

CHARTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MATERIALS SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

Adopted May 12, 1995

Revised: 4/2/96, 1/14/98, 11/14/02, 3/09/04

I. General Philosophy on Governance

The Department is administered by a Chair, who has broad latitude to make day-to-day decisions and policies concerning the operation of the Department. Several committees shall meet regularly, with responsibilities in defined areas. Appointment to the committees is made by the Chair in consultation with the faculty.

II. Definitions

Faculty includes all tenured or tenure-track teaching faculty members who have at least a one third time appointment in the Department. Faculty members who transfer into administrative positions within the University will be considered departmental faculty if they continue to actively participate in the Department, as evidenced by teaching at least one course per year, or advising departmental graduate students, or serving on departmental committees. Staff includes the regular professional and clerical members of the Department. Research faculty members with official appointments are welcome to participate in faculty meetings and discussions, but may not participate in any faculty vote. Post-doctoral researchers, visiting scholars, and students are not included in any of the three groups.

Several procedures outlined in this document require a positive vote from a specified fraction of the faculty for approval. For these purposes, the definition of faculty is as given in the preceding paragraph. The fraction will be based on the total number of faculty members currently in the Department (including those on approved leave), and not on the number of faculty members who are in attendance at a particular meeting.

III. Responsibilities of the Chair

The Chair is responsible for the operation, administration, budgeting and scheduling of the Department. The Chair determines raises, teaching assignments, professional staff work assignments, and areas of responsibilities. The Chair suggests committee assignments in consultation with the faculty. The Chair has the ultimate authority in all personnel decisions, such as hiring, admitting students to the graduate programs, disciplinary actions, and termination; the only exception is that the Departmental Coordinator has the responsibility for personnel decisions, scheduling, work assignments, and areas of responsibility for the unionized clerical staff. The Chair is responsible for allocating office and laboratory space, and changing space assignments when necessary. He or she will act as an advocate for the Department in dealing with the administration. It is expected that the Chair consult with the appropriate departmental committee in

matters where responsibilities are designated to the committee or where responsibilities overlap. It is further expected that the Chair consult with the faculty in matters concerning the future directions of the Department and critical budgetary decisions. The Chair will conduct faculty meetings as necessary to discuss issues critical to the Department. The Chair will report at least annually to the faculty on budget issues, including general funds, research funds, and discretionary (Tech Fund) resources.

IV. Responsibilities of the Committees

The departmental committees have responsibilities in areas defined in this section. Committee membership is established by the Chair in consultation with the faculty in question. Each committee will have a chair and a vice chair, both of whom will be appointed by the Department Chair. The term of the committee chairs will be determined by the Department Chair in consultation with the committee.

The only exceptions to the appointment procedures for committee members and committee chairs are the Governance Committee and the subcommittee overseeing promotion and tenure. Rules for these committees are discussed in detail in the appropriate sections below.

The committees and their responsibilities are:

The Undergraduate Program Committee is responsible for all matters related to the undergraduate program, including: academic advising, recruitment, admissions and transfer standards, retention, distribution of Departmental scholarships, and advising of student organizations. The committee is also responsible for coordination of curricular changes, changes in degree requirements, and assessment activities at the Departmental, College and University-wide levels. It is expected that the Undergraduate Program Committee will consult with the faculty on all significant changes to the curriculum and/or degree requirements.

The Graduate Program Committee is responsible for setting standards and procedures related to the graduate program, including admissions, recruitment, qualifying examinations and thesis defense regulations. Additionally, the Graduate Program Committee is responsible for coordination of curricular changes, changes in degree requirements and assessment activities. It is expected that the Graduate Program Committee will consult with the faculty on all significant changes to the curriculum and/or degree requirements.

The Faculty and Staff Professional Development Committee is responsible coordinating the Department's development and professional service activities. These include promotion and tenure (a subcommittee to comprise tenured faculty only) at the Departmental and College levels, bestowal of awards such as membership in the Departmental Academy, organization of a Departmental seminar series, and the Department's Library Liaison.

