schedule a meeting to occur in January. March 1 (or the next business day, as appropriate) is also the deadline for eligible tenure-track faculty who are expecting parents to notify their assistant dean that they would like to receive the FAS’s automatic one-year appointment extension and review postponement.





## PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

By September 1,<sup>8</sup> you should submit the following materials to your department to be included in your dossier:

- **A *curriculum vitae*, including a complete bibliography.** Note: Candidates who opted in Spring 2020, Spring 2021, and/or Spring 2022 for an extension of their associate review clock due to the COVID-19 pandemic and/or parental leave and/or have thereafter extended their clock due to medical leave and/or parental leave, may include the following language in their c.v.s, if they wish: “Harvard’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences grants appointment extensions and teaching relief to tenure-track faculty, in keeping with its policies related to the COVID-19 pandemic, medical leave, and parental leave. Accordingly, Harvard delayed my associate review by [INSERT NUMBER OF YEARS OR, IF LESS THAN ONE YEAR, NUMBER OF MONTHS] [INCLUDE IF APPROPRIATE: and gave me [INSERT NUMBER] course[s] of teaching relief].”
- **Copies of all of your publications (including any that are forthcoming) or other scholarly materials. In art-making fields, copies, as appropriate, of all creative works.**
- **Teaching, advising, and mentoring:**
  - Please see the “Second-Year Review” section of this handbook, for a discussion of: what “teaching,” “advising,” and “mentoring” mean at the FAS for the purposes of promotion reviews; a developmental view of these activities; and teaching portfolios.
  - **Teaching/advising/mentoring statement:** Just as the department will provide a summary teaching chart listing all the courses in your teaching portfolio (see more on the summary teaching chart, following this list of candidate-submitted materials), similarly, please provide in your teaching/advising/mentoring statement a summary description of the advising and mentoring work you did with undergraduate and graduate students, TFs, and postdoctoral fellows.

You should not just describe, but also assess and reflect on your efforts in teaching, advising, and mentoring. Because the FAS takes a developmental view of teaching, advising, and mentoring, you should reflect on aspects of your professional progression and on how you have addressed any areas of concern. In the statement, you may discuss:

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<sup>8</sup> By March 1, for calendar-year appointees.



## PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

- ✓ your philosophy/approach to teaching, advising, and mentoring
- ✓ how you define effectiveness in each of these areas, and the methods and approaches you use to achieve these
- ✓ your reasoning and process in forming your teaching portfolio
- ✓ how you engage with students, advisees, and mentees at various levels (e.g., first-years, concentrators, graduate students, TFs, postdoctoral fellows)
- ✓ any challenges you faced and any modifications made to courses, teaching, advising, and mentoring in response to feedback
- ✓ any ways you have actively worked to improve your teaching, advising, or mentoring

Given the often interconnected nature of teaching, advising, and mentoring individuals, you are not obligated to discuss these three topics in rigid separation from, and in sequence with, each other. However, regardless of how you organize your statement, your discussion should still clearly maintain the distinctions between these activities, as noted in the definitions above.

- **Teaching, advising, and mentoring materials:** This includes teaching awards, representative course syllabi, and a list of past and present undergraduate, graduate, and (as relevant) postdoctoral advisees and mentees (including those who have moved to another research group). You may include informal advisees and mentees.
- **A research statement,** which succinctly summarizes the work you have accomplished, articulates the impact you have had on your field, and lays out your future research goals.
  - How you define your field, in your research statement and in other contexts, is important. In associate reviews, the field definition affects who the external letter writers are and how your case is viewed. The field definition should be sufficiently broad that your impact beyond your own specialization can be determined. For instance, the field definition may situate your area of specialization within a broader field; or the definition may speak to the “Venn diagram” of your impact, i.e., not only the immediate subfield in which your work, but the adjacent subfields and fields affected by this work.

You may find it helpful to work with departmental colleagues over time (ideally from the second-year review onward, and certainly when you are actively preparing for the associate review), to understand and clearly articulate a definition of your field.



## PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Talking with your colleagues over time also helps to disseminate in the department an understanding of your work and the impact you are having on your field.<sup>9</sup>

- **A service/citizenship statement** that reflects on your committee work and administrative work, as appropriate, as well as how you have contributed to diversity, inclusion, and belonging in all areas of your professional life, both to date and with regard to your future plans.
- **A statement addressing overlap in publications and joint authorship.** This statement should make clear: 1) In book fields, in what specific instances your publications are partial or significant reiterations of scholarship covered in others of your publications (such as articles), and 2) In all fields, in jointly-authored publications, what your unique scholarly contribution was. The purpose of this statement is to provide a clearer picture of your body of work and, where applicable, the nature of your collaborations with others.
- **As applicable, a list of current and pending funding.**

You may also include a list of outside scholars whom you would like the department to contact for letters of evaluations and/or a list of scholars whom you feel should not be consulted, with an accompanying explanation. (If you prefer, you may provide this explanatory information to the department chair. You may also consult with the assistant dean.) The department chair will consider carefully how best to take this information into account when developing the list of external reviewers.

To round out the materials in your dossier, the department will add a summary teaching chart, which lists all of the courses you have taught since the beginning of your appointment at Harvard, as well as the enrollments and the Q scores for each course. To gather feedback on your advising and mentoring, your chair (or their designee) will also write to current and former undergraduates, graduate students, and, as relevant, postdoctoral fellows, including those who have moved to another research group. This list may also include informal advisees/mentees designated by you. Please note that you should not solicit letters from your students (or postdocs) yourself, as this may put them in an awkward position.

