

A STATEMENT OF EVALUATION STANDARDS  
AND PROCEDURES

DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

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This is a statement of criteria, standards and procedures to be used by the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science in evaluating its members.

Prologue: The Department of Mathematics and Computer Science is committed to the development and maintenance of standards of professional excellence on the part of its members and the department as a whole. As part of this commitment, we participate in a periodic evaluation of our members for the purposes of supporting each other in our efforts to develop and maintain excellence and to make a fair and impartial decision at a crucial point in a member's career.

The following presents the guidelines developed by the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science for the evaluation of its members, setting forth the criteria to be used in the evaluation of members, the standards against which they will be measured and the procedures to be followed.

## **Section A. Statement of evaluation criteria and standards**

General: The department shall evaluate a faculty member in the following areas. In the case of tenure decisions, only areas 1, 2, and 4 will be evaluated, and additionally, the needs of the department and the university will be considered.

1. Excellence in teaching
2. Professional growth
3. Academic and career advising
4. University service
5. Community service

In the following, we present major points to be considered by the department in the evaluation process. While the department concurs that these points are aspects of professional excellence, we agree with the statement, attributed to the mathematician and educator, G. Pólya: It is impossible to define excellent teaching, but everyone recognizes it when she or he sees it.

Therefore, in accordance with this belief, individuals will form composite assessments of colleagues consistent with the following criteria. The department feels that only those not versed in the use of numbers would attempt to give numerical ratings to these criteria. We do hold, however, that excellence in teaching is of primary importance.

### **1. Excellence in Teaching**

The following items shall be considered in evaluating a colleague:

- a. The individual's organization and clarity of presentation of the course material. How well the material is received and understood by students. How responsive the individual is to the needs of students.

- b. The individual's ability to instill within a student an interest and enthusiasm for the subject matter.
- c. The access that students have to the individual.
- d. The individual's maintenance of appropriate and reasonable academic standards.
- e. The individual's ability to choose pertinent material and to set and meet reasonable objectives within the framework of the selected material.

## 2. Professional Growth

The Mathematics and Computer Science faculty's primary mission as teachers must be supported by ongoing professional growth and active engagement with one's discipline. Sustained professional growth ensures that faculty remain engaged with and current in their discipline, better preparing them for all aspects of their duties and responsibilities. In addition to helping find research projects and collaborators, disciplinary engagement ensures faculty are aware of new developments and educational best practices, thereby enhancing pedagogy and keeping our curriculum current. It informs efforts to advise students regarding internships, jobs, and graduate programs, and it helps faculty find professional service opportunities.

There are many ways a member of the department can show evidence of professional growth. In what follows, we include a non-exhaustive list of activities that might be cited to support a claim of professional growth. These are grouped into three tiers, and we expect members of the department to be engaged in multiple activities regardless of tier. However, primary importance is placed on those activities in Tier I, secondary importance on those in Tier II, and tertiary importance on those in Tier III. In particular, Tier I activities are considered to be those that are impactful or original.

For tenure and promotion to associate professor, we require evidence of professional growth that includes original research in one's discipline and publication of that research in a peer-reviewed journal, a peer-reviewed conference proceedings, or an invited or peer-reviewed book chapter. For promotion to full professor, we require evidence of a significant contribution to one's discipline. The clearest evidence of the latter is with peer reviewed publication, in the form of a paper in a conference proceedings, a journal article, a book chapter, a monograph, or a textbook.

Tier I:

- a. Conducting original research in one's discipline(s) and publishing that research in peer-reviewed journals, in peer-reviewed conference proceedings, or as an invited or peer-reviewed book chapter.
- b. Authoring textbooks or research monographs.
- c. Making other significant contributions to one's discipline.

Tier II:

- a. Actively participating at conferences (such as giving presentations, organizing sessions, or serving on panel discussions).
- b. Directing student research, advanced independent study, or student theses.
- c. Applying academic expertise to problems arising in other disciplines and contexts.
- d. Publishing expository papers, survey papers, papers on pedagogy, or book reviews.
- e. Refereeing or reviewing manuscripts for scholarly journals or academic publications.
- f. Writing grant proposals to support research and/or educational activities.
- g. Giving colloquium talks.

Tier III:

- a. Attending conferences.
- b. Developing new courses.

### **3. Academic and Career Advising**

The department believes that advising is a generally pervasive activity within the department that is not limited to the formal advisor-advisee relationship. An individual's willingness to advise students may be measured, but the quality of that advising is difficult to measure, as its effects may not be felt until years after the advisee has left the university. Generally the department equates good advising with the creation of a climate which fosters realistic discussions with students about their goals and abilities.

Although individual advising styles may differ considerably, common elements in every effective style include appropriate knowledge, openness, and availability.

