

Department of Mathematics
Procedure for the Evaluation of Tenure-Track Faculty

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I. Introduction

This document describes the procedures for evaluating tenure-track faculty within the Department of Mathematics. For the purposes of this document, “tenure-track faculty” refers to any tenured or tenure-eligible member of the Department of Mathematics. The policies and procedures outlined are either required by the *Faculty Handbook* (in particular Section 3.05.F of the *Faculty Handbook*, Chapter 4, 2.10.1 – 2.10.7 of the *Administrative Manual*) or serve to supplement the *Faculty Handbook* policies and provide additional details specific to the Department of Mathematics.

II. Personnel Process

1. The Department of Mathematics will maintain a list of guidelines and suggestions for the preparation of personal statements and portfolios. Each candidate will maintain a current vita that will be made public at the start of the review process. Each candidate may choose to name an *advocate*. The Advocate will work with the Personnel Committee (PC) throughout the process for the candidate under consideration. The Advocate must be a tenure-track faculty member of the Department of Mathematics, but may not be the Unit Head.
2. The PC will provide a mechanism for tenure-track faculty to share anonymous formative feedback with the candidate about strengths and potential issues to address in the personal statement and portfolio. The PC will compile this information and share it with the candidate. In addition, the Unit Head will communicate directly with the candidate about possible items for the candidate to address. Although the exact content of this communication will remain confidential, the Unit Head, as a member of the department, may raise issues discussed with the candidate in subsequent stages of the personnel process.
3. All candidates are strongly encouraged to solicit 1-3 letters from professional colleagues outside the Department of Mathematics, including, if appropriate, professional colleagues outside of Grand Valley. Such external letter writers will be charged with providing information and their professional opinions about one or more relevant aspects of the candidate’s work, in light of departmental standards and expectations. Although the PC and Advocate will work with the candidate to identify external letter writers, their selection ultimately rests with the candidate. The PC Chair will communicate with and request the letters from the external letter writers; the letters will be addressed and submitted to the Unit Head, with copies sent to the PC Chair. The PC will share the candidate’s vita and the departmental evaluation criteria with external letter writers; upon request, the PC Chair will solicit additional relevant materials from the candidate and share these with the external letter writers.
4. Each academic year (typically in the fall semester), the PC will conduct one classroom visitation for each untenured faculty member using the attached Class Visit Record. In addition, tenured faculty members seeking promotion within three years are encouraged to request classroom visitations from the PC. The Class Visit Records produced by the PC will be shared with the candidate and retained by the department for future reviews.
5. ***Class Visit Records:*** Untenured faculty who are under consideration for contract renewal, tenure, and/or promotion must include in their portfolios all Class Visit Records produced by the PC prior to their review. Tenured faculty who are under consideration for promotion must include all Class Visit Records produced by the PC in the three years prior to their review. If any candidate (untenured or tenured) has not been visited by the PC at least twice in the three years prior to their review, then the PC will conduct classroom visitations during the semester prior to the review (winter semester for promotions to Professor; fall semester for all other personnel actions) to ensure that the candidate’s portfolio includes at least two Class Visit Records.

