

Department of Mechanical Engineering Governance Document

Approved by
Department of Mechanical Engineering Faculty
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1. Preamble

Governance of the Department of Mechanical Engineering is shared between the faculty and the chair of the department in accordance with college and university policies. Governance is organized to promote the missions of the Department of Mechanical Engineering, the College of Engineering and Iowa State University. The chair is primarily responsible for developing a department vision and making administrative decisions regarding budget and space allocation, administrative structure, department operations, and personnel matters. The department faculty serves in an advisory role to the chair to carry out these responsibilities.

The department faculty has responsibility for the education and research programs within the Department of Mechanical Engineering. This includes but is not limited to developing faculty promotion and tenure policies and procedures, admissions requirements, graduation requirements, curriculum and course revisions, degree programs, grading procedures and policies, research programs, and service and outreach programs. The department faculty will recommend candidates from the department for the awarding of diplomas, degrees, and certificates.

The department faculty will make decisions regarding their responsibilities as a body except in cases where they have delegated authority to a committee.

University and College of Engineering policies will supersede Department of Mechanical Engineering policies when there is a policy conflict. For matters of concern not addressed in this document, refer to the Iowa State University Faculty Handbook (hereafter referred to as the Faculty Handbook).

Terms: “advancement” refers to career development of term faculty. “Promotion” refers to career development of tenure-track and tenured faculty. “Probationary faculty” refers to tenure-track faculty prior to tenure. While probationary faculty are usually assistant professors, they may hold any rank, including associate or full. For example, a senior person hired from industry or a government lab might initially hold a title of untenured associate or full professor.

2. Department Mission

The mission of the Department of Mechanical Engineering is to create knowledge through research in the science and technology of mechanical engineering; to share knowledge through educational programs and the dissemination of our new discoveries; and to develop the professional potential of faculty, staff, and students.

3. Voting Faculty Members

The voting faculty of the Department of Mechanical Engineering shall consist of:

- i. All term faculty who have appointments longer than one year,
- ii. All tenured and tenure-track faculty appointed under the ISU Tenure Policy with more than 30% of their salary paid through the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

Only tenured and tenure-track faculty will vote on decisions pertaining to tenured and tenure-track faculty hiring, promotion & tenure. Only faculty with graduate college appointments will vote on issues pertaining to the graduate program.

4. Faculty Appointments Policies and Procedures

The department will follow faculty appointment definitions and associated procedures as described in the College of Engineering Governance Document, Section 4.

a. Recruitment and Search – Tenure and Tenure-Eligible Faculty Appointments

When a faculty opening occurs, the chair will consult with the faculty to determine the needs of the department. The chair will appoint a Search Committee, finalize the advertisement in consultation with the committee and advertise the position. The Search Committee will screen the applicants to identify those that meet the qualifications. After the interview, the committee will solicit faculty input on each candidate via discussion at a faculty meeting. After discussion, the chair will solicit a faculty vote on the acceptability of each candidate – the results of which will be communicated to the faculty. The hiring decision and negotiations are the responsibility of the chair.

To facilitate timely decision making, each candidate is handled as a separate case with feedback provided to the chair as soon as possible after the interview. Relative ranking of candidates among others in their cohort is discouraged.

b. Recruitment and Search for Term Faculty Appointments

Recruitment and search for faculty to fill term faculty appointments will follow the same procedure as Tenure and Tenure-Eligible appointments described in Section 4a above if departmental funds are to be used in support of these positions.

Term faculty with appointments of one year or less can be hired by the chair, in consultation with the associate chairs, to fill short-term instructional needs. As such, these short-term appointments do not require input from all faculty.

In the case of term faculty hired on non-departmental funds, the chair or an appropriate faculty sponsor will make the case for a term faculty appointment at a faculty meeting. After discussion, the chair will solicit a faculty vote on the acceptability of the candidate – the results of which will be communicated to the faculty. The appointment decision as well as its terms and conditions are the responsibility of the chair.

c. Qualifications for Term Faculty

All term faculty must meet the minimum qualifications described in the Faculty Handbook and the College of Engineering governance document.

d. Qualifications for Professor of Practice

In addition to the minimum requirements for appointment outlined in the Faculty Handbook and the COE Governance Document, Professors of Practice must have significant relevant professional experience outside of academia, which the Department of Mechanical Engineering defines as an impactful career demonstrating two or more of the following attributes:

- (a) depth and range of technical achievement;

- (b) high levels of responsibility;
- (c) evidence of broad perspective;
- (d) success in a competitive environment;
- (e) national or international prominence and recognition.