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<sup>9</sup> Your department may take into consideration how you define your field when they put together the materials for your dossier, but they can change it as they deem appropriate.



## PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

In addition to the materials above, the committee will review the feedback letter that you received after your second-year review as an assistant professor. This letter provides a fuller context for understanding how you have developed and the mentoring you received.

In preparing for your review, you should keep the promotion timeline in mind. For example, you may wish to time the submission of important manuscripts so that peer review occurs before your penultimate year as an assistant professor. Because your associate review includes external evaluations, it is important to be known in your field. You should present your work at seminars organized by other universities and at national and international conferences. It may be helpful to consult with your senior colleagues about what types of conferences to attend and how much time to dedicate to such activities. You might also wish to share and discuss your work with non-Harvard colleagues, to make sure that relevant outside scholars are familiar with your research.

(2) **Committee Review:** Your chair will appoint a review committee consisting of tenured faculty colleagues from your department and, as appropriate, from other departments. The composition of the review committee must be authorized by the divisional dean to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest and that it is sufficiently representative. This committee evaluates your materials. (If you are a member of any undergraduate degree/curricular standing committees, the review committee chair should seek an evaluation from the chair(s) of those committees, which will be included in the review committee's consideration of your case.)

If, after preliminary review of your materials (and **before** sending the case to the department for initial review), the review committee wishes to seek clarification from you on aspects of your materials, the department chair is permitted to send you written questions on behalf of the review committee, with a date by which you should send written answers back to the department chair. Questions should be limited to matters that the review committee deems essential to clarify. The review committee's questions and your response will become part of the final dossier. The review committee is under no obligation to seek clarification from you on your materials.

After evaluating your materials, the review committee makes a recommendation to the department as to whether to continue with the review. The department discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the case and decides whether the case warrants further review. If the department votes not to proceed, the divisional dean must approve the decision. The chair will then meet with you to



## PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

discuss that decision; you will also receive a letter, which will have been reviewed by the divisional dean, documenting the outcome.<sup>10</sup>

(3) **Evaluative Letters:** If, as is most common, the department decides to proceed with the review, the chair will send out requests for letters from “arm’s length” external scholars to assess your scholarly and other achievements. “Arm’s length” means that the evaluator is not a past or present advisor, mentor, collaborator, co-teacher, or other role in close relationship to you, as assessed by the divisional dean/SEAS Dean’s office. Associate promotion dossiers must include a minimum of five arm’s length letters from external reviewers. In addition to the required arm’s length letters, the department has the option of soliciting letters from past or present collaborators or mentors.

All reviewers, whether external letter writers or collaborators/mentors, are asked to make a recommendation about your promotion using the following benchmark: whether you have demonstrated sufficient promise and achievement to potentially qualify for tenure at Harvard within three to five years.<sup>11</sup> The chair usually sends requests to letter writers in early November,<sup>12</sup> asking for responses by January. Before the chair sends out these requests for letters, both the letters making the requests and the list of recipients must be reviewed by the divisional dean. It is expected that the recipient list will be diverse, including gender and racial/ethnic diversity, and that it will reflect an appropriately broad definition of the field. (To see sample letters to either external reviewers or collaborator/mentors, please see the *FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook*: <http://academic-appointments.fas.harvard.edu/>.)

(4) **Departmental Vote:** After the committee receives all of the evaluative letters, it reports back to the department regarding its findings. The tenured members of your department then meet for an in-depth, rigorous discussion of your case, followed by a vote on your case. This process usually takes place in February to early March<sup>13</sup> because your completed dossier is due at the Office for Faculty Affairs by (in AY 2023-2024) March 22, 2024. A favorable vote does not have to be unanimous but must comprise affirmative votes by a significant majority of the tenured faculty in the department. If the vote is positive, the department chair, together with the chair of the review committee, writes a case statement for your dossier that includes, among other things, a

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<sup>10</sup> Note: When a candidate opts, at any stage in the process, to withdraw his/her/their case from consideration, a departmental vote does not occur. Candidates wishing to withdraw their case should state this in a letter to the department chair, which the chair shares with the divisional dean.

<sup>11</sup> While most departments do not include a comparison list of external scholars in these letters, it is the standard practice in some FAS departments and in SEAS to include a comparison list.

<sup>12</sup> In early May, with a request for responses by August, for calendar-year appointees.

<sup>13</sup> In September, for calendar-year appointees, with completed dossiers due by October 1 (or the next business day, if October 1 falls on a weekend or a holiday).



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description of your field, a summary of the departmental review process, an evaluation of your impact in research, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship, and a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the case. The completed dossier is forwarded to the divisional dean for review along with a draft of your associate professor appointment letter. This letter summarizes feedback from the review regarding research, teaching, advising, mentoring, service/citizenship, and continuing professional development and offers constructive advice about possible ways to strengthen your record as you move towards your tenure review. If the department votes against your promotion, then the chair must explain this decision to the divisional dean. The chair will then meet with you to discuss the decision. In this case, you will also receive a letter, which will have been reviewed by the divisional dean, documenting the outcome.

