

Criteria for the Evaluation of Faculty of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science at University of North Alabama, Florence, AL*

***This document is modeled after the policy of the Columbus State University
Department of Mathematics in Columbus, GA**

A Shared Governance Document

This policy is intended to serve as a shared governance document whereby the tenured faculty in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, the Department Chair, and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences shall jointly engage in a process of faculty evaluation for tenure, promotion, or reappointment purposes. The initial adoption of this document was based on consensus of the tenured faculty and concurrence of the Department Chair, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. Subsequent revisions will be adopted by the same process.

Since this policy incorporates evaluations over previous years, its full implementation will require phase-in periods of variable length depending on the specific application. During these phase-in periods, appropriate allowances will be made in the evaluation of candidates for reappointment, tenure, or promotion; however, candidates will be expected to use this document, where possible, to guide the development of their portfolios. Similar phase-in periods will also be required for full implementation of each subsequent revision of this document.

Annual Evaluations

Annual evaluations will be utilized to monitor the faculty member's progress toward tenure, promotion, or reappointment. These evaluations will be subject to review by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Three categories of activity will be considered:

1. Effectiveness as a Teacher
2. Effectiveness in Research, Scholarship, and Other Creative Activities (Including professional growth and development activities)
3. Effectiveness in Rendering Service

Faculty contributions in these categories will be rated as "excellent", "favorable", "satisfactory", or "unsatisfactory". Faculty should perform at the satisfactory level or better in each category. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to furnish sufficient evidence for the determination of a rating in each category. A standing departmental committee consisting of three tenured faculty members will assist, as needed, in the collection of this evidence and related data, including for example, classroom observations, to enhance assessment endeavors undertaken by the tenured faculty and the department chair.

The four ratings: “excellent”, “favorable”, “satisfactory”, and “unsatisfactory” are assessments of quality performance. The criteria for a “satisfactory” rating provide a baseline that describes the minimal level of acceptable activity normally expected of a fulltime faculty member. The criteria for a “favorable” rating provide for an intermediate level of performance assessment between “satisfactory” and “excellent”. An “excellent” rating assessment implies an optimal level of performance. The “unsatisfactory” rating is an adverse assessment that strongly suggests the need for corrective action.

The evaluation of each criterion will be conducted by peer tenured faculty and the Department Chair. A majority vote of peer tenured faculty and concurrence of the Department Chair is required to receive each rating. If a majority vote of peer tenured faculty is not unanimous, then the candidate will be informed of the strength of this vote. The concurrence of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences is also required to receive an “unsatisfactory” rating. If the Department Chair does not concur with the majority vote of the tenured faculty or the Dean does not concur with an unsatisfactory rating, then the candidate shall be informed of the impasse, and the final decision shall be the Dean’s prerogative.

Requirements for Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion

Since the principal mission of the university is teaching, it is expected that teaching activities will hold the first priority of all department faculty.

The department’s requirements for probationary reappointment to a tenure-track position depend on the number of years of service in the position. To obtain the department’s recommendation for the first two probationary reappointments to a tenure-track position, the candidate should have a rating of “satisfactory” or higher in each of the three categories of evaluation. To obtain the department’s recommendation for subsequent probationary reappointments, the candidate should have a “favorable” or “excellent” rating in the teaching effectiveness category and “satisfactory” or higher ratings in the other two categories.

The department’s recommendation for reappointment to a non-tenure-track position is based solely on performance in the teaching effectiveness and service categories. To obtain the department’s recommendation for reappointment to a non-tenure-track position, the candidate should have a rating of “satisfactory” or higher in each of these areas.

The department’s recommendation for reappointment of adjunct faculty is based solely on performance in the teaching effectiveness category. To obtain the department’s recommendation for reappointment, the candidate should have a rating of “satisfactory” or higher.

