

**BYLAWS
OF THE FACULTY OF THE COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY**

Approved April 2, 2020

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Faculty of the College of Engineering, Virginia Commonwealth University.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

- II. 1. The purpose shall be to establish, in conformity with Article VI of the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate of Virginia Commonwealth University, an orderly instrument whereby this Faculty can effectively participate in the consideration, formulation, and implementation of governance policies of the College of Engineering (hereinafter called the College) and University policies that affect the College and its faculty. The organization shall provide the opportunity for each member of the Faculty to express, through representation, concerns and opinions about all matters vital to the welfare of the University and to the proper functioning of this College. The Faculty has responsibility for the academic and research programs of the College.
- II. 2. The Faculty of the College of Engineering exercises its authority as a single organization and does not delegate authority to individual departmental faculties. As necessary the Faculty of the College of Engineering will recruit faculty members from individual departments to serve on its various college-wide standing and ad-hoc committees. As such, these bylaws do not contain statements of shared governance for individual departments.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

- III. 1. The College of Engineering faculty is a heterogeneous group of scholars drawn from such disciplines as engineering, computer science, biosciences, physical sciences and management to support the educational, research and service mission of the College. The College of Engineering has a continuing commitment to foster each faculty member's academic freedom of thought, teaching, research, learning, inquiry and expression and to ensure fair and equitable treatment through its governance.
- III. 2. College of Engineering faculty are appointed according to the College of Engineering Promotion and Tenure Policy and Procedures document. College of Engineering faculty are appointed in ranks of professor, associate professor, assistant professor and instructor. All full-time faculty appointments will be tenured, probationary (tenure-eligible) or term (non-tenure-eligible) positions. Adjunct, emeritus, and visiting faculty are not considered term faculty per Article IV of the VCU Faculty Handbook. Affiliate faculty are drawn from other units within the University and receive no financial support from the College of Engineering. Joint appointments involve financial support from the College of Engineering and another unit(s) within the University.

- III. 3. Term appointments are renewable upon review and recommendation by the full-time faculty of the sponsoring College of Engineering department, and upon subsequent approval by the department Chair and Dean. Affiliate faculty appointments are usually for terms of one to three years depending upon the educational or research involvement within the specific program, and can be extended beyond the aforementioned term if warranted by special circumstances. Affiliate appointments are renewable upon annual performance assessment and recommendation by those College of Engineering full-time faculty directly involved with the Affiliate faculty member and with approval of the department Chair and Dean. Joint faculty appointments may be variable in length, but must be specified annually in the contract offer and be approved by units providing funding.
- III. 4. Part-time adjunct faculty appointments are for a one-semester term. Other part-time faculty appointments are possible depending upon available funds. Adjunct and other part-time appointments are renewable upon review and recommendation by the voting-eligible faculty of the sponsoring College of Engineering department, and upon subsequent approval by the department Chair.
- III 5. Full-time faculty of the University who hold tenured, tenure-eligible, term, or joint appointments with tenure in the College of Engineering or administrative and professional faculty with teaching and/or research appointments in one of the College of Engineering departments, shall constitute the voting membership of the Faculty of the College of Engineering. Recognized departments within the College of Engineering are Biomedical Engineering, Chemical and Life Science Engineering, Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, and Mechanical and Nuclear Engineering.
- III. 6. Affiliate, adjunct, part-time, emeritus, and visiting faculty members shall have the right to participate in General Meetings of the Faculty without voting privileges. Affiliate, adjunct, part-time, emeritus, and visiting faculty members may not serve on standing committees.

