Visiting Committee/BDA/AACSB

Faculty Review Process – *Final 1 March 2016*

HBS faculty review procedures are periodically refined and honed based on changes at HBS and in the world around us with the aspiration for having a process that is effective and equitable. Beginning in January 2015, we embarked on a period of focused input-gathering, reflection and subsequent process refinement.

Senior Associate Deans Paul Healy and Youngme Moon began a review of the process by gathering information through extensive outreach across tenured and tenure-track faculty through small and large group discussions and written input. The feedback gathered confirmed that many tenured and tenure-track faculty members perceived that there were opportunities to enhance the process and the experience of those who participate in it. The feedback focused on a number of areas of concern around three topics:

- Ensuring consistency throughout the process and across cases
- Increasing transparency about the process for junior and senior faculty
- Managing faculty workload without compromising quality

Through the feedback gathering process, a number of potential modifications were identified. These were not changes to the *standards* – the promotion standards remain unchanged – but refinements to *procedures*. These procedural modifications (organized here by the primary goal category each addresses) were discussed at an Appointments Committee meeting, an advisory vote was taken on whether to implement some recommended changes, and they were put into practice in spring 2015.

Ensuring consistency

Three concerns were raised about consistency across cases. First was that different subcommittees could potentially have different standards, leading to differences in outcomes. Second was concern about the consistency of Appointments Committee meeting discussions, given the unstructured nature of those discussions and the perception among many faculty members that it was difficult for such a large group to always have candid discussions. As a result, important questions were not always raised. Finally, there were concerns about the consistency of reviews of case-writing and teaching.

Given these concerns, there was strong support among senior faculty for adopting three changes to our process. Under the first change, after subcommittees have completed their reports, all cases would be reviewed by a Standing Committee that includes the members of all subcommittees. In the first year of adoption, two Standing Committees were formed, one with members of all associate promotion subcommittees, which reviewed, discussed and voted on all the associate cases, and the second that performed a similar overview of all tenure cases. Although we have had only one season to gauge effectiveness, the Standing Committee appears to have increased confidence that outcomes of individual cases are not driven by particular subcommittees, to have generated vigorous debate among subcommittees on their cases, and to have changed outcomes in a few cases.

The second change was for cases heard by the full Appointments Committee to be facilitated by the Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Development. This was intended to ensure consistency in the structure of the discussion and demonstrate a commitment to procedural equity across cases.

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Finally, to ensure that there is consistent evidence collected on teaching and case-writing, we decided to designate two letter writers to explicitly cover these areas. In addition, a framework for considering teaching and case-writing effectiveness (**Appendix A**) was developed and distributed to senior faculty at the time that review letters were requested. The goal of the document is to provide a model for how senior faculty might think about, evaluate and measure teaching effectiveness and case-writing at HBS.

Separate from the above changes, a Faculty Review Board (FRB) was created at the School to review allegations of egregious behavior or persistent problematic conduct by faculty. Related to the promotions process, for cases where previous or current conduct raises a question of whether the candidate meets the School's standard for contributions to the HBS community, the FRB will undertake a review of the concerns, collect any additional data, and make a recommendation to the Appointments Committee about whether the behavior constitutes a violation of the School's standards. Previously, such concerns would have been handled by the Subcommittee. But since conduct allegations are rare, Subcommittee members typically have limited experience in dealing with such matters and in understanding their relative severity. By assigning this responsibility to the FRB, we hope to increase consistency across cases in this area. (Principles and Procedures for Responding to Matters of Faculty Conduct, draft as of 28 April 2015)

Increasing transparency

Junior faculty raised concerns about the transparency of the process. First, because HBS has a different set of standards and objectives for promotions, they often find it difficult to understand particular decisions, potentially creating distrust of the process. In addition, those who have been through the process expressed frustration over the months of anxiety without any information, since we have followed a policy of "no news is good news."

To counter the concern about the transparency of the process, the Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Development implemented a practice of providing detailed information on the process to junior faculty at various stages of their career. These meetings were designed to be interactive, to help "demystify" the review process, to build more trust and confidence in the care that goes into our decisions, and to answer questions. Targeted, relatively informal small group meetings take place one year after hire, one year before submitting for associate review, and one year before submitting for tenure review. The content of the meetings is tailored for each audience (e.g. timelines appropriate for their stage in the process). Toward this end, the same framework for considering teaching and case-writing effectiveness shared with the senior faculty was shared with the junior faculty through these meetings. In addition, in the course of the junior faculty meetings, questions for self-reflection (**Appendix B**) were developed and shared. The goal is to provide a framework for periodic self-reflection by which an individual can occasionally take stock and try to understand, as it relates to the HBS faculty review process, "How am I doing?"

The Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Development also holds a meeting with the recently tenured faculty who are new members of the Appointments Committee in advance of the season. The aim of the meeting is to talk about the process, expectations, and answer any questions they might have about the process and their roles as members of the Appointments Committee.

In an effort to reduce anxiety for candidates going through an associate or tenure review, we now systematically communicate whether they have passed procedural milestones (e.g. letter requests have been sent out, your case is moving forward to be reviewed by the Appointments Committee).

Managing faculty workload

One concern raised by tenured faculty was the time spent writing letters and attending Appointments Committee meetings. For junior faculty (and their assistants), the workload concern was reflected in the requirement to provide more than 30 copies of their package of output in paper copy form.

To address the senior faculty workload question, the number of internal reviewer letters requested has been reduced. It is no longer automatic to go to all members of an academic unit for every case. Further, some internal letters are targeted to teaching and case-writing, allowing the letter writer to focus closely (and, if they choose, exclusively) on a particular area of evaluation.

The reduction in number of letter writers comes at a potential cost if faculty members who have information relevant to a case (including those in the unit who are not formally asked for a letter) are no longer heard. To address this concern, once the subcommittee requests for letters have been sent out, the Senior Associate Dean now sends the full senior faculty a list of all associate and tenure cases to be reviewed and encourages anyone who wants to write on a candidate to do so.

The introduction of the Standing Committee also serves to ease the workload of senior faculty for associate cases. For these cases, the Appointments Committee reviews and provides written input on cases, but there is no meeting and "big room" discussion, eliminating hours of meetings for the tenured faculty. Further, a comparatively extended period (4 vs. 1.5 days) during which the associate case material may be reviewed also allows for greater control, time and flexibility for senior faculty to evaluate and comment on cases.

To manage the workload associated with preparing a candidate's package, efforts are in motion to better leverage technology to improve the experience of junior faculty (candidates), as well as external reviewers and HBS senior faculty working on the cases. Specifically, the process is moving from a largely hard copy to a largely electronic material submission and review model. This reduces the physical material the candidates must produce for the packet, and, hopefully, facilitates the experience of external reviewers and HBS senior faculty participating in the process.

Looking forward

Changes implemented over the last year and their effectiveness are being reviewed, again through small group meetings. The findings from this reflection process will be shared and any further refinement needed related to the modifications made will be discussed with the Appointments Committee this spring.

As part of the original feedback gathering process, additional areas for ongoing review have been identified. With respect to the use of quantitative data, which is currently excluded from our evaluation process, there was support for exploring how we might use such data to enhance and provide additional insight into our reviews. With an eye toward more fully understanding the issue and with the goal of developing concrete proposals for the Appointments Committee's consideration, senior faculty working groups have been convened to conduct a review of different kinds of evidence to evaluate impact (e.g. citations, case sales) and teaching effectiveness (e.g. student teaching ratings, videotaped teaching).

Another working group has convened to consider how the School identifies and evaluates prospective senior lateral candidates. The group is considering both the characteristics of the candidates the School has historically considered (e.g. fields, level of "establishment"), and whether it might be beneficial to consider a broader set of candidates (perhaps people more junior, or doing work in less established, emerging fields). In addition, the group is working to identify the types of evidence we need to collect about a prospective candidate before embarking on a lateral tenure review. This could cover how we might best answer questions on a candidate's: 1) research (e.g. regard for the work, relevance to practice, impact), 2) teaching (e.g. how do we determine whether an individual will be effective in the HBS classroom and committed to activities such as case-writing?), and 3) contributions to the HBS mission (e.g. how do we determine whether an individual will be committed to contributing to the common good at HBS?). Finally, the group is considering the question of compensation related to attracting lateral tenure hires. At issue is how we competitively and equitably compensate and support tenured hires.

Finally, looking ahead we would like to do more to support tenure-track faculty who are unsuccessful in the process. As, on average, three out of four junior faculty who join HBS do not stay, it is essential that they feel well-supported and that the School appropriately acknowledges their time and contributions as members of the community. Efforts are underway in identifying how the School can improve their exit experience, and ensure that they transition with dignity. Effectively supporting their transition can both help them to land well in their next opportunity and create positive ambassadors for HBS.

