



The Document

Let's talk about The Document. The Document helps you know what to say, and what to Emphasize, in your narratives for pivotal reviews in academia.

Every academic unit—that is, every academic department or college that has a budget and hires faculty—has its own Document governing evaluation of faculty for retention, tenure, and promotion.

At my institution, this document is called the Role and Scope Document. At your institution, it may be called Instructions for Faculty Review & Appraisal, or Faculty Personnel Policies and Procedures. It could be part of the Faculty Handbook, the Personnel Manual—or, if you are a member of a unionized faculty, part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

If you have not seen yours recently, NOW is the time to find it. It may be sitting on your department's website under Faculty Resources, or maybe—if your department is really good—you received a copy when you were interviewing for your position.

At any rate, Find The Document, whatever it may be called at your institution, Print it, and sit down with a Highlighter.

The Document includes information about the procedures, criteria, and standards for evaluating different kinds of faculty members (clinical or practice faculty, research-only faculty, and faculty with responsibilities for teaching, research, and service).

It specifies the expectations for meriting retention, tenure, and promotion. It may also stipulate who may be on your academic unit's review committee, as well as procedures for annual reviews.

There is a LOT of information in this document—and that's why you need a Highlighter.

Methodically read The Document. Highlight everything relevant to This Next Review, for you. Make notes in the margins when the document lists possible Indicators or Evidence for various criteria that trigger ideas of what YOU can draw on in Your dossier.

For teaching, indicators may be student evaluations, examples of exams or assignments (both what you designed and what students submitted).

For research, your department may consider certain conference proceedings as publications; it may count conference posters to be just as meritorious as conference presentations. It may specify that the publications that matter most must appear in certain journals or be ranked in certain indices.

Pay attention to these and note how they relate to what You have to work with.

Note the difference between materials you are REQUIRED to provide and those you MAY provide as evidence.

Also Recognize the difference between Criteria and Standards. *Criteria* are the categories on which you are evaluated. Standards are the Level of performance you must demonstrate for each criterion, for That review. While you may need to provide the same kinds of evidence for the research Criteria, the STANDARDS for being retained may be lower than the standards for being tenured.

Pay attention, also, to any words about the Review Period. Some kinds of reviews want you to provide evidence created only since the time of the Last dossier review. Others want you to provide evidence from the time that you joined This institution, and some ask for evidence from your entire career.

Having read, highlighted, and made notes in The Document, you can start making a list of tasks.

You will need to gather students' evaluations, syllabi, etc. Create a task for each of those. Make a task item for each kind of statement or summary focused on service, research, or teaching, that you must write.

You will want to note tasks related to gathering information on things like the rankings of the journals in which Your publications appear. Remember to include pesky tasks like providing to your review committee the names of possible external reviewers.

Your list will be a dynamic document, so you probably want to create it in electronic format, in Word or Excel, so you can reorder tasks, and add new ones. In another video we'll talk about how to sort the tasks to help you stay sane and powerful.

For now, you simply need to understand this: When we don't have information, *we make it up*. And we usually make up information out of our *fears*.

So, an important ANTIDOTE to Anxiety about preparing your dossier or writing personal statements of accomplishment is to GATHER SPECIFIC INFORMATION.

NOW you do Not need to venture into the Unknown. You have read The Document governing

your review. You Know what you need to demonstrate.

Now you do not need to fear that the journey before you is Infinite. It's *finite*. Your list of tasks may be long, but it is definitely Finite. And you can do every bit of it, a step at a time.