

Third-Year Review at the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World

The President and Board of Trustees have mandated a formal performance review of tenure-track Assistant Professors in their third year of service at New York University to determine whether they should be allowed to continue their progress towards tenure, and if so, what advice they should be given about strengthening their records.

The Third Year Review will be included in the docket of all ISAW tenure candidates, and its standards for tenure should be kept in mind in framing the report.

The Third Year Review should therefore take into account that standards for the award of tenure are extremely rigorous, and that they set particular importance on high scholarly accomplishment. If the faculty has any doubts about the potential of a junior person to become a published scholar of national prominence at a later stage in his or her career, its doubts should be clearly outlined in the review.

If such doubts are serious, the faculty should not recommend reappointment, since the overwhelming likelihood is that reappointment would simply result in an even more painful and professionally costly negative decision at the time of a subsequent tenure review. In the event of reappointment, any reservations must ultimately be shared in writing and in person with the probationary colleague, so that he or she may be under no misunderstanding over the likelihood of tenure being awarded. If reappointment is not offered as a result of the Third Year Review, the faculty member being reviewed will be given terminal employment for one academic year beyond the year in which the review took place.

To comply with this policy, the ISAW faculty must examine the performance of third year Assistant Professors, and the substance of this review must be communicated to the Director with a recommendation for reappointment or termination. The recommendation must reach the Director by May 6 or the nearest business day each year for faculty hired three years earlier. Any questions regarding the review procedures should be directed to the Director.

Guidelines and Procedures

1. All Assistant Professors in their third year of service must be reviewed. The only exception is the case of an Assistant Professor who has a prior written agreement specifying review for tenure and for promotion in an earlier year. Such an agreement must be specific.
2. The review is to be undertaken by an ad hoc committee consisting of three tenured professors, at least two of whom must be full members of the ISAW faculty. The review must include an assessment of the quality of the Assistant Professor's scholarship and research, both published and unpublished, obtained through critical evaluation by at least two senior members of the NYU faculty. The review may be written by the committee chair, but all members of the committee should read the review before it is submitted to the faculty. The review

should represent a collective judgment of the committee or, in the case of a divided opinion, a majority of the committee. If there is a division, the dissenting opinion should be appended to the majority review.

3. The review must be presented to and discussed by the full tenured faculty of ISAW. The committee's review should be made available to tenured members in advance of a meeting at which all tenured faculty discuss the report. Tenured faculty members may propose amendments to the report. Whether the recommendation is positive or negative, the tenured faculty shall take a recorded vote.
4. In the case of appointments shared between ISAW and another unit of the University, both units must participate in the review.
5. The committee chair must then communicate through a written report to the Director the recommendation of the committee as well as his or her own recommendation. The report of the committee should include the following materials in pdf format, most of which have been submitted to the committee by the candidate:
 - An up-to-date curriculum vitae of the Assistant Professor, including a list of all courses taught at New York University, all committee service, all publications, papers and activities at conferences, etc., and a list of all grant and fellowship proposals submitted with a notation as to which proposals have been funded, indicating amounts requested and received.
 - A three-page statement by the assistant professor, assessing his or her academic career and professional goals.
 - An evaluation of teaching performance which includes a judgment of the quality of syllabi and of classroom performance.
 - A copy of the committee review (from item 2, above).
 - An assessment of the quality of the Assistant Professor's scholarship and research, both published and unpublished, obtained through critical review by at least two senior members of the faculty.
 - A Chair's letter which must characterize the tenor of the full faculty discussion, indicating any areas of concern and of possible dissent. If the sense of the discussion was that of unanimous support for the review, the Chair should so indicate. In the case of a negative recommendation, the tenured faculty vote (yes, no, abstained) must also be indicated.
 - Summary of report signed by candidate (see items 7 and 8, below).
 - Finally, There should be a clear statement of the candidate's progress towards tenure and recommendation as to reappointment after the fourth year.
 - Report summary letter, signed by both the Chair and the candidate, should be forwarded to the Director.
6. A summary of the report, in the form of a letter of advice characterizing its reception by the tenured faculty, must be given to the candidate and discussed with him or her by the Chair. The candidate must sign the letter to indicate that he

or she has read it and discussed it with the Chair. This summary must cover both strengths and weaknesses of the candidate's performance to that time.

7. The summary letter must include the following:
 - “This is a letter of advice; regardless of the merits for reappointment at this time, it does not constitute a guarantee of tenure.”
 - “Tenure standards are continually rising and, per established guidelines, candidates will be judged by those standards in effect at the time of their tenure review.”
 - “I have read this letter of advice and understand its contents.”
 - Signature and date block for the candidate

8. The Director will acknowledge receipt of the Third Year Review and communicate his decision regarding reappointment or termination directly to the chair and the candidate. In the case of a Director’s recommendation contrary to that of the faculty, the Director will provide the Chair with the reasons prior to contacting the candidate. The Chair will then have ten days in which to provide further information or counter-argument.

Approximate Timeline:

Mid-October: Committee selection & paperwork completed (notice sent to faculty member under review and signatures of committee members gathered)

End of fall semester (December 31st): Faculty member under review should submit all appropriate documentation listed above to the Academic Affairs Department

January 13: Complete documentation provided to committee members of third-year review

May 6: Committee report due to Director.

Approved by the ISAW faculty on October 2, 2012.