

**CONSTITUTION
OF
THE COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING**

Last revised: October 21, 2009

PREAMBLE

This constitution defines and prescribes the manner in which the University of North Texas College of Engineering governs itself and the roles that individual members within the College play in this governance. All prescriptions and policies detailed herein are and must remain consistent with the University of North Texas Policy Manual and the UNT Faculty Handbook.

ARTICLE 1

1. Definition and Mission

1.1 Definition

The College of Engineering, hereinafter referred to as the College, was established in 2003 as an academic unit of the University of North Texas and, as such, is maintained for the purpose of serving the State and the Nation by working to achieve its mission.

1.2 Mission

The mission of the UNT College of Engineering — the newest college of engineering in North Texas — is to capitalize on the opportunity for innovation and excellence in teaching, research and service. This will be achieved by a strategic alliance among all of the college's constituencies in the region, the state of Texas and the nation. The constituencies involved include foremost our undergraduate and graduate students as well as academic units and industry, particularly in North Texas, so as to foster economic development and promote an academically diverse environment¹.

**ARTICLE II
FACULTY**

1. Definitions

1.1. The term *university year* as used in connection with appointments of members of the teaching staff and other personnel comprises any two terms in the calendar, as defined for the year.

1.2. The term *Governing Faculty* shall include those members of the College who have regular faculty status as professors, associate professors, assistant professors, and lecturers who hold appointments of one-half time or more. Only the Governing Faculty have voting rights at College faculty meetings. Lecturers may vote at faculty meetings only if they have held appointments for more than one calendar year. Individuals designated as Governing Faculty will remain members of the Faculty until termination of employment in the College. Unless otherwise stated, the term “Faculty” is defined as the Governing Faculty.

1.3. The term *Regular Faculty* shall include those persons holding at least a 50% appointment in the College for a university year as professor, associate professor, assistant professor, lecturer,

¹ As stated in the 2008-2009 UNT Catalog

or instructor. The term also includes persons of those ranks whose percentage of appointment is not less than 50% to the College, but who have divided appointments between the College and other UNT units totaling at least 75% for a university year. Persons holding adjunct or visiting appointments are not included as regular faculty.

1.4. The term *Teaching Staff* shall include all persons holding instructional positions but who are not regular faculty. These positions include instructors and adjunct faculty.

1.5. The term *Research Staff* shall include persons whose responsibilities in research relate to the College and are not regular faculty.

1.6. The term *professional staff* shall include persons whose function is to conduct, on behalf of the Governing or Regular Faculty, a particular programmatic phase of the instructional or research activity of the College. Professional staff includes, but is not limited to, internship coordinators.

1.7. The terms *Teaching Assistant*, *Research Assistant*, and similar junior positions as may be appropriately established from time to time shall be used to designate appointees who participate in the processes of teaching and research but do not possess faculty rank. Appointees in these classifications shall have student status.

2. Powers and Duties

2.1. The Faculty of the College will have the opportunity to participate in the affairs of the College.

2.2. The Faculty of the College is vested with plenary powers to make rules and regulations concerning matters of import to the College and its faculty, such as grading regulations, class attendance, committee organization, and related internal matters. All such regulations shall be recorded in the minutes of the Faculty meetings and filed with the Chair of the Faculty Council.

2.3. The Faculty shall adopt rules and procedures for its own governance.

2.4. In the absence of specific provisions to the contrary, the rules of procedure described in *Robert's Rules of Order (10th or most recent edition)* shall be followed in all meetings of the Faculty and by committees, boards, and other deliberative bodies.

3. Faculty Meetings

3.1. The Dean of the College shall call meetings of the Faculty as are deemed necessary to carry on the affairs of the College and its Faculty. There shall be at least one meeting in each academic term. Special meetings shall be called upon petition of at least 10% of the Faculty. The Dean shall give reasonable written notice of all faculty meetings and shall distribute a written agenda at least one week in advance of each faculty meeting.