ARTICLE IV

FACULTY COUNCIL

- IV. 1. The purpose of the Faculty Council is to represent the faculty of the College of Engineering. The Faculty Council will be advisory to the Dean of the College of Engineering on all important issues concerning graduate and undergraduate curricula, programs, evaluation and improvement of instruction, information technology, awards and honors, tenure and promotion, and major organizational changes. The Faculty Council will represent faculty concerns to the Dean of the College. In the event that issues are not resolved, the Council will vote whether to represent these concerns to other appropriate bodies in the University Governance Structure. The Faculty Council will also ensure that faculty meetings, committee membership and elections are maintained according to College Bylaws.
- IV. 2. The Faculty Council (Council) shall be composed of one representative from each department within the College of Engineering, excluding Department Chairs, who will serve for staggered two-year terms. Voting-eligible faculty in each department will elect the Council representative as needed from their academic department. Faculty Council members may serve up to two consecutive terms. A Council member may be recalled by a majority vote of their department.
- IV. 3. The Faculty Council shall annually elect and rotate a Chair and Secretary for a one-year term. The Chair shall preside at Council meetings and serve as liaison between the Council and the Dean. The Secretary shall record minutes of Council meetings, announce future meetings, and keep all records pertaining to the Council. The Secretary of the Faculty Council will make the

meeting minutes available to the general faculty. Faculty Council members will inform the faculty of special concerns addressed by Council actions. When a Faculty Council decision requires a vote, all members of the Faculty Council must participate. Any decision will be based on the majority.

- IV. 4. The Faculty Council shall convene at least once per semester and in addition whenever deemed necessary by the Council Chair or by three or more Council members. The Faculty Council will have the authority to establish sub-committees as it deems necessary for the conduct of business.
- IV. 5. Once a year, the Faculty Council will distribute an anonymous survey to determine the opinions about the state of the college. All voting-eligible faculty will be polled. The poll results will be reported to the college voting-eligible faculty.
- IV. 6. In the event of an anticipated Faculty Council vacancy, it is the responsibility of each department chair to arrange for the election of a replacement in a timely fashion. Membership of Faculty Council will be announced by the Dean before the end of the spring semester. Council members will begin their service on August 16.

ARTICLE V

STANDING COMMITTEES

- V. 1. General
 - V. 1. A. Standing College of Engineering committees include the Undergraduate Academic Committee, Graduate Academic Committee, and the Promotion and Tenure Committee. It is the responsibility of each department chair to notify the Dean or Dean's designee of any anticipated vacancy by February 1. The duly elected representative from each department must be submitted no later than March 31. Membership of standing committees will be announced by the Dean before the end of the spring semester. Committee members will begin their service on August 16.
 - V. 1. B. All standing committees shall have an agenda prepared by the chair of the committee and distributed to members at least four calendar days prior to the scheduled meeting.
 - V. 1. C. All standing committee chairs shall distribute minutes of each meeting to the committee members within one calendar week after the meeting for their approval.
 - V. 1. D. The Chair of each standing committee is responsible for: 1) Preparing an annual report summarizing the committee's activities, submitting it to the Dean, and distributing it to faculty via email by May 15 and 2) Maintaining all documents pertaining to its charge and operating procedures with the official copy being available in the Dean's office.
 - V. 1. E. All standing committee proposals subject to College of Engineering faculty approval must be sent to the general faculty two weeks prior to the anticipated vote. Standing committees can create subcommittees/taskforces that include faculty members from outside the standing committee. All authority and decision responsibilities still remain with the standing committee.
 - V. 1. F. Meetings are to be scheduled between August 16 and May 15. Under extenuating circumstances and with the unanimous approval of the standing committee members, meetings can also be called during the summer term.
- V. 2. Undergraduate Academic Committee

