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Department of Mathematics
Process for Evaluating Affiliate Faculty for Contract Renewals
Starting August 2013

This document describes the process through which the Department of Mathematics will evaluate affiliate faculty for contract renewal. It is based on guidelines distributed by the Provost's Office in 2011, as well as earlier versions adopted by the Department of Mathematics.

- For each candidate up for review, an *ad hoc* committee of regular faculty will be created to serve as the department's Affiliate Evaluation Group (AEG) for that candidate. The purpose of each AEG is to make recommendations on contract renewals of affiliate faculty to the Unit Head. The Unit Head will then make a final recommendation to the Dean.
- The AEG consists of at least one regular faculty member chosen by the Unit Head to chair the committee, and one tenure-track faculty member (other than the Unit Head) chosen by the candidate up for review. This second member may advocate for the candidate. The Unit Head may appoint another regular faculty to any of the AEGs. It is expected that in a given academic year, the same regular faculty member will chair all AEGs.
- The focus of the evaluation for contract renewal will be teaching performance. Affiliate faculty members are expected to be professional teachers and to teach effectively. The primary role of an effective teacher is to establish conditions that are conducive to student learning. Effective teachers maintain knowledge of their subject areas, keep course content up-to-date, incorporate appropriate pedagogy, and meet all classes (except for illnesses, emergencies, and pre-arranged absences). Further descriptions of effective teaching are found in the "Criteria for Effective Teaching Performance" section below.
- The process will proceed as follows:
 - The department will conduct visits to two different classes of each candidate under evaluation. The visits will occur in the semesters prior to, or semester of, the evaluation. Class visitation reports will be written for each visit using the Affiliate Class Visit Report Form (see page 5) and will be used as part of the evaluation process. The purpose of these visits is to provide information to the AEG to assist in the evaluation of teaching performance. The visits will be conducted by members of the department's Foundations Committee, the course coordinators for MTH 110, MTH 122, MTH 123, or MTH 201, or members of the AEG. Any candidate can request that a department colleague (regular or affiliate faculty) be a second observer. This colleague would assist in writing the class visit report. Such requests must be made early enough to the Unit Head to allow sufficient time to coordinate the visits.
 - The chair of the AEG will work with the Unit Head to develop a schedule for the evaluation process. Typically, the rest of the steps below will be conducted during Winter semester, but the Unit Head may choose to move the process to Fall semester when we have several candidates being considered in the same academic year.
 - Each candidate for contract renewal will provide to the AEG a portfolio. The portfolio needs to contain information that is specific, personal, and recent. In particular, the portfolio must contain the following items.

- A self-evaluation which focuses on teaching (a specific form will be provided).
 - A copy of a syllabus and final exam from at least one course the candidate has taught at GVSU that illustrates what the candidate expects his/her students to have learned in that course.
 - At least two examples of materials that demonstrate involvement of students in the learning process: possible documents include in-class group activities, class projects, calculator support materials, etc.
 - A curriculum vitae.
 - Activity reports for the years since the last contract renewal.
 - Candidates may include other materials if they wish.
- After the classroom visits and portfolio are submitted to the Unit Head, the AEG will invite comments from regular and affiliate faculty about the candidate's performance.
 - The AEG will use the material supplied by the candidate in his/her portfolio, the class visit reports, student evaluations from classes taught by the candidate during the time of the current contract, the previous contract renewal report (if applicable) and faculty comments to produce a draft summary report and recommendation for the candidate. Recommendations can be for a three-year renewal, a one-year renewal, or no renewal. The official author of this report will be the chair of the AEG, so if there is disagreement among the AEG, the AEG chair will make final decisions about the report. This draft report will be given to the Unit Head and the candidate.
 - Each candidate will meet with the Unit Head and a representative of the AEG to discuss his/her draft report, unless the candidate signs a form to waive his/her right to the discussion. After the meeting, the candidate has the right to submit a dissent, if the candidate believes the evaluation was incomplete or unfair. The AEG member chosen by the candidate also has the right to submit a dissent.
 - Once the deadline for submitting a dissent has passed, the chair of the AEG will finalize the report and recommendation. The final report and recommendation will be shared with the candidate and the Unit Head.
 - The Unit Head will consider the AEG's recommendation and any dissent from the candidate, and may request another meeting with the candidate. Then, the Unit Head will give the final report, any dissent, and his/her recommendation to the Dean. The Dean will communicate his/her decision to the candidate in either April or May.

Criteria for Evaluating Teaching Performance

The following criteria are based on the document produced by the Teaching Effectiveness Committee of the former Division of Science and Mathematics at GVSU. The categories listed below describe traits that are common among effective, professional teachers. Distinctions are made between characteristics of effective and those of excellent teachers in each category. In addition to the descriptions in each category, there are some characteristics of excellent teaching that are common to all categories. Specifically, excellent teaching is dynamic, innovative, reflective, and constantly evolving.

We realize that to be an effective or excellent teacher it is not necessary to meet all of these listed criteria at the highest level. In fact, it is an unrealistic expectation for any one individual to do so. However, the categories do describe characteristics to which we should all aspire.

A. Classroom management skills

Effective teachers use teaching/learning techniques such as lecturing, discussion, problem solving, small group work, student presentations, etc., that promote learning. These teachers ask appropriate questions and challenge students to think about the subject matter without intimidating or degrading them. In addition, excellent teachers create environments in which students are interested and active participants in their own learning.