(5) **Decanal Review:** If your department votes to recommend promotion to associate professor, then your dossier will be reviewed by the divisional dean with an FAS Committee on Appointments and Promotions (CAP) subcommittee. The members of CAP include such leaders as the Edgerley Family Dean of the FAS, all of the divisional deans and the John A. Paulson Dean of SEAS, the Danoff Dean of Harvard College, the Dean of the Harvard Kenneth C. Griffin Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS), the Dean for Faculty Affairs and Planning, the Dean of Undergraduate Education, the Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Development, and one additional senior faculty member from each division and SEAS. The divisional dean and the CAP subcommittee evaluate the quality and quantity of scholarship, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship and provide specific feedback to the chair on the draft appointment letter included in the dossier. If the reviewers feel there are issues that warrant further discussion, the full CAP will be asked to discuss the dossier and the appropriate feedback to the chair on the appointment letter. Each year, at least a few dossiers for promotion to associate professor are reviewed by CAP. This additional step does not mean that the promotions will not be successful, but rather indicates that they would benefit from further review by a broader committee.

(6) **Review Summary:** The associate professor appointment letter you receive from the department chair upon promotion is the formal record of the feedback and advice resulting from the review. The FAS encourages departments to provide both positive feedback, as appropriate, and candid, constructive suggestions on possible ways to heighten your impact in research, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship. The goal is to make the letter as useful as possible, to help you to effectively prepare for your tenure review. Letters may also include views offered by the external letter writers or any collaborator/mentor letter writers (without attribution, to maintain confidentiality). Quotations from those letters may be included, as long as doing so does not reveal the authors' identities. If you eventually stand for tenure, this feedback letter from the department will also be read by the committee conducting your tenure review, to give them additional context for understanding how you have developed and the mentoring you received.



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After your review, you should have an in-person meeting with your review committee chair, department chair, and your formal mentor, to discuss the feedback provided in the letter, and the assessment of your prospects for tenure. The purpose of this group meeting is not only to provide you with helpful feedback, but also to ensure that these key individuals hear each others' feedback and your comments, so that everyone is on the same page. Sometimes tenure-track faculty feel that they are receiving conflicting advice from different sources. This meeting is one way to mitigate that effect. You may also wish to speak with other colleagues in the department who have been promoted to associate professor to discuss how they have chosen to follow up on their reviews. Further details about the process for associate reviews can be found in the *FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook* at <http://academic-appointments.fas.harvard.edu/>.<sup>14</sup>

**Note:** As mentioned earlier, some of the tasks in associate reviews are performed by different individuals in, respectively, SEAS and the FAS divisions. Specifically:

- In SEAS, the John A. Paulson Dean of SEAS appoints the review committee.
- The SEAS review committee chair prepares and signs the final case statement.

Please consult SEAS for more details on SEAS procedures.

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<sup>14</sup> Please note that the six steps discussed above are broken down further into 15 steps in the *FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook* for administrative purposes.





## PROMOTION TO TENURE

Your review for promotion to professor (the only tenured rank at Harvard) ordinarily occurs during the penultimate year of your appointment as associate professor.<sup>15</sup> As the *FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook* notes, “Tenured professorial appointments are reserved for scholars of the first order of eminence who have demonstrated excellence in research, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship and who have the capacity to make significant and lasting contributions to the department(s) proposing the appointment. Candidates for this position should evince scholarly achievement and impact on the field, intellectual leadership and creative accomplishment, teaching, advising, and mentoring effectiveness in a variety of settings with both undergraduate and graduate students (and, as appropriate, researchers), contributions to the University community and broader scholarly community, and potential for future accomplishments in all these realms.”<sup>16</sup>

As mentioned in the “Promotion to Associate Professor” section of this handbook, as a general principle in promotion reviews for tenure-track faculty, there is no formula at the FAS for the relative weights of research, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship in promotion decisions. The FAS is looking for high-impact contributions in each of these areas, and “impact” can take many forms.

As noted in the “Overview” section of this *Tenure-Track Handbook*, in 2020, 2021, and 2022 the FAS instituted policies granting appointment extensions and one-time teaching relief for eligible tenure-track faculty, due to the significant disruptions to professional life resulting from the COVID-19 crisis. The FAS also grants one-year appointment extensions to eligible tenure-track faculty due to the birth, adoption, or foster-placement of a child.

Moreover, effective July 1, 2023, tenure-track faculty who take a medical leave lasting eight weeks or longer (including medical leave associated with childbirth) will have the option to take a one-year extension to their current appointment as well. During this one-year extension, the faculty member would be eligible for one semester of teaching relief. (For more information, please see Chapter 3H in the FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook, “Other Leaves (Family [including Parental], Medical, and Personal) and Extensions.”)

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<sup>15</sup> Associate professors with calendar-year appointments (appointments that end on December 31 in a future year) ordinarily follow a review timetable based on the calendar year. This timing is described in the footnotes.

<sup>16</sup> Note: If you choose to undergo a review for promotion to tenure at an earlier time than in the ordinary timetable for tenure reviews, and if that early review is unsuccessful, your tenure-track appointment will end one year after the tenure review occurred, superseding the original end-date of the tenure-track appointment.



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Internal and external evaluators in tenure reviews should evaluate candidates by using the standard criteria for tenure provided above. Evaluators should assess a faculty member's aggregated scholarship, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship without any penalty if the faculty member received teaching relief and/or appointment extension(s) due to the pandemic, medical, or parental leave. For example, if a candidate for tenure was given a one-year clock extension and thus came up for tenure in the eighth (rather than the ordinary seventh) year after their initial appointment date, their body of work should be evaluated as if they had had seven years to work towards tenure. Similarly, and for example, if a tenure-track faculty member was given one course of teaching relief, they should be evaluated for tenure as if they had taught the course for which they received relief. Clock extensions and teaching relief related to the pandemic, medical leave, or parental leave should not be counted against candidates in any way.

