

**The University Senate of Michigan Technological University**

**Proposal 6-18**

**DEPARTMENT OF  
MECHANICAL ENGINEERING-ENGINEERING MECHANICS**

**Charter**

# DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING-ENGINEERING MECHANICS

## Charter

October 2017

### I. Department Voting Members, Approval and Amending the Charter, and Department Procedures

#### A. Department Voting Members and the Role of Professional Staff

**Academic Members:** All faculty holding the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, professor, lecturer, senior lecturer, principal lecturer, or professor of practice with at least 50% employment in the department.

**Staff Members:** The professional (excluding post-doctoral appointments) and non-exempt staff with at least 50% regular\* employment in the department.

**Research Members:** All faculty holding the rank of research assistant professor, research associate professor or research professor with at least 50% employment in the department for at least 9 months.

**Academic Issues** are defined as:

- All curricular matters and changes in degree programs
- Requirements for certificates and academic degrees
- Peer evaluation of teaching

The **Department Voting Constituency:**

- Academic Members vote on all matters brought to the department.
- Staff Members and Research Members vote on matters not defined as Academic Issues

*Administration* of the Department is carried out by the Department Chair and the Executive Committee, consisting of the Associate Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies, the Associate Chair and Director of Graduate Studies, the Technical Area Directors, the Director of Operations and Finance, and the Director of Research. In matters of policy the Department Chair is advised and assisted by the Academic Members, Staff Members, and Research Members directly, and by the Standing Committees.

*Authority* is delegated by the Academic Members, Staff Members, and Research Members to the Department Chair, who acts under advisement of the Standing Committees: the Executive Committee, the Faculty Development Committee, the Curriculum Committee, the Graduate Committee, the Research Committee, the Safety Committee, the Student Advisory Committee, the Honors and Awards Committee, and the External Advisory Board.

*Major department policy issues* are those that are not mandated by Senate policies and procedures and do not require university approval, and are therefore subject to approval by the Department Voting Constituency.

*Promotion and Tenure Actions* must be conducted in accordance with the Faculty Handbook Appendix I: Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment Procedures, and by written Departmental Procedure (*see Section IV.B*).

*Sabbatical Leave Procedure* must proceed in accordance with Senate Procedure 706.1.1 and the written Departmental Procedure (*see Section VI*).

*Emeritus/Emerita Professor Policy* must proceed in accordance with Senate Policy 703.1 and the written Departmental Procedure (*see Section VII*).

*Grievances* formally submitted to the Department Chair or Executive Committee must be addressed in accordance with Senate Procedures 704.1.1 Faculty Grievance Procedures. To supplement these Procedures, the Department has a written Departmental Grievance Process (*see Section VIII*).

\*Regular staff appointments as defined by the university

## **B. Revision of the Charter**

Charter revisions may be proposed by either of two methods:

- Action initiated by the Executive Committee
- Submittal to the Executive Committee of a petition signed by at least 20 percent of the Department Voting Constituency

Ratification by the Department is subject to the following procedural requirements:

- Must be preceded by discussion in an open meeting of the Department Voting Constituency
- Must be conducted by secret ballot, distributed to the Department Voting Constituency after adjournment of the discussion
- Must be accepted in secret ballot by at least 2/3 of those voting

A ratified Charter revision becomes effective upon approval by the President of the University.

## **C. Conflicts with University Policy**

If, at any time, any provisions of this Charter are in conflict with published University Policies and Procedures, the University Policies and Procedures shall take precedence. In the case of noncompliance the Charter Compliance Process in Section IX will be followed.

## **II. Chair of the Department**

As Chief Executive of the Department, the Department Chair will:

- Serve as spokesperson and advocate for the Academic Members, Staff Members, and Research Members to the Administration and Alumni
- Serve as a communication link among the Academic Members, Staff Members, and Research Members, Administration, and Alumni
- Represent the ME-EM Department to the University and appropriate external constituencies
- Provide leadership in revision and implementation of the Department strategic plan
- Lead the Department advancement activities
- Expand and allocate Department resources in consultation with the Executive Committee
- Maintain and implement procedures for development and promotion of Staff Members in accordance with University and Senate guidelines
- Ensure the University's tenure, promotion, and reappointment policies are implemented
- Implement and maintain the faculty mentoring program, and facilitate faculty development
- Provide direction and resources to the Associate Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies, the Associate Chair and Director of Graduate Studies, the Director of Operations and Finance, and the Director of Research
- Serve as the chair of the Executive Committee
- Act as the liaison between the Department and the External Advisory Board and the Student Advisory Committee

## **Evaluation and Reappointment of the Department Chair**

The evaluation and reappointment of the current Department Chair will follow Senate Procedures 506.1.1.

