

**Rules and Bylaws**  
**Department of Mechanical Engineering**  
**University of Nevada, Las Vegas**

**Section I - The Department Faculty- Composition and Responsibility**

- 1.1 - In matters other than the tenure and promotion of faculty members, the voting department faculty shall consist of all tenure-track persons holding a full-time contract with the University of Nevada System for professional services as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor, and teaching one or more courses in the department of Mechanical Engineering.
- 1.2 - The Department Faculty, under the direction of the Chair, shall have authority over matters of internal educational policy and faculty welfare.
- 1.3 - The instructional group or individual responsible for the conduct of a course shall have authority over all matters of internal educational policy of that course, including text selection and determination of course content within the framework of the catalog description.
- 1.4 - Adjunct faculty shall consist of those individuals holding adjunct appointment in any rank listed in I.I. They shall be invited to attend faculty meetings and to make and second motions, but shall not be allowed to vote.
- 1.5 - Research faculty shall consist of those individuals holding full time research appointments in any rank listed in I.I. They shall be invited to attend faculty meetings and to make and second motions, but shall not be allowed to vote.
- 1.6 - Part-time faculty shall include those qualified persons who may accept one-semester appointments to teach specific courses. They may be requested to serve in an advisory capacity and to select texts for the courses they teach, but shall not otherwise have a vote in internal academic policy of the Department.

**Section II - Purpose and Procedure of Department Faculty Meetings**

- 2.1 - Purpose. The Department Faculty shall hold meetings for the purpose of receiving information and taking action on any matter of general educational policy or faculty interest.
- 2.2 - Quorum. A quorum shall consist of more than one-half of the Department Faculty. Approval of a motion requires a majority vote of at least a quorum.
- 2.3 - Presiding Officer. The Department Chair will be the presiding officer at meetings of the Department Faculty. The Chair will designate another faculty member to preside in

the case of his/her absence.

2.4 - Meetings. Meetings may be called by the Department Chair or by a request of at least one-third of the Department Faculty. All meetings called by the Department Faculty must be held within 5 school days of the request. Notification of meetings, except for matters related to new professional appointments, must be given at least 5 days in advance. Meetings shall be scheduled to avoid class conflicts.

2.5 - Agenda. An agenda will normally be furnished for each faculty meeting. Faculty members proposing a new business should inform the other faculty members in writing of its nature at least one full working day before the meetings. If more than three items are to be discussed, an agenda will be arranged and items taken in order.

2.6 - Minutes. The Department Chair has the responsibility of distributing a copy of the minutes of each meeting of the Department to each member of the Department Faculty within one week after the meeting. Such minutes shall constitute official record and notice of the official actions of the Department. Minutes will not be considered official until approved at the next meeting of the faculty.

2.7 - Class A Actions. Actions taken by the Department faculty which substantially alter or affect Department policies regarding Department Chairmanship or Department organization shall be designated Class A actions.

2.7.1 - The department faculty shall determine by simple majority of those present and voting in a Department meeting whether any action shall be designated Class A, Procedure I or Procedure II.

2.7.2 - A Class A action. Procedure I, shall be submitted in writing to the Department Faculty, along with a mail ballot to be returned within a specified time limit. Ballots shall be counted in the presence of a majority of the faculty.

2.7.3 - A Class A action. Procedure II, shall become effective upon approval by two-thirds of the faculty present and voting at a Departmental meeting. It shall become effective after the approval of the minutes of the meeting.

2.7.4 - Approval by a two-thirds majority of the Department Faculty is required for the adoption of any Class A action.

2.8 - Proxies. Proxy votes will not be allowed in Department meetings.

2.9 - Secret Ballot. The call for a secret a ballot by a faculty member must be honored on any vote. A secret ballot is always used when voting for Department Chair.

2.10 - Procedure. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of Department meetings.

### Section III - Committees

3.1 - Committees. The Department Chair shall appoint such ad hoc committees as may be required from time to time. The Department Faculty shall create standing committees as needed.

3.2 - Term of Service. The term of service of a member on any standing committee shall be for a period of approximately two years. The term begins at the date of appointment, and ends at the time of appointment of a designated successor. Members of the ad hoc committee serve until discharged by the Department Chair.

3.3 - Limitation of Service. No member shall serve at the same time on more than two Department Standing Committees nor be chairperson of more than one committee unless it is impractical to be relieved of other responsibilities and the member is willing to serve.