6. The PC Chair (with support from the office staff) will create a spreadsheet containing all numerical data from the relevant years of student evaluations. At this stage in the process, the spreadsheet as well as full copies of relevant student evaluations will be made available to the PC, Advocate, and candidate. The spreadsheet and full copies of relevant student evaluations will be included in the candidate's portfolio.
7. **Optional Formative Feedback on Personal Statement:** The candidate may share with the PC and Advocate a draft personal statement. The PC and Advocate, after reviewing this document as well as the candidate's student evaluations and compiled spreadsheet, will meet with the candidate to provide formative feedback with regard to the completeness, clarity, and coherence of the personal statement as it pertains to the relevant evaluation criteria. During this meeting, the candidate will also be given an opportunity to discuss preliminary formative feedback provided by department members in Item 2 above. The feedback provided during this meeting will not be documented in writing and should not be construed as necessary or sufficient to guarantee a positive outcome of the personnel action under consideration. The choice to meet or not meet with the PC regarding a draft personal statement rests with the candidate; this choice, by itself, will not be viewed favorably or unfavorably in subsequent steps of the evaluation process.
8. The candidate will submit their portfolio, including their finalized personal statement, to the PC Chair. At this time, external letter writers will also submit their letters to the Unit Head. These letters will then be included in the candidate's portfolio.
9. **Items To Include in Portfolio:** The candidate's portfolio will be made available to all tenure-track faculty. The portfolio will include: the personal statement, vita, student evaluations (including the compiled spreadsheet described in Item 6), Class Visit Records, external letters, and supporting information and examples of work provided by the candidate. Beginning in Fall 2016, candidates who have tenure and are applying for promotion must include all Faculty Activity Reports (FARs) and Faculty Activity Plans (FAPs) for the previous six years. Beginning in Winter 2017, candidates applying for contract renewal or tenure/promotion to Associate Professor must include all Faculty Activity Reports (FARs) and Faculty Activity Plans (FAPs) since their initial hires at GVSU. All candidates must include all annual written performance summaries (WPS) since the 2015 calendar year.
10. Each department member is expected to review the candidate's vita, personal statement, Class Visit Records, spreadsheet of numerical student evaluation data, and external letters. In addition, faculty should seek additional information and/or clarification from the candidate's portfolio whenever such information is necessary to ensure informed and responsible participation in the candidate's review. Based on their review of the candidate's portfolio, each department member is invited to submit suggested bullet items for the candidate's *Initial Agenda*. Department members may submit up to three suggested bullet items (of 1-2 sentences each) for each of the three areas of evaluation (teaching, scholarly activity, and service). Faculty are encouraged to include a brief rationale for their suggestions, but the rationale will not be included in the Initial Agenda. These suggestions will be submitted directly to the Unit Head.
11. Each member of the PC and the Advocate will review the entire portfolio, including the external letters, and will submit 1-3 suggested bullet items for each of the three areas of evaluation. These suggestions will be submitted directly to the Unit Head.
12. The Unit Head will compile the suggested bullet items and rationales (with names redacted) from Items 10 and 11, share them with the PC and the Advocate, and use them in addition to the external letters to create a *Draft Initial Agenda* for the candidate's unit discussion meeting. It is expected that this agenda will normally be at most 2 pages for a contract renewal, and at most 3 pages for a tenure or promotion decision.

13. The Unit Head will share the *Draft Initial Agenda* with the PC and the Advocate. The PC and the Advocate will then meet to discuss the *Draft Initial Agenda*. After the meeting, the Advocate and each of the individual members of the PC will communicate suggestions to the Unit Head for any changes to the *Draft Initial Agenda*. At her/his discretion, the Unit Head will revise the *Draft Initial Agenda* based on these suggestions to produce the *Initial Agenda*.
14. The Unit Head will share the *Initial Agenda* with the PC and the Advocate. The PC and the Advocate will then vote on whether to endorse the *Initial Agenda*. If there is not a majority vote in favor of endorsing the *Initial Agenda*, the Unit Head will revise the *Initial Agenda*, submit the revised version to the PC and to the Advocate, and a new vote will be taken. After the final vote is taken, the Advocate and/or any member(s) of the PC may write a dissent (at most one page in length) that will be appended to the *Initial Agenda*. All dissents will be signed by their author(s). The final vote will be made public along with the *Initial Agenda*.
15. The Unit Head will distribute the *Initial Agenda* (including the final PC vote and any dissents) to all tenure-track faculty. At this time, the Unit Head will also share an edited copy of the compiled suggested bullet items, with names redacted, from Item 12 with the candidate so that the candidate has full information in order to address questions/concerns/issues at the unit discussion meeting. (The Unit Head, in consultation with the PC, will determine if any submitted comments are not relevant to the personnel action and will delete them from the compiled suggested bullet items document before forwarding it to the candidate.)
16. Once the *Initial Agenda* has been distributed, any tenure-track department member, including the candidate, may propose changes. The Unit Head, at his or her discretion, will use faculty feedback and the *Initial Agenda* to produce the *Final Agenda* for the unit discussion meeting. The Unit Head will then distribute the *Final Agenda* to all tenure-track faculty.
17. The unit discussion meeting will last at most 50 minutes and will be scheduled in advance at a normal department meeting or seminar time. The meeting will have three stages: discussion with the candidate, deliberation, and voting. During the discussion portion of the meeting, the candidate will be given the opportunity to respond to any items listed on the *Final Agenda*. If time permits, department members will be given the opportunity to ask follow-up questions. After the discussion portion of the meeting has concluded, the candidate will leave the room, and the Unit Head will provide a verbal summary of the preceding discussion. Department members will then discuss the personnel action or actions under consideration and eligible departmental faculty members will vote by secret ballot. To the extent possible given the aforementioned time limitations, it is the Unit Head's responsibility to organize and facilitate each candidate's unit discussion meeting in a way that promotes meaningful discussion of salient issues.
18. After the candidate's unit discussion meeting, the Unit Head and PC chair will count and tally the votes in the presence of the candidate (or a designate chosen by the candidate). The Unit Head will share the result of the vote with the department via e-mail.
19. ***Post-Meeting Faculty Comment Forms:*** The Unit Head will distribute *Post-Meeting Faculty Comment Forms* to all tenure-track members of the department (including the candidate). All department members who agree with the majority vote and have no additional perspectives to add to the discussion should not submit *Post-Meeting Faculty Comment Forms*. *Post-Meeting Faculty Comment Forms* should only be submitted when an individual disagrees with the vote and/or has a substantive comment to make. Candidates may submit a *Post-Meeting Faculty Comment Form* and may attach any materials that address specific concerns raised in the unit discussion meeting. The Unit Head will use the unit discussion and comment forms to prepare a *Draft Unit Recommendation Report*. However, at his or her discretion, the Unit Head may reconvene the department, returning to Item 17, if substantive new issues or concerns are raised in the *Post-Meeting Faculty Comment Forms*.

