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TO: Richard Koubek, President

FROM: Andrew Storer, Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs 

COPIES: LaReesa Wolfenbarger, Dean, College of Visual & Performing Arts
Rodica Curtu, Department Chair, Department of Mathematical Sciences

DATE: September 30, 2026

SUBJECT: Senate Proposal 03-27

Attached is the Charter for the Department of Mathematical Sciences (Senate proposal 03-27). I have reviewed and endorse the revisions.

I concur X do not concur with the provost's recommendation as stated in this memo.



Richard Koubek, President

10/5/2026

Date



Michigan Technological University
University Senate

**THE UNIVERSITY SENATE OF
MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY**
PROPOSAL 03-27

Department Charter for: Mathematical Sciences

Michigan Technological University

DEPARTMENT CHARTER FOR: MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES

Approved by Department on Sept 14, 2026

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Amending & Approving the Charter and Department Voting

Voting Members

All Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty (TTF) members and Instructional-Track Faculty (ITF) with appointments of 50% or more in Mathematical Sciences are voting members. Academic issues and strategic planning require a vote of the voting members. Although not voting members, staff vote on non-academic issues as determined by the Chair.

Advisory Committee

The Department Advisory Committee consists of the Department Chair, Associate Chair, Director of Graduate Studies, and four elected members of the department faculty. It meets at least once a semester to advise the Chair and to facilitate communication between the Chair and other members of the department. The Advisory Committee is also responsible for conducting regular and extraordinary evaluations of the Chair, according to university policies and procedures.

Adoption of a New Charter

A new charter may be proposed by the Advisory Committee. The proposed charter must be circulated to the faculty at least ten days before the faculty meeting at which it will be discussed. Following this faculty meeting, a ballot will be conducted, and the new charter will be adopted if it is approved by at least two-thirds of the votes cast.

Amendment of the Charter

Any department faculty member or committee may propose amendments to the charter. Proposed amendments will be circulated to the faculty at least ten days before the meeting at which they will be discussed. Following this meeting, a ballot will be conducted. Amendments approved by at least two-thirds of the votes cast are approved.

Updating Charter to Ensure Compliance

The Advisory Committee is responsible for reviewing the charter every five years in September, or as needed, and proposing amendments to update the charter and ensure compliance with university policies and procedures.

Conflict with University Policies

In any event in which the charter conflicts with university policies and procedures, the university policies and procedures shall take precedence.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Department Chair

Unit Governance

The Department Chair is the chief administrative officer of the department and reports to the dean. The Chair serves as a representative and advocate for the department, balancing these responsibilities with those of a university administrator.

The Chair's responsibilities are twofold: to perform executive functions and to maintain effective communication with faculty and staff.

Executive functions include, but are not limited to, managing the budget, hiring faculty and staff, advising faculty on professional development, making recommendations about reappointment, promotion, tenure, recommending salary increases, and taking an active role in fundraising and alumni relations.

To facilitate effective communication, the Chair will lead a discussion of goals and plans and provide a budget projection for the coming academic year. The Chair will also hold department meetings, as necessary (at least two per semester), to provide updated budget projections and to discuss significant initiatives that affect the faculty, including strategic planning and academic issues. The agenda for each meeting, as well as any formal proposals to be discussed, must be distributed at least 24 hours before the meeting. Significant initiatives require a ballot to be held following a discussion at a department meeting.

The Chair implements departmental policies passed by ballot. The Chair may veto a policy approved by department ballot.

The Chair is evaluated regularly according to university policy using procedures determined by the Senate. The Advisory Committee may also choose to conduct an extraordinary evaluation of the department chair, outside the time frame mandated by the university policy, to express its views and/or concerns to the Dean.

Evaluation of Teaching

The evaluation of teaching is the responsibility of the Chair, subject to Board of Trustees Policy 6.9 and Faculty Handbook 3.2.13. Teaching evaluations will consist of student evaluation and other methods approved by the voting members. No single measure for evaluating teaching will constitute more than 50% of the evaluation.

Compensation

Salaries, wages, and distribution of merit pay are the responsibility of the Chair and will be based on each faculty member's cumulative record of teaching, research, and service.

Workload

The Chair determines faculty and staff workload, including teaching assignments. Teaching assignments will be made in accordance with departmental and university policies.

Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment Guidelines

The following guidelines are for decisions concerning tenure, promotion, and reappointment of faculty, including instructional track faculty, in the Department of Mathematical Sciences.

Committee Structure and Duties

The Tenure/Promotion/Reappointment (TPR) committee consists of five tenured faculty members not under consideration for promotion or tenure and must include at least three full professors. This committee is elected annually in the spring semester. The Chair and the departmental representative to the College TPR Committee are not eligible to serve.

The Promotion/Reappointment (PR) committee will consist of members of the TPR committee, as well as one ITF faculty at the associate or full teaching professor rank. The Chair and the departmental representative to the College TPR Committee are not eligible to serve on the PR committee.

The purpose of the TPR Committee is to conduct reviews of candidates for tenure, promotion, and reappointment, and to report its recommendations to the Chair. The entire committee will review all cases involving Assistant Professors, and cases of Associate Professors up for tenure only. Cases involving promotion to or tenure at the rank of full Professor will be considered by the subcommittee consisting of full Professors.

The purpose of the PR Committee is to conduct reviews of instructional-track candidates for promotion, and reappointment, and to report its recommendations to the Chair. The entire committee will review all cases involving instructional track faculty.

The TPR/PR committee must deliver a written report to the Department Chair. The report must contain the recommendation of the committee, and it should indicate whether the recommendation was unanimous or by majority vote. If the decision is not unanimous, the vote of the committee (but not the individual members) should be included in the report.

A faculty member may be considered for tenure prior to the mandatory year. The TPR committee will follow the university procedures for early tenure cases as outlined in the Faculty Handbook.

Department Chair's Role

For tenured and tenure-track candidates, the Chair solicits external letters of review for each candidate for promotion or tenure. The Chair will obtain five or more letters, at least two from reviewers selected by the candidate and at least two from a list prepared by the chair in consultation with the TPR committee. Letters from PhD/Postdoc advisers and from collaborators (past 60 months) should not be solicited for the tenure and promotion cases per HR guidelines.

The Chair makes a recommendation to the College Dean on each case involving promotion, tenure, and reappointment. The Chair considers the external letters and the recommendation of the TPR committee.

Guidelines for Promotion to Associate Professor and Tenure

Guidelines for Associate Professor and tenure promotions are generally the same. In rare cases faculty may be hired at the rank of Associate Professor without tenure. Under such circumstances the faculty will be required to go up for tenure within the number of years stated in their contract.

Candidates for promotion to Associate Professor and/or tenure are evaluated on their contributions to research, teaching, and service. The fundamental requirement is that the candidate be making progress towards national recognition as a scholar.

Research

Research contributions are judged primarily based on peer-reviewed publications, funding activity, and supervision of graduate student research.

The total publication record of a candidate will be judged; the primary consideration will be the quality of the candidate's top five publications (as chosen by the candidate).

Candidates are expected to demonstrate a sustainable research program. Evidence of research productivity could be based on multiple factors, including: collaboration with a variety of colleagues, singly authored papers, papers co-authored with students, senior authorship on papers (in subdisciplines where this distinction is recognized), being the Principal Investigator on a grant or contract, or direction of a student to the completion of the PhD (as sole advisor).

Candidates are expected to have been active in seeking external funding and to have shown some degree of competitiveness. Reviews of unsuccessful grant proposals can be submitted as evidence that the candidate is submitting quality proposals and is "close" to receiving funding. The normal expectation for a candidate for tenure is that he or she has directed one or more students to completion of a (research-based) MS or is directing one or more PhD students. It is

not required that the candidate will have directed a PhD student to the completion of the PhD but progress to completion should normally be demonstrated.

Teaching

Teaching refers to course teaching, and the quality of classroom teaching (in-person or online) is evaluated based on student evaluations and reviews by the TPR Committee and the Department Chair. Candidates are expected to do a good job in the classroom by these measures. In addition, candidates are expected to teaching a range of courses, teaching at various levels (introductory service courses, intermediate undergraduate courses, and advanced courses), and contributing to assessment activities.

Service

Service contributions include departmental service, college and university service, and service to the profession. Candidates are expected to contribute to the department in some of the following ways:

- Serving on departmental committees.
- Writing and grading PhD examinations.
- Serving on MS and PhD thesis committees for students (other than principal advisor).
- Other examples are provided in Guidelines for Promotion to Teaching Professor.