3.2. The Dean shall preside at all faculty meetings except that another member of the Faculty may, at the Dean's discretion, and shall, in the Dean's absence, be appointed by the Dean to act as chair *pro tem*.

3.3. The minutes of all faculty meetings shall be recorded and distributed to the faculty for

approval. Approved copies of all meeting minutes will be kept on file in the Office of the Dean.

3.4. An item may be placed on the agenda of faculty meetings conducted by the Dean by any standing or special committee when presented in writing by the chair of the committee or by any member of the Faculty when presented in writing in a timely fashion and supported by signature of one other member of the Faculty.

3.5. A quorum for the transaction of business at faculty meetings will require 50% + 1 of the Governing Faculty.

3.6. College of Engineering voting may also be conducted via e-mail. A quorum for such transactions will require participation of greater than 50% of the Governing Faculty.

ARTICLE III COLLEGE ORGANIZATION

1. General

1.1. Within the area of endeavor broadly classified as Engineering, there exist several groups of related academic studies and research, each group commonly identified with an academic discipline or an area of professional practice. The College acknowledges these valuable activities by organizing itself into several departments. Each department consists of Faculty who share a commonality of interest in the undergraduate programs, graduate programs, research, and related work corresponding to an engineering academic discipline or an area of professional practice.

1.2. The basic objective of each department is to effectively fulfill the instructional, research, and professional service missions of the College that are appropriate to that particular department.

1.3. The College may from time to time establish additional administrative units which do not fall within the purview of an existing department. The purpose of these units is to serve the needs of the Faculty in accomplishing the mission of the College.

2. Departments and Programs

2.1. The departments will constitute the basic administrative and academic units of the College.

2.2. Each undergraduate and graduate degree program offered by the College will be under the general supervision of the Faculty of a department or unit.

2.3. Initiatives for new programs and departments and changes to existing departments and programs should be presented to the Faculty for discussion and input in an open forum.

2.4. Each unit shall have a Chair, Coordinator, or Director appointed by the Dean from among the Faculty of the College.

2.5. Each department shall have its own Constitution and Bylaws.

2.6. To effectively implement the objectives of a department, the Faculty of that department shall formulate the organizational structure, departmental committees, and operational procedures of each department in conformance with the operational rules and procedures of the College. These structures and procedures shall be communicated to all departmental Faculty and to the Dean of the College. Each department shall have its own operating procedures kept on file in the department's office.

2.7. All College units other than departments shall have a faculty standing committee which shall advise the unit head in the administration of the unit.

2.8. The Faculty and the Teaching, Research, and Professional staff of a department or other unit shall transmit its recommendations for action and its special reports to the Dean through its Chair or unit head.

ARTICLE IV COLLEGE OFFICES

1. Office of the Dean

1.1. Duties: The duties of the Dean will be defined by the Provost and will include the following:

- 1) preside at College Faculty meetings,
- 2) act on behalf of the Faculty to carry out the academic programs of the College,
- 3) develop and implement a strategic plan, and
- 4) appoint a temporary officer to preside in his absence. If no individual has been designated by the Dean, the Executive Committee, at the request of the Provost, shall appoint a temporary presiding officer.

The Associate Dean(s) selected by UNT policies have the responsibilities as may be assigned to them by the Dean.

1.2. Term of Office: The Dean serves at the pleasure of the Provost, who will initiate the review process and review content of the Dean periodically.

1.3. Advisory Board: The Dean will appoint, meet, and consult with an Advisory Board consisting of representatives from industry, government, and/or academia.

2. Department Chairs

2.1. The presiding officer of a department is the Chair. A Chair is the department's representative to the Executive Board and is responsible to the Dean for the administration of the said department.

2.2. Chair responsibilities include but are not limited to

- department budgets,
- promotion and tenure evaluations,
- development of faculty workloads in accordance with departmental policies,
- merit recommendations, and

- implementation of the departmental academic mission.

2.3. Additional responsibilities include but are not limited to

- recruiting faculty (when there is an approved line),
- recruiting and retaining students,
- maintaining records,
- ensuring that the necessary courses are taught,
- actively mentoring junior faculty
- resolving disputes,
- managing staff, and
- coordinating budgets.