Appendix A

Teaching and Case-Writing Effectiveness: Questions for Consideration *(as of 16 July 2015)*

When considering whether an individual is an effective teacher in the HBS environment, it might be helpful to consider some of the following:

- Overall, does the instructor drive the class discussion in a way to achieve clear learning objectives and goals through an inductive discussion process?
- Does the teaching plan have clearly stated learning objectives? Do the students grasp these learning objectives?
- Does the instructor manage the class discussion effectively, listening to and responding to student discussion, and facilitating productive debates between/among students?
- Does the instructor set high quality standards for student contributions (and him/herself)? Does s/he ask challenging questions that stimulate discussions and push students to engage with the topic and each other in a deep way?
- Does s/he use the boards productively?
- Has the individual had experience teaching doctoral students or executives at HBS? If so, was s/he effective in teaching these different audiences?
- What are potential future teaching assignments for which the individual is well positioned to be successful at HBS (e.g. develop second-year course, develop focused executive education program, head a first-year teaching group, develop focused executive education program, teach in a CLP, etc.)?

Has the individual developed the ability to write cases and teaching notes that are effective in fostering participant-centered learning? In reviewing case writing effectiveness, it might be helpful to consider some of the following:

- Does the case focus on important managerial issues and have a clear decision focus?
- Does the case balance tactical decisions with strategic decisions, allowing students to learn about this situation but also abstract to a broader set of situations?
- Does it provide students with sufficient information to allow them to perform a reasoned analysis?
- Is it written clearly, concisely, and in an engaging style?
- Does the case facilitate classroom debate by describing conflicts among relevant parties, or situations where there can be a range of viewpoints?
- Does the case require students to exercise judgment, develop reasoned assumptions, challenge existing assumptions, and/or evaluate trade-offs?

For teaching notes, it might be helpful to consider some of the following:

- Does the teaching note specify clear learning objectives for the case, such as enhancing knowledge through building frameworks, concepts or institutional knowledge; building skills; challenging implicit assumptions; or developing values, beliefs or self-awareness?
- Does the teaching note explain how the case fits within a broader course, module or body of knowledge?

- Does the note provide the analyses of the case that the instructor expects the students to perform? Is the discussion of the analysis clear, complete, representative of relevant alternatives, and where appropriate are there supplements to support the analysis?
- Are important lessons and takeaways from the case discussed?
- Is there useful description of how the case can be taught, with a discussion plan, suitable questions, openings and closings for areas of discussion, and any special techniques or guidelines discussed (e.g. use of roleplaying, voting, breakout groups, videos, etc.).

Appendix B

Questions for Self-Reflection: Intellectual Contributions, Teaching and Contributions to the HBS Community *(as of 29 September 2015)*

Intellectual Contributions: Associate

- Do I present my work at leading universities and conferences?
- Since joining HBS, have I been productive in writing and publishing work from my dissertation and made meaningful progress on work that goes beyond my dissertation?
- How does the impact and quality of my work compare to that of peers at other top schools?
- Who are the leading scholars in my field? Do they know me and my work?
- Have I begun to develop my own identity as a scholar in the field?
- Do I review papers for the leading academic journals?
- Have I begun to write cases that are synergistic with my research?

Intellectual Contributions: Tenure

- Am I invited to present my work at leading universities and/or conferences?
- Do the leading scholars/educators/practitioners in my field know me and my work?
- How does my work compare to peers at other top schools in terms of quantity, quality and impact?
- Am I considered a leader in my field or sub-field?
- Has my work caused people to think differently about an important managerial problem? Has it meaningfully influenced their own research, teaching, or practice?

Teaching: Associate

- Am I an effective case method teacher in the MBA classroom?
- Am I ready to take over or develop a course in the EC?
- Have I written cases/teaching notes? Have those cases been taught inside and outside HBS?
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Teaching: Tenure

- Am I an effective case method teacher in the MBA classroom? Am I effective teaching executives?
- Are my cases/teaching notes used and valued by others inside and outside HBS?

Contributions to the HBS Community: Associate

- Am I respectful and professional in my dealings with faculty colleagues, staff and students?
- Do I regularly engage in HBS and unit activities (e.g. doctoral and faculty recruiting, seminars)?

Contributions to the HBS Community: Tenure

- Am I respectful and professional in my dealings with faculty colleagues, staff and students?
- Do I regularly engage in HBS and unit activities (e.g. doctoral and faculty recruiting, seminars)?
- Am I ready to take on leadership responsibilities at HBS (e.g. course head, mentoring junior faculty, etc.)?