20. The Unit Head will distribute the candidate's *Draft Unit Recommendation Report* to all tenure-track faculty. The Unit Head will solicit suggestions for changes to the *Draft Unit Recommendation Report* and will, at his or her discretion, incorporate these suggestions into the final *Unit Recommendation Report*. The Unit Head will distribute the final *Unit Recommendation Report* to all tenure-track faculty.
21. Following the guidelines in the university Faculty Personnel Policy (Section 3.05.F of the *Faculty Handbook*, Chapter 4, Sections 2.3 – 2.10 of the *Administrative Manual*), the Unit Head will forward the *Final Agenda*, the tally of the departmental vote, copies of all submitted *Post-Meeting Faculty Comment Forms*, the candidate's portfolio (including, letters from external letter writers), and the final Unit Recommendation Report, to the Dean. At this time, the candidate may also draft and attach an addendum to his or her integrative statement in order to address issues raised in the department meeting and/or *Unit Recommendation Report*. The Unit Head will also post all required materials to the CLAS Personnel Committee (CPC) Blackboard site.
22. After the conclusion of Item 21, each candidate will be given an opportunity to meet with the PC and the Advocate. The purpose of this meeting is for the candidate, Advocate, and PC to share formative feedback about the process with each other. The formative feedback provided by the PC to the candidate makes no commitment regarding future personnel actions or salary adjustments since performance of the projected activities will continue to be determined by evaluation criteria established by the *Faculty Handbook* and carried out by specific procedures determined by the departmental faculty.

Appendix A: Schedule Guidelines for Personnel Reviews

Because of workload and scheduling constraints, it is necessary to allow the PC and Unit Head some degree of flexibility in completing their work. However, the initial steps of the personnel process will typically follow the scheduling guidelines specified below.

Task	Contract Renewal, Tenure, Promotion to Associate Professor	Promotion to Professor
For promotion decisions, candidate notifies Unit Head and PC of intention to accept a nomination	By the last day of classes, Winter semester	By the last day of classes, Fall semester
Candidate provides current vita to Unit Head and PC	Prior to the start of Fall semester	By the last day of classes, Fall semester
Candidate selects Advocate (optional)	Prior to the start of Fall semester	Prior to the last 4 weeks of Winter semester
Selection of external letter writers	By the first day of classes, Fall semester	By the end of Winter semester
Formative feedback from department members	During Fall semester, before the end of the 8th week of classes	By 10 th week of the Winter semester
Classroom visitations, if necessary	During the 3rd through 10th weeks of Fall semester	During the 3rd through 11th weeks of Winter semester
Draft integrative statement due / meeting with PC (optional)	During the 11th thru 13 th weeks of Fall semester	During the last 4 weeks of Winter semester
Portfolio and external letters due (and made available the next business day)	First day of Fall semester final exams	One week prior to the first day of classes, Fall semester
Steps 9-20	First half of Winter semester, per CPC deadlines and other department commitments	First half of Fall semester, per CPC deadlines and other department commitments
Formative feedback between candidate and PC (optional)	Second half of Winter semester, after each candidate's unit meeting and vote.	Second half of Fall semester, after each candidate's unit meeting and vote.

