

Standard Operating Practices
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
College of Engineering
University of Michigan

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Preamble

Being a community of scholars sharing concern for maintaining, advancing, and disseminating knowledge in the civil and environmental engineering discipline, we believe that our service to the University of Michigan can be given most effectively through cooperative efforts within the Standard Operating Practices specified in this document and its appendix.

Articles

1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (referred to hereafter as "CEE").

2. The Faculty

a. Membership in the Faculty of CEE

The Faculty of the Department (hereafter referred to as "the Faculty") shall consist of individuals holding an appointment as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor, Professor of Practice, Lecturer III, Lecturer IV, Assistant Research Scientist, Associate Research Scientist, Research Scientist, Senior Research Scientist, or any rank of Research Professor, and dry appointed faculty.

All members of the Faculty may attend and participate in faculty meetings of the Department ([Article 7](#)), and take part in discussions or questions in the province of the Faculty.

b. The Governing Faculty

The Governing Faculty consists of individuals holding an appointment of half-time effort or more, on an academic year basis, in the Department as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor, any rank of Research Professor, and Lecturer IIIs and IVs who have completed one year of continuous service in the Department. Assistant Professors, Associate Professors, and Professors whose appointment is less than 0.5 FTE in CEE but whose tenure or tenure-track appointment resides in CEE are also members of the Governing Faculty. Only members of the Governing faculty are eligible to vote on matters requiring approval at faculty meetings and in elections for the Executive Committee ([Articles 4d and 7c](#)).

3. Officers

a. Department Chair

The Department Chair is the presiding officer of the Department and is its representative to the administration of the College of Engineering, and to other administrative units within the University of Michigan. This officer is responsible for the academic and non-academic operations of the Department, and ensuring that the Department's vision and strategic objectives are developed and achieved. These responsibilities include: appointment and promotion recommendations, merit evaluations, and teaching assignments of faculty members; recommendations for promotion and merit increases for research and staff; facilitates a process for mentoring faculty according to the department mentoring plan; managing and stewarding the department budget; providing supporting services and staff for department operations within the boundaries of the resources available; ensuring that processes necessary to maintain accreditation occur; participation in and promoting fundraising and alumni relation activities; and procurement, development, assignment, and maintenance of Departmental space. The Department Chair is also responsible for the coordination of activities of the Department, and for insuring continuity in the operation and governance of the Department.

The Department Chair is advised and assisted by the Executive Committee ([Article 4](#)), Associate Department Chair(s) ([Article 3](#)), departmental standing committees ([Article 5](#)), various *ad hoc* committees appointed by the Department Chair ([Article 6](#)), and members of the non-academic staff. The Department Chair shall perform his or her responsibilities in a manner consistent with [Article 6.04](#) of the "By-Laws of the Board of Regents", which provides for general participation by faculty members in the management of departmental affairs. In addition to the specific mechanisms included in these Rules of Governance for the Department, the Department Chair shall consult fully with the Executive Committee in formulation of administrative policy and major decisions and keep this body and the Faculty as a whole informed of the nature and basis of all substantive actions taken in relation to departmental operations. When the Department Chair is unavailable, he or she shall appoint an Associate Department Chair, or, in the absence of such an officer, another individual holding a regular professorial appointment in the Department to serve as acting Department Chair for the period of absence.

b. Associate Department Chair

The normal term of appointment to the position of Associate Chair of the Department will be three years, with the possibility of reappointment. Each appointment of an Associate Department Chair is made by the Department Chair with the advice of the Executive Committee. All appointments of this type made by a particular Department Chair shall end with the conclusion of the Chair's term of service. The duties of Associate Department Chair may include:

1. Serve as the chief officer of the CEE Department during temporary absences of the Department Chair.
2. Supervise particular segments of departmental operations, as authorized by the Department Chair with the advice of the Executive Committee.
3. Represent the Department Chair at various meetings, as requested by the Department Chair.