5. Review and Reappointment

In addition to the evaluation and review definitions and procedures described in the Faculty Handbook and College of Engineering Governance Document, the department will follow the procedures outlined in this section.

a. Annual review of Probationary Faculty

The tenured faculty will provide constructive feedback on career progress of probationary faculty on an annual basis.

- i. The goal of the yearly review is for the tenured faculty to be aware of the career progress that each probationary faculty member is making and for the probationary faculty to receive recognition of their accomplishments and advice on their career progress.
- ii. The yearly review materials for each probationary faculty will be provided to all tenured faculty members during the spring semester.
- iii. During a meeting of the tenured faculty, the progress of each probationary faculty member is discussed.
- iv. The chair will summarize the comments from the tenured faculty and provide written and oral feedback to each probationary faculty member. The feedback should focus on acknowledging accomplishments in all areas of the faculty member's efforts and advice on progress toward tenure.

b. 3rd year Review and Reappointment Committees

Unless otherwise stated, all committees formed for the reviews described in this section will be ad hoc, and composed of three faculty members:

- i. One member may be selected by the candidate under review, one by election, and one by the department chair.
- ii. For review of probationary faculty, the review committee will be composed of tenured faculty.
- iii. For review of term faculty, the committee will be composed of both term and tenured faculty. All term faculty must have passed a 3rd year review.
- iv. The department chair will select a committee chair.

Each subsection will specify who may serve on the review committee.

c. 3rd Year Review (Term, and Probationary faculty)

During the third year after the initial appointment to a multi-year faculty position, all term and probationary faculty members will undergo an in-depth review. The review will summarize progress towards promotion. For probationary faculty, the review will additionally summarize progress towards tenure.

- i. 3rd Year Review committee participants. Faculty serving on the committee should be tenured at the rank above the faculty member under review, unless a full professor is being reviewed. In this case, the review committee members will hold the rank of full professor.

d. Post-tenure Review (tenured faculty)

At least once every seven years, all tenured faculty in the department will be reviewed. The purpose of post-tenure review is to encourage the creative renewal of the individual faculty member through a self-directed review. This review will respect the rights of each tenured faculty member to exercise personal choice over scholarly activities, within the general bounds of professional conduct, and be conducted according to the Faculty Handbook.

- i. Post-tenure Review Committee Participants. Faculty serving on the committee should be at the rank at or above the rank of the faculty member under review. One member may be from another department.
- ii. Materials to be reviewed will include, at a minimum, the candidate's Position Responsibility Statement (PRS), CV, self-assessment, and student teaching evaluations.
- iii. Review Procedures and Timelines. The chair will request a list of materials from the candidate, and provide timelines for submission to the chair (or the chair's designee). The chair will provide the committee with the candidate's materials, and a timeline for the completed review that respects the College of Engineering deadlines. The committee will review the faculty member's performance, and provide an assessment of either "meeting expectations" or "below expectations" in each area of his or her PRS, and overall. The committee will provide their report to the chair. The chair will communicate the results, including any action plans, to the candidate.
- iv. Mechanisms for the faculty member to respond. If the faculty member does not agree with the committee's review, the faculty member may submit a written statement of concerns that will be appended to the committee's report. The faculty member may also appeal the assessment through the grievance procedures outlined in the Faculty Handbook. If an action plan results from a "below expectations" assessment, and the chair and the faculty member cannot reach agreement on the action plan, then the faculty member may choose action plan mediation, as outlined in the faculty handbook.

e. Review for Reappointment at the Same Rank (Term Faculty)

- i. Reappointment review committee participants must be associate or full professors, and additionally hold a rank at or above the rank of the faculty member under review.
- ii. Materials: will include, at a minimum, the candidate's Position Responsibility Statement (PRS), CV, self-assessment, and student teaching evaluations.
- iii. Review Procedures and Timelines will be consistent with college and university procedures and timelines.