2.4. Chairs are appointed to a 4-year term of office. The appointment is renewable at the discretion of the Dean and after reasonable consultation with faculty in the Department.

2.5. Chairs are selected by the Dean with consultation of the Department Faculty. External Chair searches will be conducted by a search committee made up of representatives from the Department for which the Chair is being sought and at least one UNT faculty external to the Department for which the Chair is being sought.

3. Program Administrators

3.1. Undergraduate and graduate program administrators must be faculty members nominated by the Chair after consultation with the faculty.

3.2. The administrator will serve for a term of 3 years and may be reappointed for one additional term after consultation with the faculty.

ARTICLE V COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

1. Overview of the College

1.1. Committees will develop their procedures and present them to the Faculty Council for approval.

1.2. All non-confidential (personnel-related) committee meeting minutes will be transmitted to the Faculty Council for archiving.

2. Faculty Council

2.1. Purpose: The purposes of the Faculty Council are to 1) advise the Dean on matters pertaining to issues affecting the Faculty, 2) to recommend revisions to the College Constitution

and bylaws as needed, and 3) to assist the Dean in developing and executing a strategic plan for the College.

2.2 Membership: Membership of the Faculty Council shall be one tenured faculty member elected from each department who can only serve 2 consecutive terms. The term of committee membership is 3 years. Although in the initial election, one member will serve a 1-year term, two members will serve 2-year terms, and two will serve their full terms. Initial term assignments will be determined by drawing lots. At the first Faculty Council meeting of each academic year, a Chair will be chosen by the membership.

2.3. Duties: Duties of the Faculty Council include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Representing their constituencies by communicating to the Dean the Faculty concerns about policy and budget issues.
- Appointing a subcommittee of the Faculty Council to conduct elections for committee memberships and plebiscites within the College in a manner and number determined by the membership of the council.
- Appointing a subcommittee of the Faculty Council to evaluate the Dean in the semester prior to reappointment. The evaluation will examine the Dean's resource allocation and implementation of the College Strategic Plan as prescribed by the Provost. Select membership of all ad hoc committees in the College whose membership is not ceded to the Dean.

3. Executive Committee

3.1. Purpose: The Executive Committee will advise the Dean regarding implementation of College policies and Strategic Plans in accordance with the policies of the University of North Texas and the Constitution and Bylaws of the College.

3.2. Membership: The committee shall be composed as follows:

- The Dean of the College or the Dean's designee (who will serve as chair)
- Department Chairs
- The Associate Deans for Undergraduate Studies, Research and Graduate Studies, and Public Relations and Outreach
- A representative of the Faculty Council

3.3. Duties: The duties of the Executive Committee include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Representing the Departments' interests to the College
- Executing policies prescribed by Dean
- Advising the Dean in matters pertaining to accreditation of the individual disciplines
- Disseminating to Departments, units, and Faculty budget information, changes of university policy, information provided by the Dean, and other matters directly affecting the college

4. Personnel Affairs Committee (PAC)

4.1. General: The College shall continuously seek excellence in all three core areas defined in its mission: research, teaching, and service. Crucial to achieving excellence is to reward meritorious faculty properly and to take corrective actions on personnel matters. It must be emphasized that the determination of merit is a peer responsibility that must be initiated at the department level. The College PAC is charged to ensure that the departmental evaluation, promotion, and tenure policies and standards are consistent with those of the College and the

University and departments follow their own policies.

4.2. Duties: The duties of the College PAC shall consist of

- Reviewing College tenure and promotion cases and providing non-binding recommendations to the Dean.
- At the request of the Dean, reviewing merit and reappointment decisions of the departments.
- Devising College policies and procedures concerning reappointment, promotion, and tenure.
- Reviewing departmental policies and procedures concerning reappointment, promotion, and tenure.
- Advising the Dean on all matters addressed in the preceding duties.

4.3. Compliance: The procedures and policies employed by the College PAC shall be consistent with those stated in the Faculty Handbook. Should any ambiguity or inconsistency arise, the Faculty Handbook prevails.