- V. 2. A. The purpose of the Undergraduate Academic Committee is to ensure the integrity and quality of the undergraduate degree, certificate programs and minors offered by the College. The Undergraduate Academic Committee will be concerned with admission requirements, degree requirements, academic standards, curriculum development, and other matters appropriate to the maintenance and development of the College of Engineering undergraduate academic programs and to ensure high academic standards for prospective and current students.
- V. 2. B. The Undergraduate Academic Committee shall be chaired by the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or Acting Associate Dean and composed of undergraduate program directors for each degree program within the College of Engineering. A committee member may represent multiple degree programs found within one academic department (e.g., Electrical Engineering and Computer Engineering). Undergraduate program directors shall be appointed by their respective department chairs. The Directors of Student Services, Recruiting, Advising, Career Services and Diversity/Equity/Inclusion may attend meetings in an ex officio (non-voting) capacity.
- V. 2. C. The Undergraduate Academic Committee shall establish regular communication with relevant University-level committees, especially the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UUCC) and the Academic Regulations and Appeals Committee (ARAC). The committee shall deliver approved changes concerning undergraduate curricula and courses to the UUCC, per UUCC requirements. The committee will meet on a timely and as-needed basis to consider all requests emanating from the degree programs. Activities shall be completed and prepared to coordinate with the UUCC calendar of submission and meeting dates. The committee will report its activities to the Dean and to College of Engineering during general faculty meetings on an as-needed basis, or when the Dean or general faculty requests an accounting.
- V. 2. D. In general, decisions regarding technical details of course content shall be recognized to be the province of the individual programs within the College of Engineering. The function of the Undergraduate Academic Committee shall be to ensure that courses offered for credit shall be of appropriate quality and properly coordinated within the College, across university units and aligned with the strategic mission of the College. It shall study and make recommendations regarding the establishment of new programs or the elimination of obsolete and irrelevant programs, with special attention to meeting criteria of departmental ABET accreditation.
- V. 2. E. The Committee shall also be authorized to create sub-committees, task forces and study groups to review and make recommendations concerning new rules, or changes in rules, affecting the academic quality and status of undergraduate students in the College of Engineering, with respect to admissions policies, academic advising, degree requirements, grades, student academic quality, and any other academic policy matter.
- V. 2. F. The Committee shall convene at least once per semester and additional meeting can be held when deemed necessary by the Chair or by three or more Committee members. A simple majority of committee members shall constitute a quorum.
- V. 3. Graduate Academic Committee
- V. 3. A. The Graduate Academic Committee will promote excellence in the College of Engineering graduate masters and doctoral programs. The Graduate Academic Committee is charged with the consideration, review and College-level approval of all items related to the graduate programs. Topics of consideration include admissions criteria, acceptance processes and letters, awarding of graduate fellowships or assistantships, marketing of the graduate programs, assurance of completion of program requirements by prospective graduates, the development of courses and program tracks of study, and the development and marketing of research areas within the graduate programs. Additionally, the Graduate Academic Committee shall be charged with the development and implementation of College-level processes needed to monitor graduate student progress, including advisory committees, management and administration of preparatory,

comprehensive and final examinations (outside of specific courses), and other processes deemed necessary to maintain high caliber graduate programs. The committee will help develop strategies for increasing financial support of graduate students and graduate programs.

- V. 3. B. The Graduate Academic Committee shall be chaired by the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or Acting Associate Dean and composed of graduate program directors. The committee, in consultation with the Dean, will determine what additional interests should be represented on the committee and the method of selection of the ad hoc committee members to represent those interests. Considerations in determining areas represented shall include, but are not limited to research areas, academic tracks, existing or envisioned centers, and strategic plans of the University or College.
- V. 3. C. The Graduate Academic Committee shall establish regular communication with relevant University-level committees, especially the University Graduate Council, so that the approved business of the Committee may be considered by the University Graduate Council. The Graduate Academic Committee shall deliver all approved items to the Graduate Council, per Graduate Council submission requirements and dates.
- V. 3. D. The Graduate Academic Committee shall also be authorized to create sub-committees, task forces and study groups to review and make recommendations concerning new rules, or changes in rules, affecting the academic quality and status of graduate students in the College with respect to admissions policies, academic mentoring, degree requirements, student academic quality, and any other academic policy matter.
- V. 3. E. The Graduate Academic Committee will meet at least once each semester during the academic year, with special meetings as called by the Chair. Any member may request that the Chair call a special meeting. A quorum consists of more than fifty percent of the members of the committee.
- V. 3. F. Specific requirements for individual graduate degree programs will be managed by a departmental Graduate Committee or for an interdepartmental program, an appropriate program Graduate Committee.
- V. 3. G. If budgetary, personnel, or other curricular or non-curricular reasons present barriers or problems in adopting the recommendations of the committee; the Dean shall discuss these barriers or problems with the committee.
- V. 3. H. In the event of any disagreement or issue regarding graduate program matters, they shall first be referred to the appropriate department graduate committee and then to the appropriate department chair. Any further appeal shall be referred to the College graduate committee who will make a recommendation to the dean. Further appeals must be made to the university graduate council.
- V. 4. Promotion and Tenure Committee
 - V. 4. A. The College of Engineering Promotion and Tenure Committee will review annually those faculty candidates who are being considered for promotion and tenure. The committee will review all evidential material in the candidate's dossier to determine if the candidate satisfies the criteria specified in the College of Engineering Promotion and Tenure Policy and Procedures document. It will prepare its own written report on each candidate, based on its deliberations, and report to the Dean its findings and recommendations regarding tenure and/or promotion.
 - V. 4. B. Members of the College of Engineering Promotion and Tenure Committee will be drawn from tenured faculty members in the College. None shall hold the administrative title of department chair or above, to conform to University guidelines. The committee will consist of one member from each department in the College, having been duly elected by the faculty within the particular

