

Charter for the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

As Amended 20 August 2002

I. Introduction

A. Mission

The Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering provides an educational, professional, and intellectual experience that enables students, alumni, faculty, and staff to contribute to society through teaching, research, practice, and service.

B. Vision

The Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering will develop internationally prominent educational and research programs that will benefit all of our constituencies and, in doing so, will become an international Department of Choice.

C. Guiding Principles

We will continually work to engage our students, faculty, and staff in the integration, creation, and dissemination of knowledge through teamwork, personalized instruction, research, and outreach. We will measure our success by our graduates and by the growth of the Department's prestige.

II. Department Structure

The Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering consists of a team of faculty, staff, and students led by a Department Chair and a number of standing committees working together to achieve the mission of the Department. This section describes the structure of the Department and the responsibilities of the chair and the various standing committees. The term "voting faculty" used herein consists of faculty holding the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, or Lecturer with at least a 50% appointment in the Department.

A. Department Chair

1. Responsibilities - The Department Chair should demonstrate leadership and represent the faculty to the administration. The Chair has the primary responsibility for operating the Department in an efficient manner. This includes day-to-day operations and policy implementation. Except where explicitly stated otherwise, in this document, votes made by the faculty and decisions made by committee are advisory to the Department Chair. If the chair makes a decision contrary to the opinion of a majority of the voting faculty, as expressed in a vote, the reason(s) for that decision must be explained verbally in a department meeting, in writing, or electronically. In the event that any of the Committees described in this Charter do not perform their functions, the Department Chair may temporarily execute those functions as required.

2. Evaluation and Reappointment - The term of appointment for the Department Chair shall be three (3) years. Nonetheless, the Department Chair shall be evaluated each year. The evaluation procedure is given in Section VI. The evaluation in the third year will include a vote by the faculty on whether the present Chair should be reappointed. If a simple majority vote to reappoint the Chair, then the Chair will be recommended to the Dean of Engineering who has responsibility for making the appointment, subject to approval by the Provost and President. If the reappointment is not approved, then a search will be started (See section II.A.3). If less than a majority votes to reappoint the Chair, the Dean will consult the faculty concerning a search (See section II.A.3).

3. Search for a Chair - Normally, the search for a new Chair will begin with candidates from the Department. If no faculty members are willing to serve as Department Chair, then an external search will be started, with the approval of the Dean of Engineering. When one or more faculty members are willing to be considered, the interested faculty members shall be interviewed by the Department faculty in preparation for an election by secret ballot. All candidates will appear on the ballot (along with a choice of “none of those listed”), and each faculty will vote for no more than one candidate. The PT&P Committee will collect the sealed ballots and will open and count the ballots with at least three members present. If no candidate gets a majority, then the candidate with the lowest number of votes will be removed and another vote taken. This will continue until one candidate gets a majority of those voting, or until two candidates remain with neither having a majority. If a candidate receives a simple majority of those voting, then the candidate will be recommended to the Dean of Engineering who has responsibility for making the appointment, subject to approval by the Provost and President. If the appointment is not approved or if no candidate receives a majority of those voting, then an external search will be started. In the event of a tie, with each candidate having 50%, the Dean will either appoint one of the candidates or begin an external search. The voting process for external candidates will be the same as that described for internal candidates except that if the external candidate is not appointed or no external candidate receives a majority, the Dean will consult the faculty and discuss options for the Chair appointment.

The search committee will consist of five (5) faculty members, four from the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and one from another department in the College of Engineering. The four Department members will be selected by the PT&P Committee and approved by the Dean of Engineering. The additional out-of-department representative will be selected by the Dean of Engineering.

B. Committees

1. Standing Committees - The Department will have the following standing committees: executive committee; promotion, tenure and policy committee; budget committee; computer utilization committee; curriculum and programs committee; graduate and research committee; industry and alumni contact committee; laboratory, safety, and chemical hygiene committee; and the student-faculty conference committee. With the exception of the executive committee, the Department Chair is not eligible for membership on any standing committee except as an ex-officio member. Faculty members generally should not serve on more than two standing committees at a time.

a. Executive Committee - This committee discusses action items prior to consideration by committee of the whole. It consists of the Department Chair and the chairs of all standing committees. The Department Chair will be the chair of the Executive Committee.

b. Promotion Tenure & Policy Committee - This committee reviews and recommends on issues related to promotion, tenure, reappointment, sabbaticals, and furloughs. The committee also considers fundamental policy not addressed by other standing committees and shall act as the department grievance committee. The committee shall follow University grievance procedures when dealing with grievances. This committee will be responsible for initiating the annual evaluation of the Department Chair and for maintaining the questionnaire used in that evaluation.

