Tenure/promotion guidelines and annual evaluation information
Approved in the November 22, 2011 meeting of the Department of Mathematics
tenured faculty and shared with the tenure-track faculty

Principle 1: The department is a Department of Mathematics, and all activity is weighted foremost in regard to its impact as a mathematics activity.

Principle 2: Serious, diligent, significant, high-quality activity is expected.

Expectations for untenured, tenure-track faculty by years 3 and 6 are given for scholarly and creative activity below. Emphasis is placed on these activities for the following reasons, each assumed as a self-evident truth. Faculty research and scholarly and creative activity are crucial to the educational mission of any institution of higher education. Such activity informs and deepens the teaching process, and enhances the experience of students directly or indirectly.

Research, scholarly and creative activity expectations

Significant professional development as a mathematician and mathematics educator is to be expected. Such work will be routinely subject to peer review. Peer review in part means reviewed by individuals who hold the terminal degree in the appropriate discipline, or the equivalent (and which rarely can include individuals who have demonstrable documented particular special expertise but do not hold the terminal degree).

Publications in all peer-reviewed venues are significant and ‘count’. See below for some guidance regarding journal quality. Giving talks at professional meetings also ‘count’; invited talks ‘count’ more than contributed talks; but all are valued. Impact and significance of the scholarly and creative work in the academic discipline may lead to higher weighting.

Significance of work can be measured in several ways, e.g. by citations and by supporting letters from experts in the field.

Several publications in peer-reviewed scholarly journals are expected of all faculty prior to tenure and based on work undertaken while a faculty member at A & M – Commerce. Emphasis should always be on the mathematics, whether the individual was trained as a pure mathematician, mathematics educator, or applied mathematician or other scientist.

Expectations for year 3 (and year 6) tenure-track faculty:

Faculty holding the PhD in mathematics or a related area, as well as faculty holding the PhD or EdD in mathematics education, are expected to have approximately two substantial publications by year 3, and 5 at the time of a tenure decision. (This includes accepted, unpublished work if in the top journals). Fewer publications, if in top journals, may suffice; more may be expected if the publications are in lesser journals. Fewer publications also may suffice if there has been substantial grant-related work that is deemed scholarly and creative – but in any case some substantial publications are expected by year 3 and year 5. The intent of receipt of any grant
should be scholarly and creative activity that adds to and furthers the intellectual field. Culmination of grant-related work in peer-reviewed scholarly publications should remain the goal.

Remarks concerning the notion of substantiality of publications appear below.

**Ongoing professional service/research activity of all faculty (tenure-track and tenured)**

Faculty scholarly and creative activities and service are to be encouraged, on a year-by-year basis, whether or not work has been published. In this ongoing sense, one may not necessarily be successful in publishing work and yet be maintaining adequate scholarly and creative research progress in other ways. Thus, besides publications of completed research, some work that may be perceived to be 'service' might also qualify as scholarly activity, and possibly research activity. As an example, writing grant proposals to organizations such as the National Science Foundation is not necessarily scholarly activity *per se* in that the work is not publishable, but receipt of competitive grants from such organizations is valuable to the department and to the discipline, and so submission of such proposals is to be encouraged. As another example, refereeing of papers for journals is part of important service to the discipline. Refereeing may 'count' to a limited extent as scholarly or research activity if the referee must rely on substantial expertise in the area to review the paper. Submitting proposals for, and receipt of, grants that involve utilizing or explaining mathematics and whose main activity is working with the public (defined in part as others outside of the peer research environment) is important service to the discipline, and may, at times, be considered scholarly and creative activity. Similarly, publication of resources related to teaching may be considered scholarly and creative activity. Whether the activity is characterized as primarily service or creative/scholarly must likely be determined on a case-by-case basis, although criteria include the competitiveness of the grant program or publication process, peer-review, the reliance on the recipient's academic expertise in conducting the work, and the ultimately how the work adds to the body of knowledge in the discipline. Tenured faculty is encouraged to apply for grants that may be considered more service-oriented; tenure-track faculty is expected to be applying for grants that require their professional academic and scholarly expertise.

Ultimately, tenure decisions must include scholarly/creative activity output as described above.

