Mathematics Undergraduate Mentoring Document
(AY 2024-25)

Statement: The goal of this document is to outline the department's philosophy toward mentoring undergraduate students.

First, we believe that the revision of the undergraduate curriculum, and more specifically the introduction of more clearly focused and defined tracks, already provides clearer career paths for students. In addition, we would like to continue with the traditional one-on-one mentoring pairing between a faculty member and a student that has served our students well in previous years. All mathematics faculty members recognize the importance of and fully support an effective and beneficial mentoring experience for all of our majors.

As for the substance of these mentoring discussions, our expectation is that understanding of the graduation requirements from myUK, the UK Bulletin, and A&S and Department of Mathematics webpages is handled by the University's professional advisors. Therefore, student-faculty mentoring meetings should be geared toward such topics as general guidance in mathematics, research/career opportunities and advanced degree program applications rather than course selection and graduation requirements. A direct connection with a faculty member will also help create a strong sense of community and belonging for all our students. It is expected that each mentor will contact their mentees at least once per semester for an in-person connection, and additional meetings as possibly required by the mentee.

Additional venues for mentoring or connecting with our majors include the following enrichment activities:

- Math Club activities
- Putnam and other mathematics competitions
- Game/pizza nights organized by Math Club and other graduate students' societies
- Regular announcements through majors' listserv or new Canvas page for majors
- Regular research activities and announcements of the Math Lab
- Annual undergraduate Eaves Lecture
- Alumni Day
- Annual welcome ice cream social
- Annual year end Award ceremony
- Employment through Mathskeller and Eaves Undergraduates Assistantships

Mathematics Department Mentoring Needs and Procedures: According to Tableau, there are about 80 primary mathematics majors for the academic year 2023-24 distributed as follows:

9 Freshmen, 10 Sophomores, 24 Juniors, and 36 Seniors

The Director of Undergraduate Studies will be the mentor for all Freshmen. Thus, there are about 70 students (Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors) that will need a faculty mentor.

We propose to adopt the following procedure to meet our mentoring needs for the upper level returning students:

No undergraduate mentees will be assigned to anyone in the following four groups: **(1)** Lecturers, **(2)** first year faculty, **(3)** faculty members with three qualified PhD students, and **(4)** faculty members who are not in residence for the entire academic year.

A half-load of undergraduate mentees will be assigned to **(1)** assistant professors and **(2)** faculty members with two qualified PhD students.

A full load of undergraduate mentees will be assigned to all remaining faculty members.

Based on our current enrollments, a full load for the academic year 2024-25 is expected to consist of four undergraduate mentees.

Exceptions to the above procedure will be negotiated between the Mathematics Department chair and individual faculty members. Faculty not assigned a mentee according to the above procedures may certainly volunteer to serve as student mentors.

Each individual student-faculty pairing will be accessible through myUK. This will require some technical assistance from the college.

Note:
This document was discussed and unanimously approved by the mathematics faculty at a departmental meeting held on Tuesday, February 27 2024.