The PT&P Committee shall consist of five (5) tenured faculty members with the rank of Associate Professor or Professor. At least three (3) of the members must have the rank of Professor. The Committee members will be elected by the voting faculty from a slate of candidates consisting of all Associate Professors and Professors except those who are already on the Committee, are to serve on the College of Engineering P&T Committee, or whose election would cause them to exceed the limit of two consecutive elected terms. Each Committee vacancy will be filled by the candidate receiving the majority vote in a separate Roman ballot election*. Vacancies caused by the end of an elected term will be filled by a member elected to a three (3) year term. Vacancies caused by a member leaving the Committee before the end of an elected term will be filled by a member elected to complete that term only. A faculty member may serve no more than two (2) consecutive elected terms. The PT&P Committee shall elect its own chair each year.

The Department representative on the College of Engineering Promotion and Tenure Committee shall hold the rank of professor. The representative may not be a voting member of the Department PT&P Committee, but shall serve in an ex-officio capacity. The Department Chair in consultation with the voting faculty will nominate the Department representative to the Dean of Engineering.

c. Budget Committee - This committee reviews and makes recommendations on major financial issues. These include assisting the Department Chair in making the budget plan for the subsequent year, approving major deviations or major revisions in the approved budget, and advising on the method used by the Department Chair to allocate faculty salary increases.

The Budget Committee shall consist of three (3) faculty members elected by the voting faculty. Each Committee vacancy will be filled by the candidate receiving the majority vote in a separate Roman ballot election*. At most, one (1) of the elected faculty may be untenured. Vacancies caused by the end of an elected term will be filled by a member elected to a three (3) year term. Vacancies caused by a member leaving the Committee before the end of an elected term will be filled by a member elected to complete that term only. A faculty member may serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms. The Department Chair shall be an ex-officio member of the Budget Committee.

The Budget Committee shall elect its own chair. The chair may not be an untenured faculty member.

*A Roman ballot election begins with the voting faculty casting a single vote for one of the eligible candidates. The ballots are tallied, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and another ballot taken considering only the remaining candidates. This procedure is continued until a candidate receives a majority of the votes cast.

The remaining standing committees, described below, shall consist of three (3) to five (5)

members, except where stated otherwise. The Department Chair will appoint the members of standing committees and also will appoint each Committee Chair. To the extent practicable, the Department Chair will balance committee membership with respect to specialty areas within the Department. Committees should have an open agenda and announce meeting times when topics of special interest to the faculty are being discussed.

d. Computer Utilization Committee - This committee reviews and makes recommendations on policy and actions related to the CEE Departmental Computing Facilities and will prepare the annual academic computing plan for the Department. This Committee shall include the Department Systems Administrator as a voting member.

e. Curriculum and Assessment Committee - This committee reviews and makes recommendations on undergraduate and graduate courses, curricula, and academic specialty programs affecting the Department. The Committee also addresses policy related to these issues. This committee assesses the BSCE and BSEEn degree programs and is responsible for managing the ABET self-study preparations. At least one member must be a member of the Civil Engineering faculty and at least one must be a member of the Environmental Engineering faculty. This committee shall include the Department Academic Advisor as a voting member. The Curriculum and Assessment Committee will interact with the Graduate and Research Committee on issues related to assessment of graduate programs.

f. Graduate and Research Committee - The committee reviews and ensures graduate program quality and makes recommendations on policy related to graduate students and graduate programs. This committee recruits and tracks applications for graduate programs. It rates applicants for departmental fellowships and assistantships and makes recommendations to the Department Chair.

g. Industry and Alumni Contact Committee - This committee serves as a liaison between the CEE Department and our industrial and professional clients. The committee facilitates the effective operation of the CEE Professional Advisory Committee. It also facilitates gifts to the Department from alumni and friends and works with the Department Chair to identify and nominate candidates for election to the ACADEMY.

h. Laboratory, Safety, and Chemical Hygiene Committee - This committee reviews and makes recommendations on replacement, modernization, maintenance, and support of (non computing) instructional laboratory facilities. The committee will establish laboratory fees, make an annual review of lab expenditures, and will make recommendations to the Department Chair on instructional lab account supervisors. The committee will oversee the general operation and upkeep of the CEE workshop, administer Department safety and chemical hygiene policies, including annual safety inspections and annual safety reports, and support the enforcement of safety policies. The committee should assist the Department in developing and reviewing specific laboratory equipment fees in order to maintain Department equipment for use in sponsored research. The Committee should consist of four faculty members and three staff members. The faculty members should be from the following four areas: environmental engineering, geotechnical engineering, hydraulics, and materials. The staff members should represent the civil engineering labs, the environmental labs, and the transportation materials lab. The staff members have voting rights on safety issues only.

i. Student-Faculty Conference Committee - This committee provides a forum for students to make their needs and concerns known to the faculty. It consists of one student member from each of the six student organizations, ASCE, Chi Epsilon, SEEn, ITE, AGC, and MWEA, and three faculty advisors chosen from the six organizations.