6. Advancement, Promotion & Tenure

The department will follow advancement procedures described in the faculty handbook, the College of Engineering Governance Document.

Additional departmental-specific procedures and policies are:

a. Selection for Consideration for Promotion

During annual reviews, the promotion and tenure screening committee consisting of at least three tenured full professors will screen the accomplishments of all assistant and associate professors (including term, tenure-track and tenured). Sources of information to be considered by the committee include qualifications supportive of the position responsibility statement and rank for promotion and tenure covered in the Faculty Handbook. Based on its evaluation, the committee will recommend to the chair the names of the faculty members who should be considered for promotion and/or tenure the following year. The chair may include additional names for such consideration.

b. Advancement, Promotion & Tenure Committees

Advancement promotion and tenure committees are ad hoc committees assembled for a specific individual. Committee composition will follow the same guidelines outlined for “Review and Reappointment” in section 5.b. Additionally, all committee members must:

- Hold a rank above than that of the candidate being considered for advancement, promotion and/or tenure (unless the candidate is a full professor under consideration for tenure).
- One member of this committee may be from another department.

The committee will be charged to perform an in-depth investigation of the candidate's qualifications.

c. Conflict of Interest

The candidate has the right to request that faculty with a conflict of interest not be included in the review and voting of his/her promotion and tenure case. Conflicts of interest may exist because of personal or professional circumstances or non-university personal or business relationships. The candidate will describe any conflict of interest in writing to the promotion and tenure screening committee and the chair. The document should include the name and reason for the conflict of interest. Any conflict of interest to which the screening committee and Chair agree will be dealt with in accordance with the *Faculty Handbook*. Typically, the person(s) will not be allowed to partake in the departmental promotion and/or tenure review of the faculty member.

d. Review Procedures

The candidate will submit promotion information through the department chair or their designate. The department chair will forward all submitted material to the candidate's P&T committee. This committee will provide advice to the candidate in preparing the vita and related material for the evaluation process. The committee will submit a recommendation to the faculty based on its evaluation, which will be a part of the material transmitted to the College of Engineering. The faculty will then be asked to vote by secret ballot for or against promotion and/or tenure of the candidate and will be informed about the majority vote.

In order to comply with “one faculty – one vote” policy for promotion and tenure decisions, the following voting procedures will be followed. The individual P&T committee will vote on the candidate. If the committee contains one faculty member from outside the department, that faculty member will have departmental voting rights for this matter. The recommendation of the P&T committee will go forward to the department as a whole. Only eligible faculty members who were not part of the individual P&T committee will vote on the candidate representing the department vote. These two votes will then be combined into a single tally representing the department faculty's decision. Thus, each faculty members' vote counts equally and no faculty member votes more than once.

e. Department Chair's Role

The chair will convene the tenured faculty with a rank higher than that of the candidate for presentation of the findings of the individual P&T committee along with the committee's recommendations why promotion and/or tenure of the candidate should or should not be granted. The chair will summarize the recommendation of the faculty along with his or her own recommendation and forward the materials to the College of Engineering as specified in the College of Engineering Procedures.

The chair will set the timing for the department's review process to comply with the College of Engineering and university process. In the case of tenured, tenure-track and term research faculty, the chair will also solicit letters from those individuals identified by the candidate and P&T committee.

The chair's recommendation on P&T cases is their only opportunity to vote or make a recommendation on the candidate. Thus, the chair may not serve on the individual P&T committee nor can they vote as part of the department faculty.

f. Review Postponement

A candidate may submit a request for review postponement to the chair. The chair, in compliance with university policy, will manage the postponement decision.

g. Information Sources

The information considered by the committee will be the materials prepared by the candidate in compliance with university and college of engineering requirements. In the case of tenured, tenure-track and term research faculty, external review letters will also be solicited as part of the information considered.

h. Submission of Information

The candidate will submit all information to the person specified by the chair. Typically, this is a department staff person who then distributes the materials to the individual P&T committee members.

i. External Evaluations

For promotion of tenured, tenure-track and term research faculty, the department chair will solicit input from external evaluators supplied by the candidate and P&T committee. The guidelines provided by the college and Provost will be followed as to the number of external evaluators from each list. External letters are not required for promotion of term faculty who are not research faculty.

j. Definition of Factual Information

The factual information accessible to the candidate will be only the information provided by the candidate. The candidate will not have access to confidential documents such as the recommendation letter from the individual P&T committee, external review letters,

letters from the department faculty, and the chair's transmittal letter to the College of Engineering.

k. Notification

The chair will inform each candidate in writing before the department's recommendations are submitted to the College of Engineering whether a recommendation will be forwarded and, if so, the nature of recommendations.