department. The term of membership will be three years. Members shall serve staggered three-year terms. Those who have served three consecutive years are ineligible to serve again for one year. Composition of the committee will be determined in September of each academic year.

V. 5. New Standing Committees

Based on the requirements and development of the College of Engineering, new standing committees may be authorized. New standing committees may be recommended by one or more full time faculty members. Recommendations shall be submitted to the Dean and Faculty Council along with a statement of purpose, responsibilities, duties and organization of the committee. Authorization and composition of a new standing committee will be by majority vote of the Faculty with a quorum during a regularly scheduled faculty meeting. Notice of the vote along with the document on statement of purpose, responsibilities, duties and organization shall be sent to all faculty member 14 days before the scheduled faculty meeting. After authorization of the New Standing Committee, it can be included in the bylaws as an addendum.

ARTICLE VI

NON-STANDING COMMITTEES

VI. 1. Ad Hoc Committees

Faculty, any standing committee, or the Dean may create an ad hoc committee. An ad hoc committee is presumed to be temporary. Ad hoc committees shall generally consist of a Chair, Secretary, and at least one other committee member. Ad hoc committees shall keep regular minutes and rely on a simple majority vote for approval. An ad hoc committee, regardless of its origin, cannot assume authority that these bylaws confer to a standing committee.

VI 2. Search Committees

The purpose of a Search Committee is to screen applicants for the available position and, after consideration of information obtained from applicants, recommend candidates for campus visitation, conduct onsite interviews, review and make a recommendation for the selected candidate(s). The Dean or designee has the responsibility of approval of appropriate salary and start-up packages.

VI. 3. Search Committees for College Management Positions

College management positions are defined as associate and assistant deans. Search Committees for College management positions shall be appointed by the Dean and composed of three members of the voting-eligible faculty from the College departments. In addition, the Dean may select additional faculty members from the College or outside the College. The Dean will select the chair of the Committee from among the members of the Committee.

VI. 4. Search Committees for Department Chairs

VI. 4. A. When a department chair is to be filled, the Dean will generally appoint three members of the Committee from the tenured, voting-eligible faculty of the department, taking into consideration recommendations forwarded from that department. The Dean may select two additional faculty members from outside the department. The Dean will appoint the chair of the Search Committee for department chairs.

VI. 4. B. The Dean or designee shall have the responsibility for approving visits for candidates for Department Chairs. After conducting interviews and gathering the impressions of all concerned groups and individuals, the Committee will recommend to the Dean those individuals who are considered acceptable for the position. The Dean, in conjunction with the Provost, shall make the final selection and offer for department Chairs.