2. Ad hoc Committees - It will be necessary at times to develop ad hoc committees to perform relatively short term tasks, e.g. ABET Committee. Ad hoc committees normally should not be in existence for more than two years. If the task is likely to take longer than that, it should be delegated to a standing committee. The Department Chair may appoint ad hoc committees with three (3) to five (5) members, including staff where applicable, depending on the purpose of the committee. The Department Chair may not be a voting member of an ad hoc committee. The Department Chair will appoint each ad hoc committee chair. The Department Chair may convene the first meeting of the committee in order to present the committee with its charge.

III. Hiring New Faculty or Staff

The decision to hire a new faculty or general fund staff member will be initiated by the Department Chair in consultation with the Promotion, Tenure and Policy Committee. Following the necessary approvals, the Department chair will form an ad hoc search committee. The search committee, in consultation with the Department Chair, will perform the search. The search will begin with the advertising of the open position in appropriate national and regional publications. The applications received will then be reviewed and ranked. The top two or three candidates will be interviewed by as many members of the Department faculty as is appropriate for the position. The search committee, with input from the faculty, will recommend a candidate. The Department Chair will perform the necessary negotiations with the candidate and deal with the University Administration to obtain final approval to offer the candidate the position.

IV. Promotion, Tenure and Reappointment

A. Procedures - The University has an established promotion, tenure and reappointment policy. This section outlines procedures specific to the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering.

1. Reappointment and Tenure - Tenure-track faculty are appointed for two years at a time. During the first, third and fifth years in a tenure-track appointment, the appointee undergoes an interim review. The successful result of a minor review is that the appointee is told that the subsequent year will not be his or her last year of employment. Also, the appointee should receive some useful feedback.

During the second, fourth, and sixth years in a tenure-track appointment, the appointee undergoes a major review. The successful result of a major review is that the person is reappointed. Also, some useful feedback is given so that the person can judge how he or she is progressing toward tenure and take appropriate action.

The sixth year review is the mandatory tenure major review. Successful completion of this review will lead to tenure and promotion to Associate Professor.

Lecturers must be reviewed for reappointment one year before the end of their appointment. Lecturers should also receive an annual review performed by the Department Chair in consultation with the Promotion and Tenure Committee.

All recommendations for promotion, tenure, and reappointment will require the approval of the Dean of Engineering, the Provost, the President, and the Board of Control.

2. Promotion to Professor - An Associate Professor must apply for promotion by submitting a complete F form and associated materials to the Department Chair. Normally the faculty member will have conferred with the Chair prior to this submission.

3. Review Materials - The basic yardsticks and criteria for professional growth are embodied in the F form that is required for promotion and tenure. To help faculty prepare for promotion and tenure, the CEE Department requires that our faculty up for major review or promotion complete F forms. In this way, the Promotion, Tenure and Policy Committee and faculty can compare achievements with those of colleagues who have been promoted and tenured. For an interim review, the Department simply requires that the person under review prepare an early Vita Update form as required of each faculty member in the University.

B. Criteria - The University has established certain criteria for the various academic ranks. This Charter clarifies the relative significance to be given to various factors in making Department recommendations on tenure, promotion, and reappointments.

1. Weighting of Factors - The same weighting of factors will be used both to establish tenure and to determine promotions. The factors to be considered include independent research, instructional quality (including supervision of student research), professional services to the University, professional services to the academic and research communities, and other professional services. The primary emphasis shall be on the first two criteria, independent research and instructional quality, weighted equally. Professional services may be considered as well, and certain services that enhance research or instruction in a demonstrable and tangible fashion should be included as a part of those two factors.

2. External Evaluations - External evaluations (letters of recommendation) shall be sought from at least six eminent engineers or scientists conducting research in the candidate's field for all promotions, including tenure. Preliminary contact with potential external evaluators may be made in order to ensure that they are willing and able to write a fair evaluation; however, the failure of any reviewer to respond with a written evaluation shall not be considered detrimental to the candidate. All written evaluations that have been solicited and received will become part of the candidate's file, although requests by the candidate that certain persons, if any, not be requested to send recommendations should be honored. The file should contain at least four letters from external reviewers.