To receive the department’s recommendation for tenure and/or promotion, a candidate should have

- Consistently earned a teaching rating of “favorable” or “excellent”,
- Attained the “excellent” rating at least once in the teaching category, and
- Earned a rating of “favorable” or “excellent” at least once in the research and scholarly activity category while maintaining satisfactory or better ratings in the service category.

In addition, to obtain the department’s recommendation for promotion to the rank of professor, the candidate should have earned a rating of “excellent” at least once in the category of research, scholarship, and other activities while holding the rank of associate professor.

Procedures for Tenure and Promotion

The UNA Faculty Handbook details approved university policies and procedures for applying for tenure and promotion. In the event that changes in the Faculty Handbook prove inconsistent with department policies and procedures, the policies of the Faculty Handbook will prevail.

The candidate for tenure and/or promotion must prepare a portfolio of relevant data to support the application. Formal application for tenure and/or promotion begins with the submission of this portfolio to the Chair of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science.

Criteria for Evaluating Teaching Effectiveness

Ratings in the teaching effectiveness category reflect not only classroom performance, but also advising activities and pedagogical activities that pertain to improving the delivery of mathematics or computer science courses. Recent student evaluations are a required source of input for the assessment of teaching effectiveness, but these will not serve as the sole basis for the evaluation. Strong student evaluations will carry the greatest weight when accompanied by evidence that the faculty member maintains departmental academic standards. Additional substantiation that might be considered includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Observations by the department chair and/or other tenured faculty
- Evaluations of course materials (syllabi, exams, handouts, etc.) by the department chair and/or other tenured faculty
- Evidence of reasonable grading standards that are consistent with those of the department
- Conference papers on pedagogical issues
- Evidence of student success in subsequent related mathematics or computer science courses, including those taught by departmental faculty other than the one being evaluated
- Input from the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (Required for an “unsatisfactory” rating)

Satisfactory Rating

Satisfactory performance in this category is based on evidence of a demonstrated commitment to teaching. Related criteria include all of the following:

- Effective teaching as indicated through evidence such as student evaluations of courses, peer evaluations, letters from recent graduates or former students, or other relevant data.
- Evidence of accessibility to students
- Evidence of student success in a subsequent related mathematics or computer science course
- Cooperation in departmental efforts to assess and improve multi-section courses with which the faculty member has been involved
- Participation in departmental efforts to assess major programs with which the faculty member has been involved
- Clear communication of course objectives, policies and grading criteria
- Fair, transparent grading policies
- Appropriate preparation for all class meetings
- Complete coverage of required course content
- Appropriate evidence of success of students in achieving expected learning outcomes
- Refraining from actions that disrupt the responsible execution of departmental teaching activities

Favorable Rating

A rating of “favorable” requires the faculty member to meet all criteria for the “satisfactory” rating plus additional effort directed toward teaching. The following kinds of activities are examples of additional efforts directed toward teaching.

- Submitting a grant application that would directly support the teaching mission of the university
- Providing support work for a grant that supports the teaching mission of the university
- Assuming difficult teaching assignments and achieving positive results. The difficulty may arise from the subject matter, the audience involved, or both.
- Direction of successful student independent study
- Substantial efforts to maintain/update a course through related readings, scholarship, and/or travel
- Conducting workshops or seminars that substantially enhance teaching within the department
- Preparation and presentation of a conference paper on a pedagogical issue
- Participation in departmental efforts to assess, standardize, improve, and monitor the delivery of multi-section courses with which the faculty member has been involved

- Effectively teaching an overload assignment consisting of three or more semester hours
- Preparing teaching materials such as students' solution manuals, worksheets, handouts or class-related website

Excellent Rating

To earn the “excellent” rating, the faculty member should attain all requirements for the “satisfactory” rating, along with a substantial accumulation of favorable activities. It normally will not reflect a one-time achievement but, rather, an accumulation of noteworthy successes over the review period. For example, one may accrue several items from the “favorable” category. Other substantial accomplishments are possible, such as consistently earning high student evaluation scores while upholding department academic standards or receiving a notable teaching award.