Upon initiation of the process following Senate Procedures 506.1.1, the Executive Committee will oversee the formation of a Department Chair Evaluation and Reappointment Committee. The internal Department members of the committee will consist of one member elected from each Technical Area and one member elected from the Staff.

The Department Voting Constituency (Academic Members, Staff Members, and Research Members) complete the evaluation survey of the Department Chair and the survey results are tallied together.

The Department Voting Constituency (Academic Members, Staff Members, and Research Members) vote on the reappointment of the Department Chair and the votes are tallied together.

## **Search and Selection of the Department Chair**

The search and selection of a new Department Chair will follow Senate Procedures 805.1.1

### **III. Departmental Leadership**

#### **A. Associate Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies**

The Associate Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies, in consultation with the Curriculum Committee and Academic Members, is responsible for the Department's undergraduate program. Primary duties include:

- Serve as the Chair of the Department Curriculum Committee
- Manage the allocated resources for the undergraduate program, including the undergraduate teaching laboratories; the Associate Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies is the final signatory for laboratory accounts
- Assist the Department Chair with carrying out the administrative responsibilities of the Department
- Coordinate the assessment of the undergraduate degree program in support of continuous improvement and ABET accreditation
- Work in conjunction with the Department Chair and the Director of Operations on the teaching assignments and course scheduling
- Oversee the Engineering Learning Center and its financial and human resources
- Lead the Department's undergraduate recruiting and retention efforts by working with relevant University units
- Represent the Department's undergraduate program to the University and appropriate external constituencies
- Serve on the Ad Hoc Senior Design Committee and supervise the Director of Senior Capstone Design
- Serve as an ex-officio member of the Student Advisory Committee

The Associate Chair will also perform additional duties assigned by the Department Chair and may serve as the Acting Department Chair in the Department Chair's absence. The Acting Department Chair will be the signatory of the Department.

#### Selection

Appointment by the Department Chair in consultation with the Executive Committee

Term

At the discretion of the Department Chair

**B. Associate Chair and Director of Graduate Studies**

The Associate Chair and Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the Graduate Committee and Academic Members, is responsible for the ME-EM graduate program. Primary duties include:

- Serve as the Chair of the Department Graduate Committee
- Manage the allocated resources for the graduate program, including teaching assistants and graduate assistants
- Assist the Department Chair with carrying out the administrative responsibilities of the Department
- Implement the criteria for graduate admission and graduation established by the Graduate School and the Graduate Committee
- Recruit, advise, and oversee Department orientation of new graduate students and serve as the permanent advisor to coursework MS students as needed
- Help achieve the Department diversity goals through graduate student recruiting and retention
- Conduct periodic assessment of the graduate program with criteria established by the Graduate School or Graduate Committee
- Represent the ME-EM graduate program to the Graduate School, the Graduate Faculty Council, the University, and appropriate external constituencies

The Associate Chair will also perform additional duties assigned by the Department Chair and may serve as the Acting Department Chair in the Department Chair's absence. The Acting Department Chair will be the signatory of the Department.

Selection

Appointment by the Department Chair in consultation with the Executive Committee

Term

At the discretion of the Department Chair

**C. Technical Areas**

The Technical Areas, each headed by an Area Director, are defined on the basis of academic thrust and research interests. These Areas are:

- Design and Dynamic Systems (D/DS)
- Energy Thermo-Fluids (E/TF)
- Manufacturing/Industrial (M/I)
- Solid Mechanics (SM)

Each Academic Member will be primarily identified with one Technical Area for administrative purposes, but may also be associated with one or more others according to his/her interests and activities. The Technical Areas will be reviewed periodically for relevancy and appropriateness.

#### **D. Directors of the Technical Areas**

Each Academic Member participates in and is represented primarily by one Technical Area. The Technical Areas are each represented by an Area Director. Each Area Director serves on the Executive Committee and acts as a liaison between the Executive Committee and the respective Technical Area Academic Members, as well as Staff Members and Research Members.

