

# 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, and will be guided by any changes in the Faculty Handbook.

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.

## Faculty Evaluation

General guidelines for conducting faculty performance evaluations are given in the Section 3.13.1 of the Faculty Handbook as follows:

Using the faculty member's updated curriculum vitae, Faculty Evaluation Report, student ratings, and other appropriate information, department chairs will provide each faculty member a written performance evaluation on the following schedule: by **September 15** every year for nontenured faculty and every two years for tenured faculty. Performance evaluations may be provided more frequently at the discretion of the department chair or upon request by the faculty member or the dean of the college. The evaluation will be signed by both the department chair and the faculty member. The faculty member has the option of submitting a written response to the department chair by **September 30**. Copies of the evaluation and any response shall be retained in the college dean's office.

In accordance with the above guidelines, the department chair is responsible for conducting and preparing faculty performance evaluations. While these guidelines make no provision for involving tenured faculty in the evaluation process, some involvement of

tenured faculty may be appropriate. In an October, 2009, meeting of tenured faculty, departmental guidelines for evaluation of all faculty were clarified as follows:

- (1) Classroom observations of all faculty members including adjunct faculty will be conducted at least once each year during their first two consecutive years of employment. After this time, such observations will be conducted only at the request of the faculty member being observed. However, the Department Chair has the authority to visit any classroom at any time, and without prior notice, after receiving substantial allegations of poor or inappropriate performance regarding a specific faculty member.
- (2) The Department Chair should always be included among those conducting the observations, since the Chair is responsible for issuing the evaluation for each faculty member. However, the faculty member being observed has the option of choosing up to two additional faculty members as observers preferably from among those full-time members of our department who have experience teaching the particular class being observed. These additional observers should provide the Chair with a written evaluation of the performance of the person observed, and the Chair should review all such evaluations before compiling a final evaluation of classroom performance. Observers will be mute while conducting classroom observations.
- (3) Faculty members in non-tenure-track positions are not expected to submit extensive portfolios in the evaluation process. In accordance with Section 3.13.1 of the Faculty Handbook, the evaluation will be based on consideration of “the faculty member’s updated curriculum vitae, annual statement of goals and accomplishments, student ratings, and other appropriate information” including a sample of tests they have given, a syllabus of each different course taught which specifies the basis for assigning grades, and a brief summary of any professional activities, not reported under goals and accomplishments, during the previous academic year.
- (4) The chair may accumulate data over an extended period of time which track the progress of students who enroll in selected math or computer science classes and who subsequently enroll in a follow-up class, in an effort to assess the extent to which their level of preparation in the initial class was adequate for their success in the subsequent class. Such data should be shared with each individual instructor involved in the tracking analysis and should be considered by the chair in the evaluation process.
- (5) The Chair may accumulate data over an extended period of time which summarizes the scores of students of individual faculty members on standardized departmental exams, including those which relate to student learning outcomes established by the department. These results may be considered by the Chair in the evaluation process. Furthermore, these results may be made available, upon request, to any member of the tenured faculty for matters of reappointment, tenure, or promotion.

### **Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion**

Performance evaluations will be utilized to monitor the faculty member's progress toward reappointment, tenure, or promotion. 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 and advise, as needed, in the collection of this evidence and related data.

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.

In matters of reappointment, Section 2.5.5 of the Faculty Handbook stipulates, "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 will also be consulted." This consultation will include providing each member of the tenured faculty with a copy of the candidate's most recent performance evaluation together with access to the candidate's portfolio and requesting a response from the tenured faculty after an appropriate review period.

With regard to recommendations for tenure, Section 2.5.4 of the Faculty Handbook provides the following department specific guidelines:

4. The department chair shall convene a department tenure committee, consisting of all tenured faculty in the department, supervise the election, by secret ballot, of the chairperson from among the members of the committee, and provide copies of the faculty member's tenure portfolio. It is the responsibility of the department tenure committee by majority vote to recommend for or against the granting of tenure and to submit through the department chair to the college dean all of the information relating to the tenure recommendation by June 1.
5. It is likewise the responsibility of the department chair to recommend for or against the granting of tenure and to forward to the college dean all of the information relating to the tenure recommendation by June 1.

In accordance with the above guidelines, tenured faculty will conduct an evaluation of each performance criterion based on the faculty member's tenure portfolio. The department chair will also make available upon request other departmental data that may be relevant such as evidence of reasonable grading standards that are consistent with those of the department or evidence of student success in subsequent related mathematics or computer science courses. A majority vote of peer tenured faculty 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 department chair will also conduct an independent evaluation of each performance criterion to support his/her recommendation.

Section 2.5.3 of the Faculty Handbook provides the following department specific guidelines for promotion applications:

Responsibility of the Peer Promotion Committee – In the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business and Education, this committee will consist of all tenured members in the candidate's department who are not applying for promotion. The department chair will not serve on the committee; however, the department chair will convene the first meeting and supervise the election by secret ballot of a chairperson, from among the members of the committee. . . . The peer promotion committee members will review the candidate's portfolio and will prepare a written evaluation of each candidate for the department chair (or dean) indicating the degree (highly qualified, moderately qualified, or less qualified), to which promotion is recommended or not recommended no later than November 1. In the event that the peer promotion committee is evaluating more than one candidate, it may choose whether to rank the candidates. The peer promotion committee will also provide written feedback to the candidate regarding strengths and weaknesses of the portfolio when the final promotion decisions are announced in March.

Responsibility of the Department Chair - It is the responsibility of the department chair (or dean) to form a peer promotion committee by October 20. The department chair will evaluate the portfolios of the candidates in his or her department and prepare a written evaluation of each candidate, indicating the degree (highly qualified, moderately qualified, or less qualified) to which promotion is recommended or not recommended. The department chair will forward the candidate's portfolio, the peer promotion committee's recommendation, and his or her own recommendation for each candidate to the college or area dean no later than November 15. The department chair will also provide written feedback to each candidate regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate's portfolio when the final promotion decisions are announced in March. It will be the responsibility of the department chair to confirm the candidate meets the university's eligibility requirements (e.g., years of service) for promotion to the rank being sought.

In accordance with the above guidelines, tenured faculty will conduct an evaluation of each performance criterion based on the faculty member's promotion portfolio. The department chair will also make available upon request other departmental data that may be relevant such as evidence of reasonable grading standards that are consistent with those of the department or evidence of student success in subsequent related mathematics or computer science courses. A majority vote of peer tenured faculty 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 department chair will also conduct an independent evaluation of each performance criterion to support his/her recommendation.

### **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 Elizabeth 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” (2.5.3B). 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” (2.5.4). 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” (2.5.5).

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 3.2.4 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” (3.2.4). Thus, faculty input in the chairperson appointment renewal process is guided by the college dean.