**Service expectations of all faculty**

Service to professional organizations, such as acting as officers or serving on committees for the AMS, MAA, NCTM, etc, is also highly valued. Substantial service to the Department, University, and external community is also important. (Fewer, but more significant activities may count more than numerous activities with little commitment made). All faculty are also expected to be collegial members of the department, College, and University community.

Applied research, including work done on grant-related projects or consulting, can be considered service or scholarly and creative activity, depending on factors as addressed above. Some grant-related work can be considered service to the community. The key distinction is how much mathematical and other scholarly depth the work has to it, and how much creativity, originating
from the domain of the discipline, was instilled in the work. It is generally although not necessarily expected that such work builds on the work of others. (For consideration as scholarly work, culmination of grant-related and consulting work in peer-reviewed scholarly publications should remain the goal.)

Teaching

Teaching is expected to be of high quality, as evidenced by comments by peers if they have observed the classroom, student evaluations, the use of novel materials and techniques, the development of new courses and course material, samples of student work, demonstration of the overall value added to student understanding, mentoring of student research projects, and comments by former students including recent graduates.

Comments regarding journals, research, and publications considered ‘substantial’

There is no denying that there are ‘top’ journals and lesser journals, but foremost, significant scholarly activity is expected. Examples of ‘top’ journals are those where the experts publish their work. Specific examples of top journals, which accept papers in all areas of math, include Annals of Mathematics, Inventions, journals published by the American Mathematical Society (AMS), Comptes Rendus, etc; and in addition specialty areas have top journals, e.g. Journal of Number Theory, Journal of Combinatorial Theory, Journal of Graph Theory, Annals of Probability, Journal of Differential Geometry. These journals have the highest publication standards, as well-cited, and generally, in the top universities in the US, publication in such journals is deemed to be substantial, simply by virtue of its publication in such journals. Next level journals include the journals of the Mathematical Association of the America (MAA), Pacific Journal of Mathematics, etc—such journals typically have a high rejection rate (usually over 75%, often over 85%) and may, by that measure, be more competitive than the ‘top’ journals, but the mathematics may be at a slightly lower level. In applied mathematics, the ‘top’ general journals are those published by the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM), some of the AMS journals, Numerische Mathematische, etc. Particularly applied areas and areas in engineering have other ‘top’ journals such as Physical Review Letters, Nuclear Physics B, IEEE journals, etc. It is not always unambiguous to know which journals are ‘top’ or first tier, etc. Indicators include who publishes there and how often such work is cited; the strength of the editorial board; acceptance rate; etc. Generally speaking, the mathematics faculty over the past 15 years has had some publications in both the top journals and the next tier journals.

In mathematics education, peer-reviewed publications in the Journal of Mathematics Education would be considered and substantial. Again, deciding which journals are ‘top’ and which are lesser is vague at best, but the same indicators addressed above apply here: where do the top individuals in the field publish their work, what citation impact does the work have, who sits on the editorial board, what is the acceptance rate, etc.

Requirements for promotion to Associate Professor or to Full Professor Promotion to Associate Professor requires that a faculty member satisfy the requirements above the expected tenure-track, untenured faculty at the 3rd year, as well as most of the requirements for untenured faculty
at the 6th year. Recommendation for promotion to Associate Professor will usually not occur prior to the faculty member's 5th year of service with A&M-Commerce, unless the faculty member has been granted credit for prior years of service towards their tenure-track position. Promotion to Full Professor requires that the faculty member show an overall exemplary record at Texas A&M University-Commerce in scholarship and creative activity, teaching, and service (or in rare circumstances, a truly outstanding record at other institutions prior to working at A&M-Commerce as outlined below). This includes all requirements outlined above for tenured faculty, as well as further substantial scholarly and creative activity (including an expectation of approximately five other substantial publications or the equivalent); significant teaching experience; and significant service collectively to the department, college and university on an ongoing basis. In addition, there must be some substantial contribution to the department, college, university or discipline not ordinarily undertaken by untenured faculty. This may include unusual service accomplishments in leadership roles, exemplary research and scholarly activity as recognized by peers in the field, or demonstrated outstanding teaching.