The Area Directors provide leadership to their respective Technical Areas in organizing and implementing instructional programs. Primary duties include:

- Make recommendations to the Department Chair and the Executive Committee regarding resource allocation
- Advise the Department Chair and the Executive Committee on issues related to Department policy
- Facilitate course development in the Department curricula
- Work with the Associate Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies and the Director of Operations and Finance to ensure adequate course offerings, including balancing course offerings requiring GTAs
- Serve as a liaison between the Area Academic Members and the Department Chair in recommending teaching loads and assignments
- Assist with Academic Members recruitment with a focus on Area teaching needs

##### Selection

Tenured Academic Member, elected by the Technical Area

##### Term

Two years, renewable

#### **E. Director of Operations and Finance**

The Director of Operations and Finance, in consultation with the Executive Committee and the Department Chair, is responsible for the coordination, oversight, and/or advisement of the following primary duties:

- Manage the allocated resources for the financial, administrative, course scheduling, and operational responsibilities of the Department
- Assist the Associate Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies in carrying out the BS degree/curriculum/course responsibilities of the Department
- Assist the Associate Chair and Director of Graduate Studies and Academic Members in carrying out the graduate student assignment/degree/funding responsibilities of the Department

The Director of Operations and Finance will also perform additional duties assigned by the Department Chair and may serve as the Acting Department Chair in the Department Chair's absence. The Acting Department Chair will be the signatory of the Department.

##### Selection

- If an Academic Member, then selected by the Department Chair in consultation with the Executive Committee
- If a Staff Member, then hired by the Department Chair in consultation with the Executive Committee and a Department search committee following Human Resource and Affirmative Programs Office Hiring Guide

Term

- If an Academic Member, then at the discretion of the Department Chair
- If a Staff Member, then follows the Board of Trustees Policy 4.3 Employment Policy for Professional Staff-Satisfaction or at Will  
<http://www.mtu.edu/bot/governance/policies/>

**F. Director of Research**

The Director of Research, in consultation with the Research Committee and the Academic Members and Research Members, is responsible for facilitating research growth. Primary duties include:

- Serve as the Chair of the Department Research Committee
- Manage the allocated resources in support of research growth
- Assist the Department Chair with carrying out the administrative responsibilities of the Department
- Coordinate the assessment of the research activities in support of continuous improvement
- Represent and promote research to the University and appropriate external constituencies
- Aid research growth by communicating ongoing and new research activities that promote collaboration, alleviating administrative hurdles associated with large research projects, and being involved in the recruitment of new Academic Members, Staff Members, and Research Members
- Coordinate the submission of large Department or interdisciplinary research proposals

The Research Director will also perform additional duties assigned by the Department Chair and may serve as the Acting Department Chair in the Department Chair's absence. The Acting Department Chair will be the signatory of the Department.

Selection

Appointment by the Department Chair in consultation with the Executive Committee

Term

At the discretion of the Department Chair

**IV. Standing Committees**

**A. Executive Committee**

Charge

- All Department matters
- The Executive Committee may request annual reports from the standing committees

Composition

All Area Directors plus Department Chair, the Associate Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies, the Associate Chair and Director of Graduate Studies, the Director of Operations and Finance, and the Director of Research. The Department Chair is Chair of the Committee.

**B. Faculty Development Committee** (also known as the Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment Committee)

Follow the procedures in the Faculty Handbook Appendix I. Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment Procedures

#### Charge

- Provide advice and opportunities for development intended to advance the careers of the Academic and Research Members
- Maintain, implement, and update the Department Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment Procedures in accordance with Faculty Handbook Appendix I: Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment Procedures
- Coordinate and collect all the information required for tenure, promotion, reappointment, and Faculty Development processes from all parties, including the Department Chair
- Make independent recommendations to the Department Chair for inclusion in the Academic Members dossier on tenure, promotion, and reappointment, in accordance with guidelines distributed by the Department Chair to the Academic Members
- Review Academic Member progress and make recommendations to the Department Chair on professional development, including travel and seminars
- Academic Members will be evaluated in the areas of:
  - Academic Instruction and Advising
  - Research, Creative, and Scholarly Activities
  - Professional, University, and Department Service
  - Honors, Awards, and Recognitions

#### Composition and Selection

From among the Academic Members, two tenured Professors and two tenured Associate Professors, each elected by the Academic Members in his/her respective rank. The Committee must be chaired by a Professor.