V. Sabbaticals

A faculty member who wishes to take a sabbatical must apply for the sabbatical using the procedures described in the MTU Faculty Handbook. Departmental approval will be obtained through the Promotion, Tenure and Policy Committee, in consultation with the Department Chair.

Faculty members on sabbatical shall be replaced on committees for the duration of their sabbatical only. The Department Chair will appoint replacements except for the Promotion, Tenure

and Policy Committee and the Budget Committee where the replacement will be decided through an election by the voting faculty in accordance with procedures described above.

VI. Evaluation of the Department Chair

The Promotion, Tenure and Policy Committee will appoint two (2) faculty members to administer the evaluation. They will be responsible for distribution and collection of the questionnaires as well as tabulation of the results. Responses will be kept confidential insofar as possible and after the results are summarized all questionnaires shall be destroyed. The summary of results shall be distributed to all voting faculty, the Department Chair, the Dean of Engineering, and the Provost.

VII. Grievance Policy

The Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering will use the following procedure for reviewing faculty grievances. It follows the University's grievance policy that contains the definitions of grievable issues under this procedure.

Because most faculty complaints can be resolved informally through normal collegial communications, faculty members should communicate with the Chair in the normal spirit of faculty problem solving. If this does not lead to a mutually satisfactory outcome, the faculty member may pursue the issue further through the following procedure.

The grievant shall meet with the Chair to file a grievance in writing, specifying the grounds on which the grievance is based. The grievance shall be filed within thirty (30) workdays after the discovery of the event, act, or omission that is the basis for the grievance, or thirty (30) days after the date on which the grievant reasonably should have known of such an event, act, or omission, if that date is later. (In cases where a basis for the grievance is an alleged historical pattern of inequity, the thirty (30) workdays shall commence after an identifiable action, event, or omission, if that date is later.) No grievance need be accepted for processing unless a written grievance is provided to the Chair within this thirty (30) day period.

The Chair will submit a written response to the grievant within five (5) workdays after the meeting. This period may be extended in the event the Chair is off campus.

Within five (5) workdays after receiving the written response from the Chair, the grievant will notify the Chair in writing whether the Chair's written response is a satisfactory resolution of the grievance.

If the grievant is not satisfied with the Chair's response, within five (5) workdays, the Chair will pass the written materials on to the departmental grievance committee for review. It is the responsibility of the committee to maintain a written record of the grievance process, consistent with the maintenance of due process, and with the possibility of a review of its deliberations by the University Grievance Committee. Within a time period of thirty (30) work days after receiving the materials from the Chair, that committee must notify in writing the grievant and the supervisor of its

decision whether to support the grievant. The committee decision shall be based on a simple majority vote.

If the committee decision supports the grievant, within five (5) workdays, the committee chair shall notify the Department Chair in writing of the committee's decision. At the grievant's request, the committee shall refer the grievance to the University Faculty Grievance Committee. If the committee does not support the grievant, the grievant may appeal the decision, following procedures of the University Grievance Policy (see Faculty Handbook).

VIII. Amendments to the Charter

Amendments initiated by a faculty member or by a committee are discussed and voted on by the entire department faculty. Approval of an amendment requires a 2/3 majority of the voting Any Department faculty member or any Department Committee may initiate amendments to the charter. faculty or a simple majority in two votes taken 12 months apart.

IX. Individual Responsibilities

The faculty of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering are expected to be leaders in many ways. They are expected to be technical leaders, finding and developing new ways to solve problems in their fields. They are expected to be innovative teachers, leading students to new knowledge and methods of discovery. And they are expected to participate in leading inter-institutional activities, whether through responsibilities in professional societies or directly with other organizations. The demands placed on each faculty member in attempting to meet these expectations, and in obtaining the funding necessary to meet them, are great. They fall on all faculty members alike, and yet the Departmental governance activities described in the preceding sections of this Charter must still be met. As a result, all faculty members are expected to participate in matters of Departmental governance. With increasing rank comes increasing responsibility for such activities, and it is expected that the higher-ranking members of the Department will assume higher degrees of activity within the various committees. The Department should strive to distribute various committee assignments among the faculty in a fair and equitable manner, recognizing that faculty interests and abilities should be fitted with Departmental needs to maintain a smoothly-operating group of satisfied professionals.

X. Conflicts with University Policy

In any event in which the provisions of this charter are in conflict with University policies and procedures, the University policies and procedures shall take precedence.

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