### The Tenure Review Process

Note: SEAS follows the same policies as the FAS divisions in tenure reviews. Because SEAS has its own organizational structure as a School within the FAS, the SEAS individuals who perform tenure-review tasks differ at times from the individuals specified in the process below. Please see the "Note" on page 35 for more information on SEAS process. You may also consult SEAS for further information.

The process for promotion (and the relevant individuals in the FAS divisions) are briefly outlined below. Each step is described in detail directly following the outline.

- (1) **Promotion Dossier:** Proximate to July 1<sup>17</sup> of your penultimate year as an associate professor, your divisional assistant dean sends you a letter informing you that July 1 is the official start of your review, that you should meet with your department chair to discuss the review process and any questions you may have about the materials needed for the review, that your dossier materials are due by September 1 (or the next business day, as appropriate), and that the *FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook* contains further information. You should contact your chair to schedule a meeting to occur in July.
- (2) **Committee Review:** The chair, in consultation with the divisional dean, appoints a committee to review your dossier and recommend to the department whether to proceed with the evaluation.
- (3) **Evaluative Letters:** The chair sends out requests for "arm's-length" external letters, which compare you with four or five leading scholars, at varying career stages, in your field; these external letters assess your scholarly and other achievements and provide a recommendation as to whether to grant you tenure at Harvard. These letters are included in your dossier and reviewed by the committee. Optionally, the

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<sup>17</sup> For calendar-year appointees, your divisional assistant dean sends you this letter proximate to January 1, and your dossier materials are due by March 1 (or the next business day, as appropriate). You should contact your chair to schedule a meeting to occur in January.



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department may also solicit letters from collaborators and mentors, and/or from “internal external” letter writers (i.e., from other FAS departments, centers, or other Harvard Schools).

- (4) **Departmental Vote:** The committee drafts a case statement regarding the strengths and weakness of your case and shares its findings with the tenured members of your department. The tenured members of your department discuss the case and vote on whether to recommend promotion.
- (5) **Confidential Letters:** After a favorable vote, each tenured member of the department writes a confidential letter to the Edgerley Family Dean of the FAS for inclusion in your dossier.
- (6) **Case Statement:** The chair, together with the chair of the review committee, finalizes the case statement and dossier for review by the divisional dean. Following divisional dean approval, the dossier is forwarded to the Edgerley Family Dean of the FAS.
- (7) **CAP Review:** The full FAS Committee on Appointments and Promotions (CAP) reviews your dossier and advises the Edgerley Family Dean on the next steps, which can range from forwarding your case to the President for review by an *ad hoc* committee to determining that it is not strong enough to put forward for further review.
- (8) **Presidential Review:** The President makes the final decision regarding all tenure appointments. To help in making this decision, the President or Provost often presides over an *ad hoc* committee that reviews your case for promotion. External *ad hoc* committee members and departmental “witnesses” are relied on for their expertise in the field.

(1) **Promotion Dossier:** Proximate to July 1<sup>18</sup> of your penultimate year as an associate professor, your divisional assistant dean sends you a letter informing you that July 1 is the official start of your review, that you should meet with your department chair to discuss the review process and any questions you may have about the materials needed for the review, that your dossier materials are due by September 1 (or the next business day, if September 1 falls on a weekend or a holiday), and that the *FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook* contains further information. You should contact your chair to schedule a meeting to occur in July. This letter also informs you that September 1 (or the next business day, as appropriate) is the deadline for eligible tenure-track faculty to notify their divisional/SEAS assistant dean that, due to the pending birth or adoption of a child, they would like to receive the FAS’s automatic one-year appointment extension and review postponement that are granted to expecting parents. In particular, expecting parents whose birth- or adoption-date falls no later than one month after their dossier-materials deadline must notify their divisional/SEAS assistant dean by the dossier-materials deadline that they wish to have this automatic appointment extension and review postponement. For information on this policy, please

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<sup>18</sup> For calendar-year appointees, your divisional assistant dean sends you this letter proximate to January 1, and your dossier materials are due by March 1 (or the next business day, if March 1 falls on a weekend or a holiday). You should contact your chair to schedule a meeting to occur in January. March 1 (or the next business day, as appropriate) is also the deadline for eligible tenure-track faculty who are expecting parents to notify their assistant dean that they would like to receive the FAS’s automatic one-year appointment extension and review postponement.



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see Chapter 3.H.3 in the [FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook](#) (i.e., the sub-section titled, “For Tenure-Track Faculty: Childcare Appointment Extension and Postponement of Review Policies”).