#### Term

Two years, renewable, staggered for tenured Professors and Associate Professors

### **C. Curriculum Committee**

#### Charge

- Carry out periodic review of the BS degree requirements and recommend curricula changes to the Executive Committee
- Monitor courses and review proposals for new courses offered by Academic Members, or courses offered by other Departments that affect Department students
- Assess student learning using Technical Area concept exams
- Report to the Executive Committee

#### Composition and Selection

The Associate Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies (Committee Chair), one representative from each Technical Area, and additional members appointed by the Chair of the Curriculum Committee

#### Term

Technical Area representatives: two years, renewable, staggered

### **D. Graduate Committee**

#### Charge

- Advise the Department on graduate policies and procedures
- Assist the Director of Graduate Studies with Graduate Assessment
- Administer the PhD Comprehensive Written Exam
- Review the graduate degree curricula and course offerings
- Develop and help implement procedures for recruiting, retention, and success of graduate students
- Solicit and act on program enhancement recommendations from the Academic Members,





Composition and Selection

The Associate Chair and Director of Graduate Studies (Committee Chair), one representative from each Technical Area, and, as ex-officio members, the Graduate Program Assistant and the Director of Operations and Finance.

Term

Technical Area representatives: two years, renewable

**E. Research Committee**

Charge

- Assess research activities and Department strengths with the goal of identifying and targeting the development of research programs with national visibility
- Maintain one-year and three-year Research Committee plans and inform the Executive Committee regarding their status
- Develop a yearly report documenting the research activity of the Department
- Track Department resources to expand research
- Identify emerging research thrusts
- Create the process by which research groups are formed and retired, as appropriate

Composition and Selection

One representative from each Research Group, the Director of Research (Committee Chair), and one Staff member designated by the Department Chair

Term

At the discretion of the Director of Research

**F. Safety Committee**

Charge

Institute responsible safety practices for the Department

Composition

The Department Safety Officer, a faculty member as appropriate, and the Department Chair

Term

One year, renewable

**G. Student Advisory Committee**

Charge

- Advise the Department Chair and the Academic Members, Staff Members, and Research Members regarding concerns of the Students and to provide Student feedback on matters referred to the Committee by the Department
- Coordinate the calendar of activities of Department honorary and professional society groups

Composition

One representative from each Department honorary and professional society. Representatives from Student Organizations can be added at the discretion of the membership. The Committee Chair and Vice Chair are elected from the membership. The Department Chair and the Associate Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies are ex-officio members.

Term

One year, renewable

## **H. Honors and Awards Committee**

### Charge

- Solicit recommendations from Academic Members, Staff Members, and Research Members, including emeriti Academic Members and others as appropriate, to review the credentials of all nominees (for induction into the Academy of Mechanical Engineering and Engineering Mechanics), and to make final recommendations to the Faculty
- Identify and facilitate opportunities for nominating Academic Members, Staff Members, Research Members, students, and alumni for awards and honors
- Advise the Department Chair on alumnae selections to the Presidential Council of Alumnae

### Composition and Selection

Department Chair, Associate Chairs, one Academic Member representative, and one Staff Member representative, selected by the Department Chair

### Term

Two years, renewable

## **I. External Advisory Board**

### Charge

Make recommendations to the Department Chair that leverage the partnership between the organizations represented on the External Advisory Board (EAB) and Michigan Tech to improve the Department as described in the External Advisory Board Charter

## **V. AD HOC COMMITTEES**

Ad Hoc Committees may be established as needed for specific purposes, and thereafter disbanded.

## **VI. SABBATICAL LEAVE PROCEDURES**

Application of a tenured faculty member for Sabbatical Leave must follow the guidelines established in Senate Procedures 706.1.1: Sabbatical Leave Procedures, or by its most recent successor. The following outlines the procedure by which the Department Chair secures advice from the Department Voting Constituency (706.1.1 section 6.d.i) before submitting a recommendation to the University Sabbatical Leave Committee.

Upon receipt of an applicant's Sabbatical Leave proposal, the Department Chair shall convene the Executive Committee to discuss the proposal and, if appropriate, establish means to distribute the duties of the applicant during the proposed sabbatical period. The Department Chair may also convene the Faculty Development Committee, which would serve in an advisory capacity.