4. Participate in meetings of the Department's Executive Committee.

Instead of appointing an Associate Department Chair, the Department Chair may alternatively rename the Graduate Chair, Research Chair and Undergraduate Chair as the Associate Department Chair of Graduate Programs, Associate Department Chair of Research and Associate Department Chair of Undergraduate Programs, respectively. The Associate Department Chair of Graduate Programs, Associate Department Chair of Research, and Associate Department Chair of Undergraduate Programs, may fulfill the same roles defined for the Associate Department Chair.

c. Undergraduate Chair

The Undergraduate (UG) Chair is appointed by the Department Chair with the advice of the Executive Committee. The duties of the Undergraduate Chair include:

1. Serve as Chair of the Undergraduate Committee.
2. Coordinate with the Chair of the Curriculum Committee on all matters related to the UG curricula.
3. Be the point of contact for inquiries regarding undergraduate programs.
4. Hold general advising appointments; track student progress and request meetings with struggling students; meet with students on probation/enrollment withheld; hold conferences with engineering staff regarding students with personal or mental health issues.
5. Approve degree audits; transfer credit evaluations; approve course drop/add forms; resolve grade disputes; provide input on borderline UG admissions; provide advisor recommendations on scholastic standing petitions.
6. Answer Engineering Advising Center staff questions re: curriculum requirements and CEE policies; provide training sessions to EAC peer advisors; attend monthly UPAGE meetings.
7. Coordinate participation of the Undergraduate Committee members in UG recruitment (prospective students, tours, freshmen welcome week, majors fair, etc.)
8. Participate in commencement ceremonies.
9. Ensure that the undergraduate curricula are in compliance with ABET-established standards; maintain curriculum assessment records for periodic review.

Some of the tasks described above may be delegated to UG program advisors and/or staff members where appropriate.

d. Graduate Chair

The Graduate Chair is appointed by the Department Chair with the advice of the Executive Committee. The duties of the Graduate Chair include:

1. Serve as Chair of the Graduate Committee.
2. Serve as Department representative on the CoE Graduate Chairs Committee.
3. Coordinate with the Chair of the Curriculum Committee on all matters related to the Graduate Program curricula.
4. Serve as Department liaison to Rackham for facilitating and responding to Rackham Departmental Reviews.
5. Coordinate with the Master's Chair to implement programs specifically for Master's

students.

6. Be the point of contact for inquiries regarding the Graduate Program.
7. Show strategic leadership for all aspects that affect the health of the graduate program; participate in managing and disbursing endowment funds; help in advertising efforts, both internally and externally; be vigilant of and proactive about activities that raise the stature and ranking of the program.
8. Provide leadership for all graduate recruitment efforts and participate in departmental and college recruitment events
9. Be proactive with respect to internal and external fellowship opportunities for graduate students and vigilant regarding deadlines; solicit nominations from students and faculty; facilitate selection of nominees if there are multiple candidates.
10. Approve degree audits; transfer credit evaluations; and resolve grade disputes.
11. Periodically review and insure graduate program guidelines are up to date at least once during the 3-year appointment period.

Some of the tasks described above may be delegated to staff members where appropriate.

e. Masters Chair

In consultation with Graduate Chair, a member of the Graduate Committee will be selected as Master's Chair by the Department Chair, whose duties will include:

1. Serve as Chair of a Master's Subcommittee of the Graduate Committee, comprised of members who serve as MS Advisors and render decisions on Master's Admissions for each affinity group. MS Advisors need not be members of the Graduate Committee.
2. Work with the Master's Subcommittee: i) to ensure an early and comprehensive advising plan is developed for each MS student, and ii) to inform students about the possibility of conversion to the Ph.D. program and provide information about financial aid opportunities.
3. Oversee yearly MS orientation program for all incoming students.
4. Develop and oversee programs and activities (including official and informal/social events) to engage MS students, including SUGS students, as a community to strengthen student ties to the department.
5. Identify needed support services for Master's students in collaboration with CoE and Rackham.

f. Research Chair

The Research Chair is appointed by the Department Chair with the advice of the Executive Committee. The duties of the Research Chair include:

1. Allocate and manage office space assigned to faculty, emeritus faculty, staff, post-doctoral fellows, graduate students and visitors.
2. Work with the Department Chair to identify research space for new faculty members joining the department.
3. Serve as department liaison on all research, laboratory, office and common space renovation projects.
4. Implement a fair and transparent process for the allocation of funding for acquisition of equipment for laboratories.

