



Kevin James
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Dear Interim Chair Search Committee,

I am writing to apply for the position of Interim Chair in the Department of Mathematical Sciences. Our department has a very broad mission and a unique blend of expertise. I would look forward to the challenge of working as the interim chair of such an interesting and diverse group of people. I understand the large scale and significant teaching mission of the department as well, and would enjoy working with faculty, lecturers, graduate students and coordinators to meet our teaching demands with excellence. I would enjoy facilitating activities aimed at encouraging excellence in research and collaboration. Finally, I would sincerely seek to continue and renew the sense of genuine collegiality and support from which I benefited so greatly upon arriving at Clemson in the summer of 2000.

I have served for three years as the graduate coordinator in our department. Thus I have first-hand experience in working with many of the people who make up this department and with the upper administration. In particular, I have worked closely with the Dean's office in the College of Science and with the Graduate School on a regular basis. I also serve on the Graduate Council and have served on the COS Curriculum Committee which has afforded me the opportunity to work with people outside of our department to contribute to and to shape the University's graduate and curriculum policies. I have a strong track record of protecting the department's best interests at the College and University levels while seeking to hear and understand all individuals who make up our department. Serving as your Interim Chair would allow me to broaden this already significant service and I would gladly embrace the opportunity to do so.

Our department is entering a very interesting and significant time as we consider the possibility of reorganization into a school. Whatever we choose to do over the next few months (even a choice not to reorganize) will significantly effect the future of the Mathematical and Statistical Sciences at Clemson and indeed our University as a whole. Our department is made up of a diverse group of people and I believe that each of these individuals is a valuable contributor to our mission. As we move forward, I hope to see that all individuals are heard and understood. The idea of restructuring into a School of Mathematical and Statistical Sciences is indeed a very exciting one and I think we will all benefit if we make such a transition carefully. A careful and successful transition will require contributions from many people to navigate through the challenges of accommodating the needs of all of our people while positioning us to have maximum impact in research, teaching and service. As your interim chair, I would look forward to facilitating discussions involving all members of our department in order to ensure a smooth transition. Even if we choose to continue in our present structure, the manner in which we make this decision will effect how we view each other and our department as a whole. I would like to see us move through this process in a manner that is respectful of all involved and showcases the value of all facets of our department. If we do this, we can emerge from this process with a sense of purpose and unified mission which will help to create a work environment which is enjoyable and productive. As your interim chair I will work diligently to bring this vision to fruition.

While we are making decisions about our future structure and how to attain the best version of it, we will of course continue to pursue and discover new and interesting research and to teach and serve our University. It will be important for us to continue to refine our approach to teaching an ever changing and

growing population of undergraduates and graduate students. We will need to embrace new methodologies and techniques in teaching to continue to deliver excellent learning experiences for all of our students. We will also need to continue our scholarly pursuits of new knowledge and to explore new and exciting fields of the Mathematical and Statistical Sciences. I hope to see more collaboration among the various groups in our department lead to a better appreciation of the Mathematical and Statistical Sciences as a whole while spurring us on to new discoveries and new research problems. We have a very talented faculty and we and our research interests could benefit greatly from the synergy of bringing together people with diverse and new perspectives. I would like to see more interaction between our various research teams as we move forward. There are some simple things that we could do to encourage more collaboration such as having common seminar times and a more active colloquium series including especially talks from in-house speakers which are designed to speak to a wider than usual audience and to invite collaboration.

Finally, it will be important for us to develop strategic hiring plans which are competitive with others in the college so that we may maintain and grow our excellent faculty. I would look forward to working with all research teams in the department to build exciting hiring plans and then to integrate these into a departmental/school-wide hiring plan. It is difficult to comment further on this presently, since our reorganization decisions will have a profound effect in this area. It is clear from conversations with our Dean that these hiring plans will need to be consistent with the Clemson Forward Plan and that we will need to carefully review that plan and our potential contributions to it. This must be done in a way which is inclusive of our entire department in a significant way and will of course require careful thought, respect of other research teams, willingness to collaborate and a commitment to excellence in all areas of our work effort.

If you choose me as your interim chair, I will work hard to ensure that we move forward to be the best department or school that we can be with constant attention to refining what we do. Thank you for your time and consideration of my application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin James". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The "K" is large and loops around the "e". The "J" is also large and loops around the "a". The "m" and "e" are connected. The "s" at the end is a simple, slightly curved line.

Kevin James