4.4. Membership: The College PAC shall consist of seven tenured faculty members from the College. The faculty of each College department will elect one representative to this committee. An additional member will be elected at large by the College faculty. In addition, one faculty member will be appointed by the Dean.

Each year, the members of the College PAC will choose a committee member as the committee chair by a majority vote. The College Dean, Associate Deans, and Chairs are prohibited from serving on this committee. No one will serve as a member of the College PAC for more than two consecutive terms.

A subcommittee of College PAC consisting of full professors will be elected to evaluate applications for promotions to the rank of Full Professor. If the number of full professors in the subcommittee is less than five, then additional members will be selected by the College PAC. The College PAC may decide to select full professors from outside the College with the approval of the College Dean.

4.5. College PAC Procedures:

1. Following departmental procedures, the department chairs shall submit the departmental PAC recommendations along with their recommendations, including any minority reports, to the College PAC.
2. A representative for the candidate will present the candidate's case to the College PAC. This person can answer any questions and clarify points to the committee.
3. The College PAC shall review all submitted materials and recommendations to determine the adherence to the stated Departmental, College, and University standards.

4. The College PAC shall submit its own written recommendations along with the departmental PAC and chair recommendations, including any minority reports to the Dean. If the recommendation of College PAC differs from those of the department, then all affected individuals and committees shall be informed in writing within five working days.
5. The Dean shall review all submitted materials and recommendations and transmit all submitted materials and recommendations, including any minority reports, along with his or her own recommendations, to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. If the recommendation of the Dean differs from those of the department or the College PAC, then all affected individuals and committees shall be informed in writing within five working days.

(This section will be amended as based on UNT tenure and promotion committee final report)

4.6. Grievance Process: A faculty member may dispute actions or decisions of the committees, or administrators including the Chair or the Dean, by filing an appeal. Disputes between colleagues may also give rise to a grievance. Matters for an appeal may include salary recommendation, merit evaluation, denial of tenure or promotion, non-reappointment of untenured faculty, dismissal of tenured faculty, or the assignment of the workload. Other forms of appeals based on substantive, equity, and fairness issues shall also be considered.

If the alleged grievance has occurred at the department level, then the appellant must first exhaust all grievance options at the department level to resolve the dispute before appealing at the College level. If the dispute is not resolved to the satisfaction of the appellant within 30 working days after he/she filed an appeal within the department or if the alleged grievance has occurred at the College level, then the appellant may appeal at the College level. The procedures and policies employed here must be consistent with those stated in the Faculty Handbook. Should any ambiguity or inconsistency arise, the Faculty Handbook prevails.

Appeals may be time-consuming for all involved parties. Hence, the College administrators are urged to attempt to resolve in good faith disputes that may result in filing an appeal, regardless of their involvement in the dispute.

4.7. Procedures for Appeals: Unless stated differently in the Faculty Handbook, within at most 20 working days, excluding the summer, of having received written notification from a committee or an administrator, a faculty member may initiate an appeal in writing to the College Faculty Council. This letter must include the reasons for the appeal and the remedy desired. The letter must also include two names that the appellant wishes to appoint to the Ad Hoc Appeal Committee. Within at most five working days of receiving the request for an appeal, the Faculty Council must also name two College faculty members to be appointed to the Appeal Committee and inform all involved parties of its actions. Within five working days of being informed by the Faculty Council, the four members of the appeal committee shall choose, by a majority vote, a fifth member as the committee chair. No administrators shall serve in the appeal committee unless they are chosen by the appellant. Furthermore, the members of the committee shall not have been involved in the appeal matter and shall not be biased one way or the other. The ad hoc Appeal Committee will determine its process and procedures but must allow oral and written presentation from both sides and shall submit a written recommendation to the College Dean

with a copy to the appellant and the other party within at most 15 working days from the time that the committee was formed. In addition, should the Appeal Committee discover any violations of Department, College, or University policies, the Committee will report these violations to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Within five days, the Dean will provide his recommendation to the Ad Hoc Committee's decision in writing to the appellant and the appeal committee. His recommendation should include the rationale for concurrence or non-concurrence with the decision of the Ad Hoc Committee. If the appellant is not satisfied with the Dean's or Committee's decision, he or she may appeal to the University Tenure Committee or the University Review Committee or other appropriate university committees. In case of a time-sensitive issue such as denial of tenure and promotion, nonrenewal of contracts for untenured faculty, and dismissal of tenured faculty, the procedures and time lines in the Faculty Handbook shall prevail.