The Facilities, Space and Safety Committee is responsible for oversight of operations related to laboratories and computing, including common use facilities such as the electron optics equipment, X-ray facilities, and computer laboratories (the latter of which are run in conjunction with the EECN network), development and implementation of training and safety procedures for laboratories and facilities, prioritization and allocation of laboratory space.

The Governance Committee maintains the Department Charter and coordinates all changes to the Charter. The Governance Committee conducts the Chair evaluation and coordinates any actions related to a Chair recall effort, as discussed later. The Governance Committee members will be elected by the faculty, rather than appointed by the Chair. The committee consists of three faculty members, who will be elected for a three year term. Each year, one of the committee members will be replaced by a newly-elected faculty member. The Chair of the Governance Committee will be elected by the committee members.

V. Chair Search and Performance Review Procedures

In the event of a vacancy, the Department Chair shall be appointed by the Dean of Engineering, from a list of candidates presented by the Department. A Chair Search Committee, consisting of three faculty members from within the Department, a staff member from within the Department, and a faculty member from outside the Department, will be constituted. The three faculty representatives from inside the Department will be the three who receive the most votes in an election of the faculty. The staff will meet independently to elect their representative. The external faculty member will be appointed by the Dean, in consultation with the four persons elected from the Department. Any faculty member who wishes to be a candidate for the Chair position must decline nomination to the Chair Search Committee.

The search for a new Chair may include external candidates, if approved by the Dean and the Provost, and if desired by at least half of the faculty. The responsibility of the Chair Search Committee is to identify candidates for the position. Once candidates have been identified and interviews have taken place, the Chair Search Committee will conduct a vote of the faculty, and any individual who receives an acceptable rating from at least half of the faculty will be further considered. In the event that more than one candidate is acceptable, the Chair Search Committee will forward the files of the acceptable candidates to the Dean, and they will inform the Dean of the relative ranking of the candidates. No more than three names will be forwarded to the Dean. In the event that no candidate receives an acceptable rating from at least half of the faculty, the faculty will meet to discuss the options, including re-evaluating the candidates and conducting another search.

The Chair will be appointed for a period of three years. After two years, if the Chair wishes to continue serving, the Governance Committee will conduct an evaluation of the Chair's performance. The purposes of the evaluation are to determine if the Chair should continue, and to obtain constructive feedback for the Chair in the event that he or she is

reappointed. If at least half of the faculty are in agreement that the Chair should continue, the governance committee will recommend that the Dean re-appoint the Chair.

If a significant problem arises between the Chair and the faculty in the middle of a term, it is expected that the issues will be discussed collegially and that solutions will be negotiated. If these efforts are not successful, any faculty member may request that the Governance Committee conduct a vote of confidence. If at least 2/3 of the faculty vote “no confidence”, the Governance Committee will contact the Dean and request a search for a new Chair.

VI. Faculty and Staff Search Procedures

Faculty or staff search committees will be newly constituted each time a position is available. A faculty search committee will consist of the three faculty members who receive the most votes in an election of the faculty. Staff search committees will be appointed by the Department Chair and will consist of faculty and staff members as appropriate.

The purpose of the search committees is to identify acceptable candidates. Within this purpose, each search committee will have the freedom to direct the search and agree on criteria for eliminating candidates as they see fit. It is expected that the search committee will seek the input of the faculty (and staff when appropriate) in the final stages of the search. Once candidates have been identified and interviews have been conducted, the committee will make recommendations to the Chair and the faculty. The responsibility for making the final hiring recommendation rests with the Chair. It is expected that the Chair’s decision will take into consideration the input of the faculty (and staff where appropriate) and the search committee.

VII. Amendment of the Charter

Any faculty member may propose an amendment to the Charter at any time. A written motion must be submitted to the Governance Committee, describing the nature of the change and documenting its need. The Governance Committee will bring the motion to the faculty. The motion will be discussed, and if at least 2/3 of the faculty vote for the change, it will be enacted, subject to the approval of the Provost and the President.