By September 1,<sup>19</sup> you should submit the following materials to your department to be included in your dossier:

- **A curriculum vitae, including a complete bibliography.** Note: Candidates who opted in Spring 2020, Spring 2021, and/or Spring 2022 for an extension of their tenure review clock due to the COVID-19 pandemic and/or parental leave and/or have thereafter extended their clock due to medical leave and/or parental leave, may include the following language in their c.v.s, if they wish: “Harvard’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences grants appointment extensions and teaching relief to tenure-track faculty, in keeping with its policies related to the COVID-19 pandemic, medical leave, and parental leave. Accordingly, Harvard delayed my tenure review by [INSERT NUMBER OF YEARS OR, IF LESS THAN ONE YEAR, NUMBER OF MONTHS] [INCLUDE IF APPROPRIATE: and gave me [INSERT NUMBER] course[s] of teaching relief].”
- **Copies of all of your publications (including any that are forthcoming) or other scholarly materials, and (in book fields) all significant reviews of your work. In art-making fields, copies, as appropriate, of all creative works and all significant reviews.**
- **Teaching, advising, and mentoring:**
  - Please see the “Second-Year Review” section of this handbook, for a discussion of: what “teaching,” “advising,” and “mentoring” mean at the FAS for the purposes of promotion reviews; a developmental view of these activities; and teaching portfolios.
  - **Teaching/advising/mentoring statement:** Just as the department will provide a summary teaching chart listing all the courses in your teaching portfolio (see more on the summary teaching chart, following this list of candidate-submitted materials), similarly, please provide in your teaching/advising/mentoring statement a summary description of the advising and mentoring work you did with undergraduate and graduate students, TFs, and postdoctoral fellows.

<sup>19</sup> By March 1, for calendar-year appointees.



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You should not just describe, but also assess and reflect on your efforts in teaching, advising, and mentoring. Because the FAS takes a developmental view of teaching, advising, and mentoring, you should reflect on aspects of your professional progression and on how you have addressed any areas of concern. In the statement, you may discuss:

- ✓ your philosophy/approach to teaching, advising, and mentoring
- ✓ how you define effectiveness in each of these areas, and the methods and approaches you use to achieve these
- ✓ your reasoning and process in forming your teaching portfolio
- ✓ how you engage with students, advisees, and mentees at various levels (e.g., first-years, concentrators, graduate students, TFs, postdoctoral fellows)
- ✓ any challenges you faced and any modifications made to courses, teaching, advising, and mentoring in response to feedback
- ✓ any ways you have actively worked to improve your teaching, advising, or mentoring

Given the often interconnected nature of teaching, advising, and mentoring individuals, you are not obligated to discuss these three topics in rigid separation from, and in sequence with, each other. However, regardless of how you organize your statement, your discussion should still clearly maintain the distinctions between these activities, as noted in the definitions above.

- **Teaching, advising, and mentoring materials:** This includes teaching awards, representative course syllabi, and a list of past and present undergraduate, graduate, and (as relevant) postdoctoral advisees and mentees (including those who have moved to another research group). You may include informal advisees and mentees.
- **A research statement**, which succinctly summarizes the work you have accomplished, articulates the impact you have had on your field, and lays out your future research goals.
  - As discussed in the “Promotion to Associate Professor” section of this handbook, how you define your field, in your research statement and in other contexts, is important. In tenure reviews, the field definition affects who the external letter writers and comparands are and how your case is viewed. The field definition should be sufficiently broad that your impact beyond your own specialization can be determined. For instance, the field definition may situate your area of specialization



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within a broader field; or the definition may speak to the “Venn diagram” of your impact, i.e., not only the immediate subfield in which your work, but the adjacent subfields and fields affected by this work.

In a process that you may have begun at earlier stages on the tenure track, and as you prepare for your tenure review, you may find it helpful to continue to talk with departmental colleagues to understand and clearly articulate a definition of your field. As mentioned in the “Promotion to Associate Professor” section of this handbook, talking with your colleagues over time also helps to disseminate in the department an understanding of your work and the impact you are having on your field.<sup>20</sup>

- **A service/citizenship statement** that reflects on your committee work and administrative work, as appropriate, as well as how you have contributed to diversity, inclusion, and belonging in all areas of your professional life, both to date and with regard to your future plans.
- **A statement addressing overlap in publications and joint authorship.** This statement should make clear: 1) In book fields, in what specific instances your publications are partial or significant reiterations of scholarship covered in others of your publications (such as articles), and 2) In all fields, in jointly-authored publications, what your unique scholarly contribution was. The purpose of this statement is to provide a clearer picture of your body of work and, where applicable, the nature of your collaborations with others.
- **As applicable, a list of current and pending funding.**

As with your associate review, you may also include a list of scholars whom you would like the department to contact for letters of evaluations and/or a list of scholars whom you feel should not be consulted (and, again, this latter list should include an explanation of why these scholars should not be consulted. If you prefer, you may provide this explanatory information to the department chair. You may also consult with the assistant dean). The department chair will consider carefully how best to take this information into account when developing the list of external reviewers.

As in your associate review, the department will add a summary teaching chart, which lists all of the courses you have taught since the beginning of your appointment at Harvard, as well as the

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<sup>20</sup> Your department may take into consideration how you define your field when they put together the materials for your dossier, but they can change it as they deem appropriate.



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enrollments and the Q scores for each course. To gather feedback on your advising and mentoring, your chair (or their designee) will also write to current and former undergraduates, graduate students, and, as relevant, postdoctoral fellows, including those who have moved to another research group. This list may also include informal advisees/mentees designated by you. Please note that you should not solicit letters from your students (or postdocs) yourself, as this may put them in an awkward position.

In addition to the materials above, the committee will review the feedback letter that you received after your review for promotion to associate professor. This letter provides a fuller context for understanding how you have developed and the mentoring you received. (For candidates who were externally appointed at the rank of associate professor, the feedback letter from your second-year review as an associate professor will be reviewed by the tenure review committee.) This letter will not be included in your dossier.