4. The Executive Committee

a. Duties

1. Serve as the body recommending policy for the organization and operations of the Department.
2. Advise the Department Chair in matters relating to faculty position requests and appointments.
3. Advise the Department Chair in matters relating to the composition of Departmental committees.
4. Assist the Department Chair and any faculty member assigned to oversee space and facilities in the Department.
5. Advise the Department Chair concerning recommendations from Department Standing Committees.
6. Advise the Department Chair on any and all matters on which he or she seeks assistance, or which are brought to the attention of the Committee by its members.
7. Review reappointment, tenure, and promotion casebooks and make recommendations to the Chair regarding these matters.

b. Membership

See [Article A4b \(Appendix\)](#)

c. Term of Service

Each elected faculty representative shall serve for 2 years, and two or three members will be elected per year to stagger terms and provide continuity to the committee. Each term will commence on September 1. A faculty member can remain on the Executive Committee for up to two consecutive terms and can return to the Executive Committee after taking a two- year term off.

d. Methods of Selection of Elected Representatives and Appointed Representatives

See [Article A4d \(Appendix\)](#)

e. Nature of Meetings

1. The Executive Committee shall be convened and chaired by the Department Chair or, in his or her absence, an Associate Department Chair previously designated the Department Chair. In addition to its regular meetings during the academic year, this committee may be called into session outside of the academic year when substantive matters so require.
2. A quorum shall consist of more than half the voting members of the Executive Committee.
3. The Department Chair is authorized to require a member of the Committee to recuse himself or herself from discussions in which he or she has a conflict of interest.
4. The agenda of Executive Committee meetings shall be announced before meetings occur. Executive Committee members are invited to submit items to be included on the agenda. The outcomes of meetings shall be communicated to the faculty by the Department Chair or Associate Chair. Information that is considered confidential should not be included in the publicly distributed outcomes. The Department Chair shall archive the notes from the executive committee in a manner that will be accessible by future Department Chairs.

5. Departmental Standing Committees

a. Committees

1. *Curriculum*: Review all course approval forms and UG and graduate program proposals, and bring to faculty meetings for discussion/approval; perform periodic curriculum assessment; review and modify course scheduling, in accordance with guidelines established by the Registrar's Office; annually verify that course and undergraduate program descriptions on the website are up to date; oversee the development and maintenance of an on-line repository for course syllabi-update each semester with current course syllabi.
2. *Honors and Awards*: Nominate and prepare nomination supporting material for members of the CEE community (students, faculty, and staff) for awards and other honors (internal: college, university, or external); make decisions on CEE or CoE undergraduate scholarship awards (June/July).
3. *Undergraduate*: Evaluate and modify Civil Engineering and Environmental Engineering program curricula to ensure compliance with ABET guidelines, CoE policies and program needs, and to develop new programs as desired; maintain curriculum assessment records for periodic review; keep up with changes in the accreditation requirements; make recommendations as needed to maintain accreditation compliance and help ABET Coordinator in the preparation of ABET reviews; provide advice and assist the undergraduate committee chair on matters relating to undergraduate programs including advising, advertising, degree audits, recruitment, scholastic standing, senior exit surveys, and special events; participate in prospective students, tours, freshmen welcome week, majors fair, etc.
4. *Graduate*: Evaluate new graduate program proposals to ensure consistency with department guidelines; graduate applications and recommendations from department group advisors for admission to the department and Rackham. Make final decision on admission and send out appropriate acceptance letters, including when courses must be taken to make up deficiencies required for admission. Make fellowship funding decisions, confirm GSI appointments, and review petitions (emergency student support, variances from standard policy, etc.) as needed. Review annual reports on Ph.D. student progress, and define policies and requirements pertaining to graduate admissions, enrollment and current students.
5. *Information Technology*: Maintain and find ways to improve the computing climate and web identity of the department. Coordinate with the Undergraduate Committee, Curriculum Committee and Graduate Committee to insure web content for all programs and curricula are accurate and up to date.
6. *Safety Committee*: Ensure CEE compliance with all CoE and OSEH safety standards and enforce them; inform department of safety concerns; ensure that all facilities users are trained and well-educated in laboratory safety; annually update CEE safety information and post links on website.
7. *Strategic Planning/Implementation Committee*: Recommend and lead efforts to implement strategic research and education initiatives based on CEE Strategic Plan. Perform periodic review of the CEE Strategic Plan and recommend changes as needed.

