



Department of Mathematics
Fine Hall—Washington Road
Princeton, New Jersey 08544-1000

March 5, 2018

Professor Elwyn Berlekamp
Elwyn & Jennifer Berlekamp Foundation
5665 College Avenue, Suite #330
Oakland, CA 94618

Dear Professor Berlekamp,

Thank you for your many years as a member of the Advisory Council for Princeton University's Department of Mathematics. Your valuable service spanned from July 1, 1996 to the present. During this time the Council convened for meetings in 1999, 2007 and 2014, and you participated in all of them. One of the main goals of the Council is to express to the senior administration the crucial importance of certain departmental issues. In many cases the administration eventually acted in the Department's favor. For example, the senior faculty had its teaching load reduced from 2-2 to 1-1 and the junior faculty's load from 2-2 to 2-1. Last summer Fine Hall was refurbished for the first time in its 49 years and a new person was added to the maintenance staff. Finally, the administration increased its support for graduate students. While the junior faculty's teaching load needs to be reduced, an extreme space shortage in Fine Hall still exists, and we are still facing a dire situation regarding grad funding, the Council deserves credit for facilitating the progress that has been made.

I solicited comments from two of my colleagues, both former chairs, who worked extensively with you. Peter Sarnak said, "A number of the Princeton Faculty who have served together with you on advisory committees, for Mathematics Departments and Institutes around the country, know how effective you are. Your guidance and presentation of the strengths and weaknesses to the departments and to their Deans has proved invaluable, and this is certainly the case with your long service as an advisor to our department." Joe Kohn said, "Elwyn Berlekamp is very sharp; has tremendous insight into the uses of mathematics for practical problems and application in the real world. Berlekamp prides himself on that fact that he's practical – his head isn't in the clouds."

I was Chair during the last Council meeting in 2014. After the meeting, you spent about an hour, frankly yet kindly, giving me invaluable advice as well as sharing your thoughts on the state of the Department. David Dobkin, Dean of the Faculty, referred to you as the "wise man in the room". He said that you didn't say much at his meeting with the Council, yet whenever there was a moment requiring insight into how the Department works or how mathematicians think, the other council members looked to you for enlightening words.

Again, thank you for your service to the Princeton University Mathematics Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Gabai".

David Gabai, Chair
Hughes-Rogers Professor of Mathematics