It is expected that candidates will demonstrate some degree of service to the profession, such as by refereeing papers, helping to organize a conference, or participating in professional organizations (beyond mere membership). College or university service will also be considered but is not necessarily expected. Generally, the amount of service should increase with experience, and untenured Assistant Professors are not expected to carry a heavy service load.

Guidelines for Promotion to Professor

Candidates for promotion to Professor are also evaluated on their contributions to research, teaching, and service. A candidate is expected to have shown substantial growth in these areas since promotion to Associate Professor (or as compared to a typical new Associate Professor). Moreover, the candidate is expected to have gained national recognition as a scholar.

The following specific criteria apply:

- The total publication record of a candidate will be judged; the primary consideration will be the quality of the candidate's top five publications (as chosen by the candidate) since previous promotion or the beginning of the candidate's appointment at MTU.
- Candidates are normally expected to have shown success in obtaining external funding. Some judgment must be exercised by the TPR committee and the Chair in evaluating the level of funding that is considered successful, given the candidate's area of research.

- Candidates are expected to have directed one or more students to completion of the PhD.
- Senior members of the faculty are expected to bear a heavier share of the service work, to allow untenured Assistant Professors time to develop their scholarship and teaching. Therefore, candidates for promotion to Professor must have demonstrated an increased contribution to departmental, college, and university service.

Guidelines for Promotion to Associate Teaching Professor

Instructional Track Faculty are employed to meet ongoing teaching needs and to contribute to the mission of the department.

The primary qualifications for promotion are:

- Demonstrated excellence in teaching as measured by student teaching evaluations and classroom evaluations by the Chair and members of the PR committee, typically sustained over several years.
- High quality service contributions.

Guidelines for Promotion to Teaching Professor

There are two requirements for promotion to Teaching Professor:

1. Demonstrated growth in the areas that form the basis for promotion to Teaching Professor:
 - Demonstrated sustained excellence in teaching as measured by student teaching evaluations and classroom evaluations by the Chair and members of the PR Committee.
 - Fundamental service contributions. Examples of such contributions include,
 - Math Placement Coordinator
 - Math Learning Center Director
 - Math Lab Director
 - GTI Training
 - GTI Supervision
 - Academic Advising
 - Assessment Coordinator
 - Outreach
 - Senator
 - Multi-section Course Coordinator
 - Peer or Student Mentoring
 - Online Course Development

- Academic Coordinator
 - Committee Chair
 - Leading Undergraduate Research
2. Exceptional achievements in teaching, research, and/or service that make fundamental contributions to the university's mission or have a national or international impact.

Guidelines for Reappointment

Tenure-Track Faculty

Tenure-track faculty members are reviewed yearly, and will receive a written, individual evaluation, per university policy. Evaluation of scholarly performance in the first year will be based on limited information given the recent arrival of the faculty but may consider contributions such as submissions, both for research proposals and publications, and activities to identify graduate students to work with them. As time goes on, it is imperative that the faculty members be on a trajectory toward tenure.

The TPR committee and the Chair will provide a written evaluation to each non-tenured, tenure-track faculty member. If potential issues are evident, the TPR committee and/or Chair will indicate what needs to be improved to maximize the probability of obtaining tenure. If insufficient progress is evident, they may recommend against reappointment.

Instructional Track Faculty

Reappointments for instructional track faculty at the rank of Assistant Teaching Professor, Associate Teaching Professor and Teaching Professor follow the university policy for reappointment (Section 2.1 in Michigan Tech's Faculty Handbook).

Provided that funding is available to continue the position, the central criterion for reappointment is the faculty's demonstrated and likely continued effectiveness, along with sustained contributions to the instructional mission of the department and university.

An annual reappointment review is required for all Assistant Teaching Professors. Annual reappointment reviews are not required for instructional track faculty after promotion to Associate Teaching Professor. Annual reappointment reviews are required, however, for newly hired Associate Teaching Professors and Teaching Professors during their first three years in such an appointment.

Professional Staff and Other Non-Voting Faculty Members

Staff include the regular professional and clerical members of the Department. Non-voting members of the faculty include visiting faculty, instructors (whose service, by university definition, is part-time or temporary), and other faculty whose appointment in the department is less than 50%-time.