#### 3.4 - Standing Committees.

3.4.1 - Curriculum Committee. This committee shall be charged with examining the undergraduate and graduate curriculum periodically for relevancy and offering issues including such factors as accreditation needs, frequency of offerings, stipulations of the Graduate College, University requirements, and any other factors affecting the curriculum. Proposed new courses will be presented to this committee before being voted on by the Departmental faculty. Formal courses that have not been taught for 6 years and have no foreseeable offering in the future will be dropped from the curriculum, subject to this Committee's action. The Committee is composed of four elected members.

3.4.2 - Shop Committee. This committee is required to suggest shop policy and coordinate upgrades to the shop facilities. Recommended policy items will be presented to the Department faculty for approval. The committee consists of 4 elected members.

### Section IV - Personnel Policy and Procedure

#### 4.1 - Selection and Appointment of Professional Personnel

4.1.1 - Recommendation for appointment to staff positions will be made by the Chair.

4.1.2 - Guidelines for appointment or promotion of faculty members will be according to the appropriate sections of the Regents Handbook.

4.1.3 - Candidates for tenure track appointments shall normally possess an earned doctorate in an appropriate discipline. Under extraordinary circumstances exceptions may be made provided the individual has demonstrated a high level of performance in professional scholarly and/or creative work.

4.1.4 - Only tenured faculty members shall vote on the tenure of other members.

4.1.5 - In cases of promotion, tenure-track faculty members of greater rank vote.

4.2 Selection of the Department Chair. The Department Chair shall be elected by a secret ballot by a majority of the Department Faculty in a Department Meeting called for this purpose. This meeting will normally be held in March, and the Chair's term will normally begin on July 1 of the same year. The Chairmanship will be for a three-year term, with six consecutive years being the maximum, unless determined at the time of the election to be for some other period. The department recognizes that the chairperson's duties are valuable and time consuming, and recommends that a suitable fraction of the chairperson's time be allotted to them. The chairperson's teaching load shall be reduced accordingly.

## Section V - Procedures for Approval of New and Revised Curricula

5.1 - Proposals at the undergraduate or graduate level for new degree programs and courses, for the deletion of existing programs or courses, and for substantial revision of existing courses of degree program requirements shall emanate from the Department Faculty. Such proposals originate with individuals. They shall be considered for adoption by the Curriculum Committee and be approved or rejected by the faculty; and if approved, shall be submitted by the Chair through College channels.

5.2 - A file shall be kept on all courses currently offered, or which have been offered since the most recent accreditation recommendation. These files shall include an outline of the course; a list of textbooks and the semester in which they were used; a syllabus, whenever available; copies of examinations, when possible; a copy of final examination and a list of grades assigned in the course. These files shall be available for review by members of the Department and to members of the evaluating team when they are accrediting the Department or any of the disciplines therein.

## Section VI - Retention, Tenure and Promotion Issues

6.1 - Retention Retention is defined as the continued appointment of non-tenured, tenure-track faculty person. Generally satisfactory progress toward tenure has to be shown (refer to the criteria for the award of tenure given later). In all cases, the materials in the format necessary for the ultimate use in the tenure considerations will be prepared.

6.1.1 - Informal considerations. Each year of the pre-tenure probationary period, except the mid-tenure year (defined below), the candidate shall submit a file listing all pertinent accomplishments to that point. These accomplishments shall be the same items that will be used for formal tenure considerations. Also, the candidate shall submit a list of tangible and realistic goals for additional pertinent accomplishments for the next year. The Department Chair shall then give feedback to the candidate in writing about his/her analysis of the candidate's record and goals as they pertain to a favorable action on tenure during the sixth year of the pre-tenure probationary period.

6.1.2 - Formal considerations. In the third year of the pre-tenure probationary period, a formal evaluation of the candidate's file will be carried out. The candidate will submit a complete file of accomplishments to the Department Chair. At the latter's option, the file will be submitted to a select committee of tenured faculty in the Department or it will be submitted a committee of all tenured faculty. The committee will then evaluate the file as to whether or not appropriate progress is being made toward tenure. In doing this, trends in publications, teaching reviews, grant activity, etc. will be noted. A brief report will then be composed by the committee and submitted to the candidate stating areas where satisfactory progress and unsatisfactory progress is being made. In areas where unsatisfactory progress is being made, explicit suggestions will be given about needed efforts to accomplish tenure at the end of the probationary period.

6.1.3 - Dismissal. In exceptional cases, it may be determined that continued service of the pre-tenure candidate is not in the best interests of the University. This situation will be determined through a consultation with the candidate and a vote of all tenured professors in the Department.