By the first day of each semester, the PC Chair will distribute detailed timelines with specific dates for each of the items in the personnel process for each candidate under review. Items 9-20 in the process will be scheduled based on CPC deadlines and other department business (such as meetings related to faculty searches).

Whenever possible, candidates and department members will be given at least 2 business days to respond to requests for information (such as suggestions for *Final Agendas* or *Unit Recommendation Reports*) and to review relevant documents prior to unit discussion meetings. Exceptions to this rule will occur only if necessary to meet CPC deadlines.

Appendix B: Responsibilities Associated with the Personnel Process

Candidate: First and foremost, it is the candidate's responsibility to present a complete and thorough case for the personnel decision under consideration. The candidate should document her or his qualifications (relevant to the personnel decision at hand) through a curriculum vitae, personal statement, and portfolio; the candidate should also participate actively in the personnel process. The candidate is encouraged to make use of resources such as department and college personnel documents and guidelines, and to consult with the PC, Unit Head, and other members of the department as needed.

PC: The PC conducts class visitations, provides support and assistance to the candidate, and, along with the candidate's Advocate, provides oversight of the review process, including the development of each candidate's *Initial Agenda*. Each member of the PC is expected to thoroughly review all of the candidate's portfolio and assist the Unit Head by providing suggested bullet points for the candidate's *Draft Initial Agenda*.

PC Chair: Per department bylaws, the PC Chair "is responsible for the review process, including scheduling meetings of the committee, preparing and distributing reports, and communication with the department." In particular, the responsibilities of the PC Chair include overseeing the schedule for all aspects of the personnel process and communicating with all involved parties (including the candidate, external letter writers, department members, members of the PC, and the Unit Head). Although the PC Chair does not conduct class visitations, s/he will work with the PC to schedule class visits and facilitate the committee's review of drafts of the Class Visit Records.

Advocate: At the invitation of the candidate, an advocate participates with the PC in the portions of the review process described above, including: (1) providing formative feedback to the candidate on the draft ~~integrative~~ personal statement; (2) participating in the PC's discussion and vote(s) pertaining to the candidate's *Draft Initial Agenda*; (3) if desired, submitting a dissent to the *Initial Agenda*; and (4) participating in the formative feedback exchange described in Item 22 above. To ensure meaningful and informed participation in the review process, advocates are expected to thoroughly review all of the candidate's portfolio.

External Letter Writers: External letter writers provide information and their professional opinions about one or more relevant aspects of the candidate's work, in light of departmental standards and expectations.

Unit Head: The Unit Head's primary responsibilities include developing the agenda for each candidate's unit meeting (as described in Items 12-16 above), chairing the unit discussion meeting, and writing the *Unit Recommendation Report*. The Unit Head also ensures that all processes detailed in the *Faculty Handbook* (Section 3.05.F of the *Faculty Handbook*, Chapter 4, Sections 2.3 – 2.10 of the *Administrative Manual*) are followed.

Department Members: Tenure-track members of the department have responsibilities at several points in the process. In addition to potentially serving as advocates and members of the PC, all tenure-track faculty have the opportunity to give initial feedback to the candidate, as described in Item 2 of the process. Faculty also have the opportunity (and are strongly encouraged) to submit suggested bullet points for each candidate's *Initial Agenda*, as described in Item 10 of the process. All tenure-track faculty are expected to read and respond to personnel communications from the Unit Head and PC in a timely manner, especially those pertaining to the *Initial* and *Final Agendas*. All tenure-track faculty are expected to carefully review each candidate's vita, personal statement, Class Visit Records, spreadsheet of numerical student evaluation data, and external letters, as well as their *Initial* and *Final Agendas*. In addition, faculty should seek additional information and/or clarification from the candidate's portfolio whenever such information is necessary to ensure informed and responsible participation in the candidate's review.