In preparing for your tenure review, it is important to keep the criteria for tenure in mind. Recall that your reviewers (both within Harvard and beyond) are looking for scholarly achievement and impact on the field, intellectual leadership and creative accomplishment, teaching, advising, and mentoring effectiveness in a variety of settings with both undergraduate and graduate students (and, as appropriate, researchers), contributions to the University community and broader scholarly community, and potential for future accomplishments in all these realms.

Regarding your scholarly work, it is important to think carefully about the balance between quality and quantity of your work, where and when you publish, and how to make yourself known in your field (both within and outside of Harvard).

Appropriate venues for publication differ by division, by department, and even by subfield. Some fields value books more than articles, whereas others place more emphasis on peer-reviewed journal and/or conference articles. Publishing a great deal in venues without rigorous review processes will not support a tenure case as much as fewer, high-impact articles that are more competitively placed in peer-reviewed venues. The key is defining an original and significant research agenda and directing your energies to maximize the impact and influence of your research. Your colleagues both within and outside of the University are invaluable resources for advice on how to achieve this.

Your colleagues, both within and outside Harvard, can also offer helpful advice on strategies for becoming known in your field in the years prior to your tenure review. The impact you have will depend in part on how well outside scholars come to know your work; moreover, outside evaluators may be more likely to agree to participate in the review process if they already know of





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your research. Speaking at conferences and at other institutions is an important avenue to pursue, as is being proactive in inviting scholars to Harvard. Sending out articles or manuscripts when they are ready for external consumption to scholars whose thoughts you would appreciate may also be helpful (even if most people who receive them do not reply). Applying for fellowships elsewhere can also help to get you known beyond the Harvard campus, as can serving on grant panels or as a reviewer for a professional journal.

It is also important to be known within your own department prior to a tenure review. This may seem obvious, but in large departments with distinct subfields, it may be challenging. You should make sure to give at least one talk within your department before you come up for tenure (and you should discuss the timing of this talk with your chair). You should also have conversations with a wide range of colleagues about your work and theirs; inviting colleagues, both tenured and tenure-track, to have lunch with you is a good way to get to know them.

As mentioned in earlier sections of this handbook, teaching, advising, and mentoring are also critical factors in the tenure decision. You should think carefully about your teaching each year and offer, as appropriate, a balance of lecture and seminar courses, Gen Ed classes, and graduate seminars. Be mindful of the fact that your dossier will include a summary teaching chart with data on all of the courses you have taught, their enrollments, and any teaching evaluations received. You should not solicit letters from advisees for inclusion in the dossier, because this can place them in an awkward position. The chair (of their designee) will solicit feedback on your teaching and your performance as an adviser and mentor of undergraduates, graduate students (and, as relevant, postdocs).

(2) **Committee Review:** As with your associate review, the chair will appoint a review committee consisting of tenured colleagues from your department; the committee should also include a tenured faculty member from another department/SEAS area. The composition of the review committee must be authorized by the divisional dean to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest and that it is sufficiently representative. This committee reviews your materials. (If you are a member of any undergraduate degree/curricular standing committees, the review committee chair should seek an evaluation from the chair(s) of those committees, which will be included in the review committee's consideration of your case.)

If, after preliminary review of your materials (and **before** sending the case to the department for initial review), the review committee wishes to seek clarification from you on aspects of your materials, the department chair is permitted to send you written questions on behalf of the review committee, with a date by which you should send written answers back to the department chair. Questions should be limited to matters that the review committee deems essential to clarify. The



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review committee's questions and your response will become part of the final dossier. The review committee is under no obligation to seek clarification from you on your materials.

After evaluating your materials, the review committee makes a recommendation to the department as to whether to continue with the review. The tenured members of the department discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the case and decide whether the case warrants further review. If the department votes not to proceed, the divisional dean must approve the decision. The chair will then meet with you to discuss that decision; you will also receive a letter, which will have been reviewed by the divisional dean, documenting the outcome.<sup>21,22</sup>

**(3) Evaluative Letters:** If your department recommends further review, the chair usually sends out requests for letters from "arm's length" external scholars in October,<sup>23</sup> asking for responses by the end of December. "Arm's length" means that the evaluator is not a past or present advisor, mentor, collaborator, co-teacher, or other role in close relationship to you, as assessed by the divisional dean/SEAS Dean's office.

All of the arm's length external letter writers who submitted letters for the associate review must be asked to write letters for the tenure review. Ultimately, tenure promotion dossiers must include a minimum of ten arm's length letters from external reviewers, with at least five of these letters from people who did not write for the associate review. In addition to the required arm's length letters, the department has the option of soliciting letters from past or present collaborators or mentors, and/or from "internal external" letter writers (i.e., tenured faculty who are from other FAS departments, centers, or other Harvard Schools).

All letter writers must be tenured, but not all are required to be tenured at the rank of full professor. For the required arm's length letters, up to half of those letters may be from tenured associate professors.

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<sup>21</sup> Note: When a candidate opts, at any stage in the process, to withdraw his/her/their case from consideration, the candidate should state this in a letter to the department chair, which the chair shares with the divisional dean. Candidates who withdraw their case from consideration, at any stage in the process, will not subsequently be reviewed for internal promotion to tenure.

<sup>22</sup> Note: When a tenure review is unsuccessful, whether or not it involves the candidate withdrawing at any stage in the process, the candidate cannot then be appointed instead to another FAS tenure-track position upon the conclusion of their existing FAS tenure-track appointment. An unsuccessful tenure review does not necessarily preclude the possibility of a later appointment as an FAS tenured professor, after, for instance, the candidate has spent time at another institution.