6.2 - Tenure During the sixth year of appropriate service to the university' the candidate must undergo a careful screening of accomplishments, followed by a formal vote of the Departmental Tenure Committees. A file prepared by the candidate will be the basis for this evaluation, but other information as furnished by the committee and the Department Chair may be included. For example, the results of student exit interviews, evaluations carried out the Student Advisory Committee, testimonials of colleagues, and any other pertinent materials, can be included in the consideration. After consideration of the materials, a formal vote will be taken, and summary of the deliberations prepared. The criteria for tenure include teaching, research, service, and collegiality". Ratings of "unsatisfactory," "satisfactory," "commendable," or "excellent" will be assigned for each area. In order to be recommended for tenure, a faculty member must receive an excellent rating in either teaching or research, and at least satisfactory ratings in the remaining three areas.

6.2.1 - Teaching. Teaching includes not only classroom teaching effectiveness on the lower division, upper division, and graduate levels, but also graduate student supervision, course and laboratory development (including the securing of teaching-related grants or teaching-related equipment), and instructional materials preparation. Formal teaching evaluations will be used. The level of graduate student research supervision will have important implications and should be explicitly documented by the candidate.

6.2.2 - Research. This is defined as publication (publications are to be listed in the following categories: books, patents, book chapters, refereed journals, refereed conference proceedings, un-refereed journals, un-refereed conference proceedings, and other) and research grant activity. Without a minimum of four refereed journal publications (or the equivalent) where the candidate is listed as first author, or second author where the first author is an advisee of the candidate's, tenure cannot be recommended. This is a necessary condition, but not necessarily a sufficient condition. Activity in contracting funded research must be shown and documented by proposal

submittal and, if successful, grant funding." Participation on grants in roles other than PI or CO-PI is discounted substantially.

6.2.3 - Service. Service can take many forms, and it is generally left to the candidate to make the case that particular activities are, indeed, service. These include functions that are important to the operation of the Department, College, University, or System, such as committee service. They may also include roles where the faculty member is donating time and expertise to improve the well being of technical or professional organizations, or governmental or public agencies.

6.2.4 - Collegiality. It is important that the Department function as a relatively cohesive unit so that it can accomplish meaningful educational objectives. For this reason, it is important that there be some ability of its faculty to work together. This does not mean that collaboration must take place in all functions, but, on the other hand, the inability of an individual to work with others can cause significant problems for day-to-day operations. Tenuring of individuals who do not show aspects of collegiality is not in the best interest of the Department.

6.3 - Promotion Promotion is an act bestowed by the University on an individual in recognition of a certain level of accomplishment. This document addresses promotion of an Assistant Professor to the rank of Associate Professor, as well as the promotion of an Associate Professor to the rank of Professor. While other ranks are possible within the University system, they are not covered here.

6.3.1 - Promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor. This promotion will usually take place simultaneously with the award of tenure. Generally, the same criteria used for that award will be used. For promotion, however, a higher ranking (i.e. "commendable" or higher) is needed in research. Normally, tenure separate from promotion will not be considered.z

6.3.2 - Promotion from Associate Professor to Professor. Elevation in rank from Associate Professor to Professor denotes a number of accomplishments and promises of continued high-level performance. Included are excellence in teaching, renown in research, and leadership roles within the Department and, possibly, the University. Excellence in teaching follows the same general guidelines as described in the tenure award. However, it is expected that someone at this promotion level will be able to demonstrate extremely good teaching evaluations, significant graduate student supervision, and substantial developmental accomplishments for classes and/or laboratories within the Department. Within the research realm, considerations will be given to the quantity and quality of the publication record as well as accomplishments in securing funded research independently. To substantiate the candidate's renown within the research sector, outside letters of evaluation will be required. These letters will be solicited both from a list furnished by the candidate, as well as from other persons who work in the candidate's area and who are selected on a national basis. In all cases, input of this type must come from outside of the University.

6.4 - Appeals. In the event there is an appeal of any department retention, promotion or tenure action, the candidate will file a formal request with the ad hoc appeals committee to consider the request. The candidate whose appeal is denied by the departmental ad hoc committee may then appeal his case to the College level appeals committee.

## Section VII - Amendment of Bylaws

7.1 - Proposed amendments shall be placed on the agenda of a meeting of the Department Faculty.

7.2 - Approval by at least two-thirds of the Department Faculty as required by Class A action is necessary for the adoption of any amendment