Unsatisfactory Rating

The following will earn an “unsatisfactory rating in the Teaching Effectiveness category

- Violations of policies of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, the College of Arts and Sciences, or the University of North Alabama
- Failing to attain all items required for a “satisfactory” rating in the Teaching Effectiveness category

Criteria for Evaluating Research, Scholarship, and Other Creative Activities

All faculty members are expected to maintain a program of professional growth and development. Professional development includes the development of original research, acquisition of discipline-related knowledge that is new to the faculty member, and participation in professional meetings (if the department travel budget is sufficient to fund travel to professional meetings).

Satisfactory Rating

To maintain a “satisfactory” rating, the faculty member is expected to attend at least one professional meeting, workshop, or short course each year. Alternatively, the faculty member may elect to perform at least one favorable rating activity. The faculty member is also expected to refrain from actions that impair the capability of a colleague to carry out his/her academic/scholarly activities.

A faculty member is unlikely to be recommended for tenure and/or promotion without demonstrating a pattern of activities worthy of a “favorable” rating (A tenure-track faculty member may elect to request conversion to non-tenure-track status if the faculty

member has maintained a “satisfactory” rating without demonstrating any scholarly activity deemed worthy of a “favorable” rating).

Favorable Rating

Activities that rise above satisfactory expectations may be rated as “favorable”. Examples of such activities include the following:

- Conducting ongoing research
- Submission of a paper for publication in a discipline-related journal
- Publication of a pedagogical paper in a scholarly journal
- Presentation of one’s scholarly work at a professional meeting
- Serving as a referee for a scholarly publication
- Conducting research under the auspices of the Laura Gaines Mann Professorship of Mathematics
- Successful completion of professional exams
- Significant independent study of a discipline-related subject outside one’s established expertise
- Writing proposals for internally or externally funded grants that will support research efforts
- Presenting in a colloquium
- Expert review of textbooks
- Completion of academic coursework related to the discipline
- Directing student research activities with successful outcomes
- Serving as a national or regional officer in a discipline-related professional organization

Excellent Rating

Examples of activities likely to merit a rating of “excellent” include the following:

- Acceptance of a paper by a refereed publication
- Publication of a book within one’s discipline
- Significant awards for scholarly work
- Effective implementation of an internal or external research grant
- Editing work for a scholarly journal or publication
- Significant accumulation of items with “favorable” ratings
- Presentation of significant work at a professional meeting

Unsatisfactory Rating

The following will earn an “unsatisfactory” rating in the Research, Scholarship, and Other Creative Activities category

- Failing to achieve a “satisfactory” or higher rating in this category
- Committing plagiarism

Criteria for Effectiveness in Rendering Service

Satisfactory Rating

Satisfactory achievement in this category typically requires all of the following.

- Regular participation in all relevant department committees and meetings
- Assumption of a fair share of department’s advising responsibilities (excludes first year faculty)
- Refraining from actions that disrupt the responsible execution of departmental service activities

Favorable Rating

A rating of “favorable” requires the attainment of all criteria for a “satisfactory” rating plus evidence of nontrivial university or community service in at least one additional area. Examples of activities that might merit a favorable rating include the following:

- Conduct of advising duties considerably above the normally expected level
- Acting as Chair of at least one department level committee other than the department search, curriculum, or peer review committee
- Community service activity that involves the faculty member’s expertise or enhances the reputation of the department or the university
- Serving as an officer of a professional service organization related to the discipline
- Serving as department representative to the Faculty Senate
- Significant accumulation of service activities such as regular service on one or more College of Arts and Sciences, Shared Governance, or University Committees

Excellent Rating

A rating of “Excellent” in this category requires the satisfaction of all criteria for a “satisfactory” rating in addition to some other substantial service. This may include a significant accumulation of favorable activities as well as effectual, productive service in one of the following capacities:

- Faculty advisor for an active student organization
- Chair of an institutional committee
- Chair of a department search, curriculum, or peer review committee
- Coordinating curriculum developments that have a demonstrably significant impact on the academic program

- Chair of a Shared Governance Committee
- Taking major responsibility for developing new academic programs
- Taking on additional duties that merit release time or an additional stipend such as Faculty Athletic Representative, Faculty Senate President, or Coordinator of the University Honors Program
- University recognition for distinguished service activities

Merely holding one of these titles does not guarantee the faculty member an “excellent” rating. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to demonstrate significant accomplishment.