7. Department Organization, Meetings and Procedures

a. Departmental Leadership

The department chair is responsible for developing a department vision and making administrative decisions regarding budget and space allocation, administrative structure, department operations, and personnel matters.

To provide the chair with faculty and staff feedback regarding their effectiveness, an ad hoc committee consisting of three faculty members from at least two professorial ranks will be selected each year at the first faculty meeting of the calendar year. This committee will solicit expository feedback and, at the discretion of the committee, numerical feedback from faculty and staff regarding key elements of the chair's responsibility. Verbatim responses collected as part of this process are held confidential and are treated with the same level of propriety as other personnel records. The committee prepares a summary memo that is distributed in hardcopy to the faculty and staff. The committee provides the dean with the summary memo and the raw verbatim comments. The committee subsequently meets face-to-face with the chair to debrief on the feedback process. The committee shall complete the feedback process by the end of spring semester.

b. General Organization

The chair may appoint several faculty members to serve as associate chairs to assist in the administration of the department. The PRS for each such faculty will clearly indicate what percent of the workload is assigned to administrative duties. This administrative structure (and subsequent modifications) shall be communicated to the faculty.

The chair shall have the prerogative to structure associate chair appointments as well as P&S and merit staff appointments and reporting structures to suit departmental needs and budget constraints.

The chair will appoint and maintain an Advisory Board comprised of industry and/or academic leaders from outside the university.

The chair or their designate, in consultation with the associate chairs, shall make teaching assignments for the faculty to satisfy the needs of the department. The chair, in consultation with the associate chairs, shall make committee assignments for the faculty. The length of service of any faculty member on a committee should not exceed three years continuous service except where a longer term is necessary to ensure continuity. NTE faculty holding multiyear contracts are eligible to serve on departmental committees, and have the same voting rights and responsibilities in all matters except for decisions pertaining to tenure-track faculty hiring, promotion, and tenure.

Except for the promotion and tenure screening committee's responsibilities, which are described above, the definition of the responsibilities of the committees is the responsibility of the chair with the advice and consent of the faculty. In addition to the promotion and tenure screening committee the department will maintain a minimum of two standing committees, one dealing with curriculum and another with academic standards.

The chair will present the budget of the department to the faculty at least annually. The budget will include the department's budgetary resources and expenditures by categories, as well as funds received and expended in the preceding year and projected for the current year.

c. Faculty Meetings

The chair shall call faculty meetings as needed during the academic year. Only special meetings will be scheduled during the summer months.

Parliamentary procedures will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order unless otherwise specified by this document.

Votes will be taken when a quorum is present. A quorum shall be one-half of the total number of voting faculty, excluding those on leave of absence. Votes on motions will normally be decided by a majority of voting members present. In the case of important or controversial issues, any member of the voting faculty may request the vote to be taken by written ballot, which shall be distributed, to all members of the voting faculty. An electronic ballot through a secure (anonymous) web site may also be used for this purpose.

No proxy votes or absentee ballots will be allowed except in the case of voting on promotion and tenure and the retention of a chair or selection of a new chair. For these purposes, any member of the voting faculty on any official leave of absence may vote by mail.

The chair shall appoint a secretary who shall take minutes at all faculty meetings, publish these minutes to all faculty members prior to the next faculty meeting (if possible) and maintain a master file in the departmental office.

8. Policies and Procedure for Amending the Governance Document

The chair or the faculty may make proposed amendments to the Department of Mechanical Engineering Governance Document. All amendments will be presented to the faculty for their consideration no more than once per year. Approval of the amendments will be based on a simple majority of the voting faculty.