



Mathematics Department Mentoring Plan for Visitors

Fall 2022

1. Eligibility for service as a mentor

Any tenure-track or affiliate faculty member in the Mathematics Department may serve as a mentor with the exception of the Unit Head. Affiliates serving as mentors will have teaching workload adjusted for this service work.

2. Method for selecting mentors

- The Unit Head will identify one or two colleagues who are broadly representative of the diversity of the department and consult with them to determine their availability and willingness to serve as mentors.
- Once the Unit Head appoints mentors, the Unit Head will put the new faculty member in touch with both mentors so that they can connect with each other during the period between the new faculty member's hiring and the start of work.
- Mentors are appointed for a period of one academic year.

3. Roles of the mentors and new faculty member

Mentor's Main Roles:

- Offer advice and support related to the new faculty member's questions and issues as they arise, with a focus on teaching, and help encourage the new faculty member to become a more reflective practitioner.
- Help the new faculty member be aware of and navigate relevant department/university information/policies relevant to their position
- Assist the new faculty member in building a network for professional support and development.

New Faculty Member's Main Role(s):

- Engage with the faculty mentors to discuss and understand relevant departmental/college/university policies, procedures, and expectations.
- Rely on mentors in whatever ways the new faculty member finds helpful for support in teaching and professional development and acclimating to the department.
- Begin building a network of professional support and development.

By the end of the first year, the new faculty member should, with the help of their mentors:

- Further develop the ability to reflect critically on feedback on their teaching and make improvements.
- Begin to build a network of support which the faculty member can use moving forward. This network can include departmental faculty, GVSU faculty outside the department, and colleagues outside GVSU.

- Have a plan for ongoing growth in teaching and professional development for future semesters

5. Topics to Address

The primary purpose of meetings between the new faculty member and their mentors is to discuss items of importance to the new faculty member. These items may be specific concrete items to discuss; or the meeting may focus on the new faculty member's questions, concerns, or experiences. The new faculty member contributes to the focus of each meeting for the purpose of supporting the new faculty member's ongoing professional development in teaching and their personal acclimation to life and work in the Mathematics Department.

Specific topics *that are included in mentoring meetings should be planned in order to familiarize new faculty with fundamental issues involved in life and work at GVSU and should be introduced in a timely way. Those topics should include, but are not limited to:*

- Building quality, productive, professional relationships with students
- Resources and logistics for supporting teaching (i.e., using technology/media console in classroom, accessing classroom management system, FTLC)
- Discussion of effective course design/pedagogy
- Seeking opportunities for growth in and reflection on teaching
- Interpreting feedback from both students (including LIFT and mid semester data from teaching) and colleagues
- Clarifying relevant department/university policies/information

6. Class Observations/Mid-Semester Feedback

Visitors teaching foundations courses will have a classroom visit from a member of the Foundations Committee. If the visitor is not teaching foundation courses, the Unit Head will arrange for a classroom visit for at least one of the visitor's assigned courses.

Beyond this one required classroom visit, each mentor is encouraged to conduct an additional classroom observation of the new faculty member. Peer observations of the new faculty member's teaching are also strongly encouraged, and mentors should encourage new faculty to spend time visiting colleagues' classes and also to have their own classes visited. Such are intended to be formative and must not be used in personnel deliberations. New faculty are encouraged to discuss the results of these visits with their mentors.

Mid-Semester Feedback (sometime during weeks 6-8): To hone teaching, faculty should engage students in a mid-semester feedback survey. The department has a form that it has used in the past (can be a paper form completed by hand in class or in an online survey format). However, the FTLC also has mid-semester questionnaires resources, so if you want to substitute a different mid-semester feedback tool, please be in consultation with the Unit Head to verify which resource will be used in place of the departmental student feedback survey. [FTLC](#) has multiple resources and opportunities related to mid-semester and soliciting student feedback.

7. Scheduling of meetings between mentor and new faculty member

Meet at least once before semester starts.

Meetings between the faculty member and their mentors should take place on a regular basis, at least two meetings per month at a standing mutually agreed time.

8. Workshops, orientations, and meetings to be attended by the new faculty member

All new faculty are expected to attend the New Faculty Orientation conducted by the Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC) before the beginning of their first semester of work. All new visiting faculty members are expected to attend the Math Department Start Up meeting and relevant course meetings, as well as specified department meetings that are relevant.

Other workshops, orientations, and meetings to attend will be decided upon by the faculty member and their mentors.

9. Measuring satisfaction with the mentoring program

At the end of each semester of a new faculty member's first year, the Unit Head will meet with the faculty member to discuss the faculty member's overall experiences during the semester and how their professional support network is developing. This discussion will include explicit discussion of the faculty member's experiences in, and satisfaction with, the mentoring program. The Unit Head will also solicit feedback from the mentors on their experiences and satisfaction with the mentoring program each semester.