Appendix C: Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest

Confidentiality. The personnel process involves candid discussion and evaluation of the candidate's performance. In addition, a number of formal evaluation documents, such as letters from external letter writers, agendas, and the *Unit Recommendation Report*, are created throughout the process. This appendix describes the policies of the Department of Mathematics with regard to the confidentiality of these materials.

- External letters are not considered confidential, and they will be included in their original form in the candidate's portfolio.
- External letters will be destroyed when they are no longer necessary to the personnel process. For tenured faculty, letters will be retained until the personnel action under consideration has been fully resolved and accepted by the Board of Trustees. For untenured faculty, letters will be retained until the candidate's tenure decision has been fully resolved.
- Unless otherwise specified, all work products pertaining to the personnel process, including preliminary drafts of Class Visit Records and *Initial Agendas*, are confidential and may be viewed only by the PC and the Unit Head. At the discretion of the PC, drafts of Class Visit Records ~~reports~~ may be shared with the candidate as part of the class visitation process. In addition, the *Draft Initial Agenda* will be shared with the candidate's Advocate as described in Items 12 thru 14 above.
- Suggestions for the *Draft Initial Agenda* submitted by faculty and the PC will be shared only with the Unit Head, PC, Advocate, and, in edited form as described in Item 15, the candidate.

Conflicts of Interest. In the event that the Unit Head is under consideration for a personnel action, a designate shall be appointed to oversee the personnel process and carry out all personnel-related Unit Head responsibilities for the semester during which the Unit Head is evaluated. In addition, any member of the PC who is under consideration for a personnel action (including the PC chair) will be excluded from all PC discussions and deliberations pertaining to that member's personnel action. In the event that the PC chair is under consideration for a personnel action, the PC will select a committee member or the other Assistant Chair to oversee the committee's work with regard to the PC Chair's personnel action. In accordance with the *Faculty Handbook* (Section 2.10.6 of Chapter 4 of the *Administrative Manual*) faculty with conflicts of interest due to familial or business relationships, or due to denial of tenure or contract renewal, will be completely excused from all involvement and participation in the department's personnel process.

Appendix D: Mathematics Class Visit Record

Teacher:	Observer:	Date of lesson:
Course:	Topic:	Course experience (# of times previously taught):

An explanation of the use and purpose of this form is provided on the lastpage.

Lesson Preparation (teacher, 1 paragraph):

Lesson Summary (observer, 1 page):

Lesson Response (observer, 1 paragraph):

Lesson Reflection (teacher, 1 paragraph):

By signing below, I agree that my portions of this record accurately reflect my perception of the observation.

Teacher

Observer

Description of the Mathematics Class Visit Record

As teaching is a primary responsibility of faculty, documenting a faculty member's teaching is an important task. The Department of Mathematics views teaching as work that extends beyond the classroom and involves assessment, planning, and evaluation, as well as instruction. This *Class Visit Record* strives to create an image of the teacher's classroom as well as the work that surrounds it.

In the first section, the teacher writes a paragraph that describes his or her preparation for the lesson to be observed. This paragraph should include a listing of the objective(s) for the lesson along with a description of the teacher's experience with the course and lesson. It may also include a description of how class activities were chosen or developed, or a short description of the reasoning behind the objective(s).

In the second section, the observer writes a brief summary (approximately one page) of the observed class. This summary is not evaluative. The focus of this summary is not to provide a transcript that conveys every detail of the class, but rather to capture the essence of the lesson, with selected details that help the reader understand the teacher's classroom. In the summary, the observer may wish to comment on the mode of instruction, student-teacher communication, student-student interaction, student engagement, the teacher's assessment techniques, and any other salient features of the class.

In the third section, the observer writes a one-paragraph response to the observation. In this paragraph, the observer reflects on what he or she thought was important or noteworthy about the class. This reflection may include questions, issues, praise, or commentary.

In the fourth and final section, the teacher writes a paragraph reflecting upon the observation. This paragraph may include consideration of the lesson objectives, reflection about what happened during instruction, explanation to assist the reader in understanding the lesson, or a response to what the observer has written.

The *Class Visit Record* is a result of collaboration between the observer and teacher for the purpose of communicating the teacher's teaching, and both will sign the final form. Communication between the teacher and observer is encouraged throughout the process, in particular before and after the observation and in the final editing of the record. For the personnel process, *Class Visit Records* are forwarded with the candidate's materials and should be both clear and concise.