<sup>23</sup> Usually in April, with a request for responses by August, for calendar-year appointees.



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Before the chair sends out requests for letters, both the letters making the requests and the list of recipients are reviewed by the divisional dean. It is expected that the recipient list will be diverse, including gender and racial/ethnic diversity, and that it will reflect an appropriately broad definition of the field. (To see sample letters to external reviewers, collaborators/mentors, or “internal external” letter writers, please see the *FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook*: <http://academic-appointments.fas.harvard.edu/>.)

The purpose of these evaluations from external scholars and any collaborators/mentors and/or “internal external” scholars is to help determine whether your work has met the FAS standards for tenure. Letter writers are told explicitly that you are being considered for promotion to tenure, and they are given a copy of your CV, a sampling of your work, your research statement, teaching/advising/mentoring statement, service/citizenship statement, statement on overlap and joint authorship in publications, significant reviews of your work (in book fields and art-making fields), and a link to your website.

External letter writers are also asked to compare you with other scholars in your field. (Collaborators/mentors and “internal external” letter writers” are not asked to undertake this comparison.) The comparison list consists of scholars who range from the strongest recently tenured scholars to full professors who are well-established leaders in the field. (In some instances, the list may include highly accomplished senior researchers, museum professionals, practicing artists, or others.) It is expected that the comparison list will be diverse, including gender and racial/ethnic diversity, and will reflect an appropriately broad definition of the field. Letter writers are provided with links to the websites of those on the comparison list.

The comparand exercise is a benchmarking exercise, to help the review committee understand your current standing in and impact on the field, as well as your future trajectory. You do not need to come out “on top” of the list of comparands, in order to merit tenure at Harvard; rather, the letter writers’ analyses shed light in a textured way on where you stand in the field (and why) and where you may arrive in time. When leaders in the field, at more advanced career stages, are comparands, the expectation is less that you have also attained that standing (though that may be the case); of interest is your trajectory.

In making comparisons, the external reviewers are asked to take into account the career stages of the comparands and to calibrate responses appropriately. All who review the dossiers (the department, deans, faculty serving on CAP, *ad hoc* committee members, the Provost, and the President) are keenly aware of the importance of this calibration and take it very seriously.



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The comparand list gives letter writers a sense of the caliber of comparand and the range of career stages that the department feels will help them gauge your standing in and impact on the field. Letter writers are allowed to substitute different comparands if they think certain individuals would be more appropriate.

Because external reviewers will evaluate your scholarly impact and your future trajectory, it is important that they have a very good understanding of your field and the scholars within it. For this reason, they are usually active scholars within your field (or fields in interdisciplinary cases). In science and engineering cases, some of the external reviewers may be prestigious senior researchers from a corporation or research institute rather than a university. In certain arts and humanities cases, some of the external reviewers may be well-established museum professionals or practicing artists.

(4) **Departmental Vote:** Once the external letters (and any letters from collaborators/mentors and/or “internal external” experts) have been received, the review committee discusses the letters, reviews your key publications or creative works, your teaching, advising, and mentoring effectiveness, your service/citizenship, and considers your record as a whole; they then draft a case statement regarding the strengths and weaknesses of your dossier and share it with the department. The tenured members in your department review all of your materials, along with the statement from the committee, and then meet for an in-depth, rigorous discussion of your case. After this discussion, the tenured faculty vote on whether the case is strong enough to proceed. A favorable vote does not have to be unanimous but must comprise affirmative votes by a significant majority of the tenured faculty in the department. If the department decides not to forward your case, the chair must explain this decision to the divisional dean. The chair will then meet with you to discuss the decision. In this case, you will also receive a letter, which will have been reviewed by the divisional dean, documenting the outcome.

(5) **Confidential Letters:** If a significant majority of the tenured faculty in your department vote to promote you, each of them then writes a confidential letter to the Edgerley Family Dean of the FAS. These letters provide an opportunity for each faculty member to explain their vote and further voice their views on your case. It also provides the deans with more context for your case and gives them an opportunity to ensure that the process has been fair and representative of the views of a significant majority of the department.

(6) **Case Statement:** The department chair, together with the chair of the review committee, finalizes the case statement for review by the divisional dean. This statement includes, among other things, a description of your field, a summary of the review process, an evaluation of your impact in research, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship, and a discussion of the strengths



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and weaknesses of your case, as noted in the evaluative letters, any evaluations from degree/curricular standing committees of which you are a member, and departmental deliberations on your entire dossier. Following divisional dean approval, the dossier is forwarded to the Edgerley Family Dean of the FAS, ordinarily by late February, as the dossier is due by March 1 (or the next business day, if March 1 falls on a weekend or a holiday).<sup>24</sup>

(7) **CAP Review:** After the Dean receives your dossier, it is reviewed by the Committee on Appointments and Promotions (CAP). The CAP discussion includes such leaders as the Edgerley Family Dean of the FAS, all of the divisional deans and the John A. Paulson Dean of SEAS, the Danoff Dean of Harvard College, the Harvard Griffin GSAS Dean, the Dean for Faculty Affairs and Planning, the Dean of Undergraduate Education, the Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Development, and one additional senior faculty member from each division and SEAS. CAP's discussion focuses on whether your work has met the standards for tenure within the FAS. Its role is solely advisory to the Edgerley Family Dean. The committee does not vote on appointments or promotions but acts as an experienced set of experts on process and criteria.

