

Department of Mathematics and Statistics

Lecturer Promotion and Evaluation Guidelines

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Evaluation and Promotion Guidelines for Lecturers and Lecturer PAC (L-PAC) Department of Mathematics and Statistics

1 Background

The primary duty of the Lecturer Personnel Advisory Committee (L-PAC) is to evaluate performance of faculty in Lecturer positions in each of the three areas of teaching, scholarly achievement and professional qualifications, and service, providing recognition for their efforts and offering recommendations. This is done at least once every three years for faculty in the rank of Lecturer, and is based on the contents of their yearly Faculty Activity Reports. Annual evaluations in other years are completed by the Academic Unit Head. The L-PAC also evaluates lecturer applications for promotion to the ranks of Senior Lecturer and Principal Lecturer. A guiding principle of the L-PAC is to provide honest, professional, confidential, and candid evaluations that reflect departmental values.

The L-PAC is a peer-elected body, subject to the following departmental requirements: (1) The chair of the L-PAC is chosen by and selected from the previous year's L-PAC. (2) The L-PAC consists of three department faculty. Whenever possible, two of the three members of the L-PAC will be faculty holding RTA or Lecturer positions and the third will be a tenured faculty member. (3) In addition to the chair, at least one member of the L-PAC must have previous PAC or L-PAC experience. (4) An L-PAC member may hold the chair position for at most two consecutive years. This method of selection preserves continuity while reflecting the current culture of the department.

One purpose of this document is to provide insight into departmental values that the L-PAC utilizes in evaluating teaching, scholarly achievement and professional qualifications, and service. A strength of our department is that there are diverse paths to excellence in each of the three areas, and the L-PAC strives for a balance of flexibility and accountability in its evaluations.

2 Yearly Evaluation

Yearly performance ratings of excellent, more than satisfactory, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory in each of the three areas are based on the contents of the Faculty Activity Report. Activities that overlap multiple areas can be included in the area of the faculty member's choice and referenced in other appropriate areas. This section provides an overview of departmental philosophy that guides faculty evaluation. In all cases, the listed contributions are nonexhaustive.

2.1 Teaching

This is the most difficult and subjective of the three areas to evaluate. The general criterion that the L-PAC uses in the evaluation of teaching is *effective effort*. Any teaching style that results in students working hard, learning, and receiving an appropriate amount of feedback is recognized and appreciated.

When the L-PAC evaluates teaching, it considers a variety of evidence, including: creative practices, efforts to enhance teaching, the courses taught, taking on difficult teaching assignments, self-reflection of methods, academic advising, overall involvement with students, student evaluations, curriculum development, professional development, types and frequency of student assessment. The L-PAC also considers other teaching contributions that support the mission of the department.

2.2 Scholarly Activity and Professional Qualifications

Scholarly activity involves scholarly exploration in an aspect of mathematics, statistics, or mathematics education, including interdisciplinary work. This exploration can take many forms, but its hallmark is *increasing content knowledge for the discipline or the individual*. Given the nature of the lecturer position, expectations in this area are comparatively much less than for the other two areas.

When the L-PAC evaluates scholarly activity and professional qualifications for lecturers, it considers a variety of evidence, including: professional development activities, disciplinary or pedagogical conference participation, workshops, presentations or publications, grant involvement, consulting projects. Peer-reviewed, published research is not an expectation of a lecturer, though this can, of course, be considered in the evaluation of lecturers with such accomplishments. The L-PAC also considers other scholarly contributions that support the mission of the department.

2.3 Service

Service activities encompass the various tasks necessary to support the department, the college, the university, the profession, and the community; all faculty are expected to contribute. In addition, there are exceptional service undertakings above and beyond the standard service tasks that elevate the stature of the department; these are given special recognition. The general criterion that the L-PAC uses in the evaluation of service is the level of *initiative and involvement as a good departmental citizen*. As with the other two categories, the most time-intensive tasks receive the most credit. But unlike the other two categories, each individual's service contribution directly impacts the entire department and service expectations generally increase with time.

When the L-PAC evaluates service, it considers a variety of evidence, including: committee work at all levels, leadership roles, involvement in professional societies, service-based consulting, workshop and session organizing, club advising, and outreach activities. The L-PAC also considers other service contributions, including volunteer efforts and initiatives that support the mission of the department, the college, the university, the profession, and the community.

3 Promotion

Performance ratings of excellent, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory in each of the three areas are based on the contents of promotion applications. The same types of evidence are considered as for yearly evaluations. Activities that overlap multiple areas can be included in the area of the faculty member's choice and referenced in other appropriate areas. This section provides university and departmental expectations for promotion.

The JMU Faculty Handbook, section III.E.6, states,

The promotion of an instructional faculty member shall be determined by merit regardless of the distribution of faculty by academic rank within the academic unit. Normally, a faculty member should have completed five years in academic rank before being reviewed for promotion. Though length of service may be given consideration, it is not a sufficient basis for recommendation for promotion. If a faculty member applies for promotion before completing five years in academic rank, they must present compelling evidence of accomplishment to be awarded promotion.

In the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, promotion applications are evaluated based on the cumulative record supplied by the applicant. In particular, ratings in each of the three areas are not necessarily the average of those of the yearly evaluations. While the L-PAC recognizes a wide variety of activities, teaching excellence should anchor a successful application for promotion to Senior or Principal Lecturer. There is no requirement for lecturers to apply for promotion.

3.1 Expectations for promotion to Senior Lecturer

The proposed wording for the JMU Faculty Handbook states, *An excellent rating in teaching and at least satisfactory ratings in all other areas are required for promotion to senior lecturer.*

The L-PAC considers the faculty member's documented contributions in each of the three areas over their time at JMU. During the early part of the career, the faculty member's focus should be on teaching development. Service responsibilities for faculty in the rank of lecturer should be light in the first several years, increasing during their first five years. The L-PAC interprets scholarly activity broadly. When the evidence supplied in an application is not yet sufficient to support promotion, the L-PAC will recommend withdrawal of the application and provide specific feedback regarding areas to strengthen prior to reapplying. It is advisable to request formal L-PAC feedback at least one year ahead of time if there is a question about any aspect of the application.

3.2 Expectations for promotion to Principal Lecturer

The proposed wording for the JMU Faculty Handbook states, *Excellent ratings in teaching and one other area and at least a satisfactory rating in the third area are required for promotion to principal lecturer.*

The L-PAC considers the faculty member's documented contributions in each of the three areas over their entire time at JMU and since promotion to Senior Lecturer. After promotion to Senior Lecturer, the faculty member should continue to develop their teaching excellence, assume broader and deeper service responsibilities, and continue engaging in (broadly-interpreted) scholarly activities. Promotion to Principal Lecturer is a recognition of cumulative, sustained contributions.

When the evidence supplied in an application is not yet sufficient to support promotion, the L-PAC will recommend withdrawal of the application and provide specific feedback regarding areas to strengthen prior to reapplying. It is advisable to request formal L-PAC feedback at least one year ahead of time if there is a question about any aspect of the application.