The Department Chair must submit his/her recommendation to the Executive Committee for review before submitting it to the University Sabbatical Leave Committee. The Executive Committee may elect to approve a dissenting opinion by the Department Chair, which must be appended to the Department Chair's recommendation.

Applicant appeals must be addressed in accordance with Senate Procedures 704.1.1 Faculty Grievance Procedures.

## VII. EMERITUS/EMERITA PROFESSOR PROCEDURE

The appointment and perquisites of Academic Members holding Emeritus/Emerita rank must follow the guidelines established in Senate Policy 703.1: Emeritus/Emerita Professor Policy, or by its most recent successor. The following outlines the procedure by which the Department makes a recommendation for Emeritus/Emerita status to the President for presentation to the Board of Control.

This process may be initiated by the retiree or by any Academic Member, Staff Member, or Research Member by submitting a brief written request to the Department Chair. The Department Chair must submit his/her recommendation to the Executive Committee for review before submitting it to the Department Voting Constituency for approval. The Executive Committee may elect to include a dissenting opinion, which must be appended to the Department Chair's recommendation before submitting it to the Department Voting Constituency.

The recommendation must be approved by a simple majority of those voting of the Department Voting Constituency before it can be submitted to the President.

## VIII. THE DEPARTMENT GRIEVANCE PROCESS

The following supplements Senate Procedures 704.1.1: Faculty Grievance Procedures describing the procedure for settling grievances within the Department.

- **Collegial Communications**

It is expected that most complaints or concerns can be resolved informally through discussion and debate. Any Academic Member, Staff Member, and Research Member is expected to first present his/her grievance in writing to the Department Chair. In the event that the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, or if the Department Chair is deemed inappropriate for any reason, a Grievance procedure may be initiated.

- **Grievances**

The Chair will pass the written materials to the Executive Committee. Upon receipt of the Grievance, the Executive Committee will oversee the appointment of an ad hoc Grievance Committee and will pass all relevant materials to that Committee for action within five (5) work days.

- **Composition of the Grievance Committee**

It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to ensure that an appropriate Grievance Committee is appointed from the Department Voting Constituency to consist of not fewer than three people and must be an odd number. Care must be taken to ensure that even the appearance of conflict of interest is avoided in this selection. In cases where any participant in the grievance expresses in writing that the Executive Committee may be biased, the Executive Committee is required to turn the appointment procedure over to an ad hoc committee established by the Department Voting Constituency acceptable to the participants. The Grievance Committee will elect its own Chair.

- **General Method of Operation**

The Grievance Committee shall try to determine all facts of the case, and to hear all sides. Within twenty-five (25) working days after receiving the written materials, the Grievance Committee will make a recommendation to the Executive Committee for action per Senate Procedures 704.1.1. The Executive Committee must respond to the participants within five (5) work days of receipt of the Grievance Committee's recommendation. The Grievance Committee must retain records of all deliberations, while ensuring the utmost level of security and confidentiality for the parties involved. The Grievance Committee must establish a documentation procedure to maintain records and ensure timeliness of the review and is expected to maintain contact with University Human Resources to ensure correctness of its activities.

- **Appeals**  
University Senate Procedures 704.1.1 will determine the timing of events and conditions for subsequent appeal.

## **IX. CHARTER COMPLIANCE PROCESS**

On being informed of a violation of the Department Charter by any Academic Member, Staff Member, or Research Member, the Chair or the Executive Committee is charged to follow the following procedure on behalf of the Member's request:

- Bring the violation to the immediate attention of the Executive Committee who will convene an ad hoc Charter Oversight Committee whose members are elected by vote of the Department Voting Constituency, to oversee this process
- If the problem is not corrected, or no Charter amendment is submitted to the Department Voting Constituency after one month, then the Charter Oversight Committee is charged to inform the Academic Members, Staff Members, and Research Members and call a Department meeting for discussion of the problem
- After adjournment of the discussion, the Charter Oversight Committee is charged to conduct a secret ballot of the Department Voting Constituency that reads as follows:

The Department Voting Constituency charges the Charter Oversight Committee to prepare a ballot which states that the violation of the Department Charter is to be brought to the attention of the University Senate and the University Administration, and to request immediate correction of the violation

The Charter Oversight Committee will inform the Academic Members, Staff Members, and Research Members of the ballot results and if a simple majority of those voting approve, then the Charter Oversight Committee shall carry the recommendation forward to the University Senate and University Administration, as charged in the ballot.