- VI. 5. Search Committees for Faculty Positions
The department Chair has the responsibility of selecting faculty for their department and in conjunction with the Dean, establishing appropriate salary and start-up offers. The department Chair will appoint not less than three members of the Committee from the voting-eligible faculty of the department. In addition, the department Chair may select two additional faculty members from outside the department. The department Chair will appoint the chair of the Search Committee and has responsibility for approving on-site visits for candidates.
- VI. 6. Search Committees for other College Positions
Search Committees for all other administrative management positions will be composed of a minimum of three members from different College departments as appointed by the Dean or designee. In addition, the Dean may select additional faculty members from the College or outside the College. The Dean or designee will select the chair of the Committee from among the members of the Committee. The Dean or designee has the responsibility for final approval on the offer for the position.
- VI. 7. Awards Committee(s)
Committees may be established to review and recommend recipients for special awards and honors not otherwise defined in the award parameters and selection process. Committee membership should be composed of a minimum of one member from each College department as appointed by the Dean or designee. Committees may be formed for one-time awards or be established with membership for up to three-year terms.

ARTICLE VII

GENERAL MEETINGS OF THE FACULTY

- VII. 1. A minimum of two General Meetings of the Faculty of the College of Engineering, called by the Dean, will be held each academic semester with at least ten calendar days advance notice including agenda. Additional meetings can be called by the Dean, the Chair of the Faculty Council with the majority approval of the Faculty Council, or by written petition to the Faculty Council by thirty percent of the voting-eligible faculty. All faculty and staff may attend these meetings, unless circumstances dictate Faculty only attendance.
- VII. 2. In addition to the regular exchange of ideas and news among Faculty and College Administration, the Dean and, if necessary, chair of the Faculty Council shall report to the general Faculty. Additionally, chairs of the College committees listed in Article V and VI may present reports to the assembled Faculty.
- VII. 3. Representatives to the University committees and councils shall be elected by the voting-eligible faculty at General Meetings of the Faculty for service during the subsequent year. Nominations should be submitted to the Dean at least five business days prior to the General Meeting of the Faculty.
- VII. 4. Faculty members with voting privilege can take action upon significant policy adoptions or changes that do not conflict with the responsibilities of the University Administration or Board of Visitors. Policy adoptions or changes will be approved or declined by simple majority vote by voting-eligible faculty present at the meeting. A simple majority of the total voting-eligible Faculty members shall constitute a quorum at all General Meetings of the Faculty.

ARTICLE VIII

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern meetings.

ARTICLE IX

REVISIONS AND AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

- IX. 1. These Bylaws shall be reviewed by the Faculty Council on an as-needed basis. The Faculty Council may draft proposals to amend these Bylaws and/or solicit proposals to amend these Bylaws from voting-eligible members of the faculty of the College of Engineering. Any faculty member or the Dean may also propose amendments to these Bylaws at any time by petition to the Faculty Council.
- IX. 2. A proposed amendment must be distributed to the faculty at least two weeks before the General Meeting of the Faculty at which it will be introduced. This General Meeting of the Faculty will be called by the Faculty Council.
- IX. 3. Within one month of an amendment's valid introduction, Faculty Council will conduct the vote. The amendment must be approved by a two-thirds majority of all voting-eligible faculty. The vote will be conducted by a secret ballot. Faculty who are not able to vote, due to extenuating circumstances, can arrange to submit their vote to the Chair of the Faculty Council by an alternative means prior to the scheduled vote. The vote will be tabulated by the Faculty Council and reported to the Faculty.

Revision History

- Bylaws adopted on May 16, 1997
- Proposed amendments to the original Bylaws document presented to faculty on April 17, 2003.
- Amendments approved via secret ballot by voting faculty on May 5, 2003.
- Revised Bylaws document presented to faculty on April 26, 2016.
- Revised Bylaws approved via secret ballot by voting eligible faculty on May 4, 2016.
- Revised Bylaws document with updated amendments approved by faculty ballot vote – December 13, 2016.
- Revised Bylaws document presented to faculty on March 25, 2020.
- Revised Bylaws approved via secret ballot by voting eligible faculty on April 2, 2020.