4.8. Resolution of disputes between faculty members: Following the procedures for appeals stated earlier, the faculty member(s) filing the grievance must write to the Faculty Council and name two members to the committee. The Faculty Council then asks the other party to choose two other members to the appeal committee. The process then continues as prescribed in Procedures for Appeals.

5. Curriculum Committees

Committees will be formed to address undergraduate and graduate curricula.

5.1. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee will address undergraduate curriculum matters and will be chaired by the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies. The committee will be composed of one member selected from each department and interdisciplinary program.

5.2. The Graduate Curriculum Committee will address graduate curriculum matters and will be chaired by the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies. This committee will be composed of the chairs of the graduate curriculum committee of each department and interdisciplinary program.

6. Research Grant and Scholarship Committee

6.1. The purpose of this committee is to make recommendations regarding distribution of stipends, internal research grants, scholarships, and graduate student salaries.

6.2. The membership of this committee shall consist of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, the Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, and one member elected from each department. The term of committee membership is 1 year.

7. The Faculty as a Whole

7.1. The Dean shall convene at least one meeting of the faculty each long semester. In these meetings, the faculty as a whole can approve any proposed amendments and revisions of the College of Engineering Constitution and its Bylaws.

7.2. Membership of the committee of the whole includes all Faculty.

7.3. The committee of the whole has the authority to appoint subcommittees to investigate or propose other matters as may come before the committee of the whole and have the potential for

affecting all faculty members of the College of Engineering.

**ARTICLE VI
OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT AND GOVERNMENTAL SERVICE**

Faculty members of the College are encouraged to seek outside consulting and service work that

- Enhances the technical knowledge of the faculty member
- Builds desirable relationships with the community
- Does not interfere with their duties at the university
- Conforms to the requirements of the Faculty Handbook as referenced below

Faculty Handbook Policy for Dual/Outside Employment

http://www.unt.edu/policy/UNT_Policy/volume1/1_2_2.html

**ARTICLE VII
STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

The Faculty members of the College are encouraged to support student development through honor and professional societies as faculty sponsors or advisors within the limits set by University policy. The appropriate section of the University Policy can be found at

http://www.unt.edu/policy/UNT_Policy/volume3/18_4_2.html

**ARTICLE VIII
ACADEMIC CODE OF CONDUCT**

All Faculty members of the College are expected to conform to the highest standards of ethical conduct as defined by the technical society of the discipline in which the faculty member works and according to the Ethics Policy of the University of North Texas as stated in the Policy Manual in Classification Number 1.2.9 as modified 8/03.

**ARTICLE IX
AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COLLEGE**

Amendments to the Constitution of the College may be proposed by two faculty members of the College. At the next College faculty meeting, the amendment will be presented and approved as a ballot initiative (by majority vote) in the next faculty meeting. Amendments shall be adopted by a vote of greater than 60% of the faculty present at either a general faculty meeting or a specially called meeting for the purpose of amending the constitution. Amendments to the Constitution, upon approval by the faculty, will be submitted to the Faculty Senate and the Provost for review and approval.

**ARTICLE X
BYLAWS WHICH SHALL TAKE PRECEDENCE**

In the event that there exists a conflict between bylaws, the bylaw which is most supported by the Faculty Handbook or the University Policy Manual shall have precedence. In the event that there is no predominance of support from either document, the bylaw which, if given precedence, would affect the greater number of faculty in a positive manner should be selected, unless there is compelling reason to do differently as determined by the Faculty Committee.