Faculty who transfer into administrative positions within the university will be considered voting faculty if they continue to actively participate in the department, as evidenced by teaching at least one course per year, or advising departmental graduate students, or remaining active in research, or serving on departmental committees.

Staff vote on non-academic issues as determined by the Chair. They participate in the evaluation of the Chair as specified in university policy.

At the discretion of the Chair, non-voting faculty and staff may attend department meetings and participate in discussions.

Students have no role in departmental governance.

Sabbatical Leave Recommendations

Granting of sabbatical leave requests is governed by the Board of Trustees and University Senate procedures. If there are multiple requests for leave in a given year and the budget does not allow the Chair to support all of the requests, the Chair will rank the requests according to merit. The primary criteria are:

- Past research productivity of the faculty member.
- Quality and feasibility of the proposed sabbatical activities.
- Potential benefit to the department of the proposed sabbatical leave.

If the Chair declines to support a sabbatical leave request because of the merits of the proposal, the faculty member requesting leave may appeal to the Advisory Committee, which will review the proposal and, if appropriate, recommend reconsideration by the Chair. The final decision to support a request for sabbatical leave rests with the Chair.

Emeritus/Emerita Recommendations

A faculty member retiring from Michigan Tech may be nominated for emeritus/emera status by any voting member of the faculty, including the retiree. If the nomination is approved by a majority of votes cast by academic faculty on a ballot, the Chair will recommend emeritus/emera status to the president of the university, following the Board of Trustees policies.

If the nomination is not approved by the faculty vote, the retiring faculty member shall have the right to appeal. The appeal shall be a written argument presented to the academic faculty and discussed at a subsequent faculty meeting. After the discussion, a second ballot shall be issued. The second ballot shall be considered final.

Grievance Procedure

Most faculty concerns or complaints can be resolved informally through normal collegial communications. Accordingly, faculty members are encouraged to take their complaints to their supervisor in the normal spirit of faculty problem solving. The grievant is strongly urged to involve the Ombudsperson. If this does not lead to a mutually satisfactory outcome, the faculty member may pursue the issue through university's grievance procedures (Appendix C. Grievance Procedures in Michigan Tech's Faculty Handbook).

Hiring Procedures

All matters related to hiring shall be carried out in accordance with the Provost and Human Resources/Equal Opportunity hiring processes, and any currently applicable University Senate policy or procedures.

Following interviews for a tenure-track position or an instructional-track position, the search committee will distribute a Faculty Candidate Interview Evaluation Tool to all voting members. The Faculty Candidate Interview Evaluation Tool is developed by the search committee, and it must address the candidate's abilities to succeed in the areas of research, teaching, and service. The information collected by the search committee from this tool is then shared with the chair. There will be a ballot allowing voting members to rate candidates as acceptable or unacceptable. The search committee will provide feedback to the department chair as specified by HR policy.

All evaluations, voting, and discussions of faculty candidates must be based on the qualifications listed in the job description. All discussions and decisions are required to remain confidential during the search and after the search has been completed.

Rights and Responsibilities of Faculty

The responsibilities of individual faculty members include research, teaching, and service.

For specific teaching and service duties, faculty members are consulted by the chair, and the chair considers faculty member preferences in decision-making. (From Policy 6.2 Faculty Staffing Policy at Policy 6.01-6.05 | Board of Trustees | Michigan Technological University)

Faculty members are free to choose research directions and methods of teaching but are expected to follow departmental course descriptions and policies.

Enactment of Policy

Department policies are written documents passed by ballot following a department meeting in which they are proposed. Proposed policies must be distributed at least twenty-four hours before the department meeting, and the expected discussion must appear on the agenda. Minor changes may be made during the meeting. However, substantive changes are made by resubmitting the policy. Departmental committee structure and procedures will be determined by policy.

Ballots on department policies shall be distributed to all voting faculty, except for policies that pertain to the graduate program, in which case only graduate faculty vote. Policies are passed if approved by a majority of votes cast.

Department policies are decided by secret ballot. Eligible voters will have a minimum of three business days to cast ballots. The voting deadline may be extended at the discretion of the Chair, assuming previously cast ballots have not been tallied. Ballot results will be reported promptly to the department by the Chair, and eligible voters will have access to the official ballot report upon request.