After discussing your case, CAP either recommends to the Edgerley Family Dean of the FAS that the case should be forwarded to the President and Provost or that it does not meet the FAS standards for tenure. Based on this advice, the Dean decides how to proceed with your case. In the rare instances in which the Dean decides not to forward a case to the President and Provost, the divisional/SEAS dean will communicate this decision to the chair of your department, who will discuss the outcome with you.

(8) **Presidential Review:** The President makes the final decision regarding all tenure appointments that are forwarded to her for review. An *ad hoc* review is one aspect of this decision-making process. The function of the *ad hoc* committee is to advise the President on whether the candidate's work meets the standards for tenure within the FAS. Either the President or the Provost can preside over an *ad hoc* review committee, which is assembled by the divisional dean and the Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Diversity. The committee usually consists of two to three active, full professors from outside Harvard, two to three active, tenured professors at Harvard (who are not from the department making the recommendation), the President or Provost, the Edgerley Family Dean of the FAS, the Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Diversity, and the divisional dean responsible for the case.

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<sup>24</sup> By late September, as the dossier is due by October 1 (or the next business day, if October 1 falls on a weekend or a holiday), for calendar-year appointees.



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The external members of the *ad hoc* committee are tenured faculty and are chosen for their deep understanding of your field. When appropriate, an external member of the committee may be a prestigious senior researcher from a corporation or research institute, a well-established practicing artist, or a renowned museum professional. The divisional deans and the Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Diversity ordinarily do not include external letter writers who have provided a substantial response on the committee because the dossier already includes the views of these scholars, but external letter writers who sent no, or little, response to a department's request for a letter may be considered to serve on the *ad hoc* committee.

Proposed *ad hoc* members should not be anyone who has a conflict of interest with your case, including having been one of your collaborators or mentors. "Internal external" letter writers ordinarily do not serve on the *ad hoc* committee. It is expected that the list of possible *ad hoc* committee members will be diverse, including gender and racial/ethnic diversity.

At the *ad hoc* committee meeting, ordinarily three to four departmental "witnesses" come individually to speak to the committee. These witnesses usually include the department and review committee chairs, one senior faculty member who was in favor of the promotion, and one who voted against it (if any did so). The goal in inviting such witnesses is to ensure that the full range of views within the department is adequately represented. The candidate's former undergraduate or graduate thesis advisors or postdoctoral advisors should not ordinarily serve as witnesses.

During the course of the meeting, members of the *ad hoc* committee are invited to participate actively by asking questions of witnesses, as well as by exploring more general questions related to the field. Once the committee has heard from the witnesses, the President or Provost finishes the proceedings with a discussion of the entire case. During this period, the President or Provost asks each member of the committee to summarize their views – no votes are taken.

In many cases, the President may seek additional information or advice following the *ad hoc* committee meeting. It is not uncommon for some time to elapse between the *ad hoc* and the President's decision. In order to ensure the integrity of the process, all aspects of the President's deliberations, including the timing of the *ad hoc*, are strictly confidential. Once the President arrives at a decision, the Edgerley Family Dean of the FAS and divisional dean are informed, and they convey the decision to the department chair.

Your department chair will inform you of the President's decision. If it is positive, the Edgerley Family Dean of the FAS will send you a tenure letter containing information on your tenure package (salary, etc.). The divisional dean/SEAS Dean will also meet with you to congratulate you and to share feedback from the review process. Among other things, the insights gained during the review



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process can help the divisional dean/SEAS Dean and you to think together about ways that you can best contribute to Harvard's mission, moving forward.

If the President's decision is negative, you will generally have one year (the time remaining on your appointment as associate professor) to find another position. In such cases, the department chair and the senior faculty will do all they can to help you find a suitable position at another institution. Note: If, at any point in the review process, the department, the Edgerley Family Dean of the FAS advised by CAP, or the President determines that the case should not proceed, the department chair (with the letter first approved by the divisional dean) must notify you in writing.

Although this process may seem daunting, the FAS is committed to hiring and mentoring tenure-track faculty who are outstanding in their scholarship, teaching, advising, mentoring, and service/citizenship and who have an excellent chance of receiving tenure at Harvard. This handbook aims to clarify the process for those undergoing promotion reviews. Further details about the process for reviews can be found in the *FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook* at <http://academic-appointments.fas.harvard.edu/>.<sup>25</sup>

Note: As mentioned earlier, some of the tasks in tenure reviews are performed by different individuals in, respectively, SEAS and the FAS divisions. Specifically:

- In SEAS, the John A. Paulson Dean of SEAS appoints the review committee.
- The SEAS review committee chair prepares the case statement and signs the final case statement.
- After a favorable vote on the candidate, all tenured faculty in SEAS are invited to write confidential letters to the Edgerley Family Dean of FAS. Mentoring committee members who are not in SEAS are also invited to submit a confidential letter.
- The John A. Paulson Dean of SEAS notifies the candidate of the President's decision. If, at points in the tenure review process, it is determined that the case will not proceed, the John A. Paulson Dean of SEAS notifies the candidate in writing.

Please consult SEAS for more details on SEAS procedures.

(Cover photo credit: Stephanie Mitchell/Harvard University)

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<sup>25</sup> Please note that the eight steps discussed above for internal promotion to tenure are broken down further into 17 steps in the *FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook* for administrative purposes.