Unsatisfactory Rating

The following will earn an “unsatisfactory” rating in this category.

- Failing to achieve a satisfactory rating in the Service category

Criteria for the Evaluation of the Chair of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science

Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Criteria

The *Faculty Handbook* provides minimal additional guidelines for promotion of department chairs. The *Handbook* states, “Department chairs who are applying for promotion will be evaluated using a process similar to that described for other faculty members”, and “The administrative effectiveness of the department chair will be evaluated within the category of university and community service” (3.5.3B). Thus, the promotion criteria for a department chair fit under the same general rubric as the promotion criteria for a faculty member with the exception that administrative effectiveness is included in the category of effectiveness in rendering service.

The *Faculty Handbook* does not address awarding tenure to department chairs. Instead, the *Handbook* states, “An award of tenure is not a right but a privilege which must be earned by a faculty member on the basis of his or her performance during a probationary period” (3.5.4). Thus, tenure would be awarded on the basis of the chair’s performance as a faculty member. While it is highly desirable that a member of the tenured faculty serve as department chair, it may be necessary, under certain circumstances, for an untenured tenure-track faculty member to hold a chair’s position.

The *Faculty Handbook* does not address the renewal of a probationary appointment that involves a department chair. According to the *Faculty Handbook*, “The recommendation to renew or not to renew a probationary appointment normally will originate with the department chair or other immediate supervisor. Tenured members of the department also will be consulted” (3.5.5).

In view of the considerations given above, the department's recommendation for probationary reappointment, tenure, or promotion or of the department chairperson will be based primarily on the same guidelines that apply to department faculty. Additional considerations include the following:

1. Ratings in each of the three areas will be based on a majority of peer tenured faculty. An "unsatisfactory" rating in any area will also require concurrence from the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.
2. Scholarly activity related to the performance of chairperson duties may be included under the Effectiveness in Research, Scholarship, and Other Activities category. For example, assessing the effectiveness of departmental programs may involve considerable scholarly activity especially when data must be gathered, hypotheses tested, and reports generated to disseminate findings. Preparation of the Department's Annual or Triennial Report may well qualify as a scholarly activity if the report incorporates the scholarly assessment of one or more of the department's programs. It should be noted that the written assessment of a department program may not be viewed as a scholarly activity unless it is published or presented beyond the campus. It is the responsibility of the chairperson to furnish sufficient evidence for the determination of a rating in this category.
3. Administrative effectiveness pertains to the effectiveness in rendering service category. The department chairperson is uniquely positioned to frame the critical elements of administrative effectiveness within his/her department for any given time period. Examples of possible critical elements include shared governance, curriculum development, conflict resolution, recruit new faculty, program assessment, delegation of responsibility, and advocacy for the department. It is the responsibility of the chairperson to furnish sufficient evidence for the determination of a rating in this category.

Renewal of the Department Chair Appointment

In accordance with the guidelines outlined in Section 4.3.4 of the *Faculty Handbook*, the recommendation to renew a department chair's appointment originates with the college dean. Since "the college dean has the major responsibilities in the selection and supervision of the department chairperson," it follows that input from the department relative to renewal of a chairperson's appointment should necessarily be based upon guidelines provided by the college dean. Specifically, the *Faculty Handbook* assigns the college dean the responsibility for "development of a standardized plan of evaluation that will be used for all department chairpersons during the review of a completed term and before recommendations are made for the renewal of a term" (4.3.4). Thus, faculty input in the chairperson appointment renewal process is guided by the college dean.