B. Preparation and organization

Effective teachers are those who regularly select or develop appropriate, up-to-date material, arrange that material in a logical manner well suited for teaching and learning, and make objectives clear. These attributes can be demonstrated by use of complete, well-organized syllabi, lab activities, small group projects, etc. Effective teachers can be spontaneous but are always well prepared. In addition, excellent teachers have the skills necessary to help students organize course content into a cohesive whole.

C. Communication

Effective teachers speak with clarity and appropriate volume; make eye contact with students and facilitate discussion; define new or difficult terms in lecture; make effective use of appropriate diagrams or other illustrations; and make effective use of the writing board, AV material, computers, manipulatives, and other support materials. When effective teachers deliver material, they explain concepts, terms, arguments, etc. by means of examples/analogies readily understood by students; emphasize important points; encourage students to organize their material by providing context and direction; clearly indicate transitions from one topic to another; place topics in appropriate context; and avoid annoying or distracting mannerisms.

When using a discovery mode of teaching, effective teachers create an environment in which students discover concepts, identify underlying definitions and theorems, and clarify ideas for each other. In addition, excellent teachers understand the importance of dialogue in the teaching/learning experience and are able to generate student interest. Excellent teachers are superior listeners and both interpret and respond appropriately to student questions or comments.

D. Enthusiasm

By words, gestures or other body language, effective teachers show a genuine love of and enthusiasm for the subject and for teaching that is consistent with their teaching styles. An effective teacher manages to convey a love of and enthusiasm for the subject to a significant number of students in the class. Excellent teachers not only manage to convince most students that learning the subject is a very important and very worthwhile task, they also instill enthusiasm in some of their students.

E. Knowledge

Effective teachers maintain current knowledge of their subject and relevant related areas in a variety of ways. These include reading, research, or other professional activities such as professional practice, attendance at regional/national meetings, professional meetings, and service on panels in the profession. In addition, excellent teachers continually strive to gain new insights in their fields, relevant teaching techniques, and subjects outside of their fields. The degree to which faculty members achieve these criteria must be judged in the context of the pace of growth or change within the areas in question. This is usually not judged from student evaluations, but comes from faculty peers in the unit.

F. Evaluation

Effective teachers write challenging, thoughtful questions within the constraints of class size and course objectives, and assess students' understanding of the course material and ability to use the concepts and ideas in a variety of ways. Effective teachers set fair and consistent expectations regarding tests, essays and other assignments and grade student work fairly and promptly. In addition, excellent teachers design creative assignments that intellectually “stretch” their students.

G. Availability

Effective teachers set reasonable office hours and/or adopt an open door policy for their students; are generous with time and energy; are patient with students and show pride in student achievements; promote an atmosphere of approachability; and show respect for their students. In addition, excellent teachers are interested in both their students’ professional and personal growth, encourage students’ independence and sustain high expectations of their students.

H. Intellectual motivation

Effective teachers stimulate intellectual curiosity by the strength of their own intellects, by praise, and by suggestion. Elegance of thought is clearly conveyed as a top priority of learning. Successful teachers have the ability to reward students meaningfully for outstanding work and to know how and when to do it. In addition, excellent teachers encourage deep-learning, rather than surface, approaches. They are concerned with developing students' critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, and problem-approach behaviors, and enable students to become independent learners.

I. Flexibility and resourcefulness in teaching

Effective teachers have the knowledge and ability to expand on textual material; to explain or illustrate material in more than one way; to respond meaningfully and appropriately to student questions about course material and related topics; and to demonstrate the relevancy of course material. Effective teachers share ideas with and seek advice from colleagues. Successful teachers have developed feedback mechanisms that monitor the effectiveness of teaching and demonstrate the ability and confidence to adjust their teaching styles to achieve a more productive learning experience. In addition, excellent teachers demonstrate an ability to transform and extend their students’ knowledge. They draw on their knowledge of their subject, their knowledge of their learners, and their general pedagogical knowledge to communicate the concepts of the discipline into terms that are meaningful to their students.

J. Dedication to students

Excellent teachers leave something of themselves with their students. Teachers who can achieve this difficult criterion must – by conviction, dedication, and devotion – demonstrate to students the importance of life-long learning and serve as important role models. Teachers who excel in this category must share themselves with students. The influence of the individual teacher is so unique and so worthwhile to some students that in a sense it is never forgotten.

Affiliate Classroom Observation

Department of Mathematics

Affiliate Faculty Member:

Observer:

Affiliate to fill out: If you have questions about what is meant by a question, please ask!

1. Describe a typical day in the course to be observed. Please include a description of whether and how much you typically use: lecturing, discussion, problem solving, cooperative or small group work.

Response: (Please Type)

2. How do you deal with homework and homework questions in this course?

Response: (Please Type)

3. How do you use technology in this course?

Response: (Please Type)

4. What has been the biggest challenge in teaching this course for you? How have you tried to address it? What support would you like for it?

Response: (Please Type)

Observer to complete:

Date:

Course:

of students:

1. Describe the class observed. Please include a description of modes of instruction, student engagement, technology use, and how students and teacher interacted.

Response:

2. What was the greatest strength of the lesson you observed?

Response:

3. Were there any questions, issues, or challenges that you feel should be addressed or discussed with the instructor?

Response:

Instructor response: Optional.

Do you have any comment or response or questions about the observer's report?

Response:

Signatures:

Observer: _____

Instructor: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____