- a. Knowledge: Advisors must have a good working knowledge of university curricula, rules, regulations, and policies; an in-depth knowledge of their own departmental curriculum; a sufficient awareness for student support offices to make appropriate referrals; and a familiarity with advising resources. Advisors should maintain and be familiar with their advisees' academic records and any other pertinent information provided by the university.
- b. Openness: Advisors must show a readiness to serve in advising; to welcome student questions and concerns (academic, career-related, and possibly personal); and to make appropriate referrals.
- c. Availability: Advisors must make themselves available to students at reasonable times both formally through regular advising appointments and informally, including discussions with students who are not their advisees.

## **4. University Service**

The department believes that university service should not be defined narrowly as participation in university governance. We hold that university service includes participation in the following areas:

- a. Departmental service
- b. University governance
- c. Extra-curricular activities
- d. Activities that enrich the intellectual and cultural life of the university.

We feel that all members of the department must participate in departmental service and are encouraged to serve the university in the other areas listed above.

## **5. Community Service**

The department also values and will consider community service contributions related to the professional interests and expertise of the faculty member.

We give primary importance to areas 1 (Excellence in Teaching) and 2 (Professional Growth) in our evaluations. In the case of instructors, all areas will be evaluated consistent with the Faculty Code Interpretation of Chapter III, Sections 3 and 4, Evaluation of Instructors (Professional Standards Committee Report to Faculty Senate 5 May 1986). As indicated in the Faculty Code (Chapter III, Section 3e), promotion to full professor requires evidence of distinguished service in addition to sustained growth in teaching, professional growth, and advising.

## **Section B. Evaluation Procedures**

In cases where the chair is being evaluated, the tenure-line members of the department will choose another of its members to conduct this evaluation. References below to the chair are to this replacement in these instances.

### **1. Responsibilities of the individual being evaluated**

The individual undergoing evaluation shall prepare a file containing the following material:

- a. A statement by the individual regarding his or her professional objectives, both short-term and long-term.
- b. Other material believed by the faculty member to be useful, in accord with Faculty Code, Chapter III, Section 4(a).
- c. Student evaluations of all courses taught during the previous two semesters in promotion, 3-year, or 5-year evaluation cases, and during the previous four semesters in tenure cases.

## 2. Responsibilities of colleagues in the evaluation process

Consistent with the Professional Standards Committee’s spring 2012 interpretation of the Faculty Code, all tenure-line faculty and ongoing instructors in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science are expected to participate in evaluations involving tenure or promotion. For all other evaluations that are not “streamlined” (as described in Chapter III, Section 5 of the Faculty Code), the Chair is responsible for ensuring that at least three members of the department participate in the evaluation. All tenure-line faculty and ongoing instructors are strongly encouraged to participate in 3-year, pre-tenure evaluations for tenure-line faculty.

A list of colleagues participating in an evaluation will be provided to the evaluatee at the time the file is submitted to the Provost. Those individuals will have the following responsibilities:

- a. *Review of file.* The colleagues participating in the evaluation process of a given individual shall read the file prepared by the individual.
- b. *Classroom observations.* All faculty participating in a particular evaluation are expected to familiarize themselves with the evaluatee’s teaching through one or more classroom visits.
- c. *Student evaluations.* Student evaluations placed in the individual’s files shall be reviewed.
- d. *Letter of evaluation.* After performing items a. – c. above, each colleague participating in the evaluation shall write a careful and thoughtful letter evaluating the individual in light of the department’s *Statement of Evaluation Standards and Procedures* and university guidelines as outlined in the *University Faculty Evaluation Criteria and Procedures*.

## 3. Procedures

- Step 1: The individual under review builds his or her file as described above, and submits it to the chair by the stated deadline. The individual also informs the chair whether the file is open or closed. (Please see the *University Faculty Evaluation Criteria and Procedures* for more details on open and closed files.)
- Step 2: Colleagues read the material in the file (including student evaluations), visit the individual’s classes, and write letters of evaluation. These letters are submitted to the chair in advance of the meeting described in the next step.
- Step 3: Colleagues participating in the evaluation will meet to consider the department’s recommendation. This will be deliberated in the absence of the individual undergoing evaluation.
- Step 4: As a result of these deliberations, colleagues may file addenda to their previous letters of evaluation.
- Step 5: For an open file, the head officer writes a department summary letter and gives it to the evaluatee. For a closed file, the head officer writes a letter containing the department summary and a summary of colleague letters and gives it to the evaluatee.
- Step 6: The file is submitted to the Provost and the Faculty Advancement Committee.

Mathematics and Computer Science faculty members involved in drafting these revised guidelines: Sigrun Bodine, David Chiu, Brad Richards, Mike Spivey, Courtney Thatcher, and (for one particular minor edit) James Bernhard.