b. Terms of Service

Faculty members will typically serve for at least two years when appointed to a standing committee. Terms of service on all committees will be staggered to provide continuity. Each term will commence on July 1.

c. Method of Selection

The responsibility for appointing Faculty to committees rests with the Department Chair, who will receive input from the Executive Committee. Balance in representation of the various CEE specialty areas and faculty interests shall be considered when assigning faculty to committees. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment of another individual by the Department Chair, after consultation with the Executive Committee.

d. Committee Chairs

Each year the Department Chair, with the advice of the Executive Committee, shall appoint one faculty member of each standing committee or ad hoc to serve as Chair of the committee except when provisioned by title as in the case of Graduate and Undergraduate Chair who shall serve as Graduate Committee Chair and Undergraduate Committee Chair, respectively.

6. Ad Hoc Committees

a. Search Committees

Membership of faculty on all faculty search committees shall be determined by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Chair. The Chair shall make recommendations for membership and those recommendations shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for ratification

b. Casebook Committees

The Department Chair will solicit non-binding suggestions for the composition of the casebook committee (inclusion or exclusion) from the candidate. The Executive Committee and Chair will consider the candidate's recommendations, and then compose the committee in accordance with college rules.

c. Other Committees

The Department Chair, with the advice of the Executive Committee, or other committees as appropriate, may appoint other *ad hoc* committees as needed to conduct departmental operations

7. Department Operations

a. Procedure

All meetings shall use standard parliamentary procedure with Robert's Rules of Order (current edition) for guidance, except where otherwise specified.

b. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of half of the Governing Faculty who are in residence. Only those individuals on leave or assigned to off-campus duty shall be deemed not in residence. A quorum shall be required for decision making in Departmental meetings, whether by vote or otherwise.

c. Voting

All items requiring a vote will be presented at a faculty meeting. The Executive Committee will decide which issues require paper or electronic voting. Topics that require a vote can also be voted on during faculty meetings that are advertised in accordance with [Article 7e](#).

- i. A voted topic at a faculty meeting passes if a simple majority of those who vote are in favor. A quorum must be present for a vote to be binding.
 - ii. A topic voted on by a paper or electronic ballot passes if a simple majority of those who vote are in favor. At least 50% of the governing faculty in residence must vote for the results to binding.
 - iii. A topic of extraordinary consequence, as determined by the Executive Committee, shall pass if 2/3 majority of the governing faculty in residence are in favor. All topics in this category will require paper or electronic voting.
- d. Frequency of Meetings
The Department shall meet at least three times per semester, but typically meets monthly during the academic year.
- e. Notice of Meetings
The Faculty shall be notified of Faculty Meetings by E-mail and possibly by additional means to ensure wide dissemination of the notification within the Department. Notification should be made at least one week in advance of a meeting. Special meetings may be called on shorter notice, if required.
- f. Nature of Meetings
Meetings shall ordinarily be open to all faculty in the Department, as defined in [Article 2a](#), the departmental unit administrator, and the designated staff member who is assigned the task of taking the meeting minutes.
- g. Voting Privileges
Voting privileges are restricted to members of the Governing Faculty ([Article 2b](#)).
- h. Absentee Ballot
Voting *in absentia* will be permitted for faculty members eligible to vote, but temporarily away from campus. In the event of a paper ballot, it is the responsibility of absent individuals to arrange for the ballot to be mailed to them, and to return the ballot by the deadline specified. All mail ballots will be counted by individuals selected by the Executive Committee.
- i. Discussion of Candidates for Faculty Appointments
Faculty will be invited to meet with, attend seminars by, and provide written or verbal comments on candidate's who interview for a faculty position in the Department. The search committee will assemble those comments and include them as part of their overall recommendation on hiring to the Executive Committee.
- j. Amendments
This document can be amended at any time by the Chair ([Article 3a](#)) with approval of the Executive Committee ([Article 4](#)) and should be reviewed at least once every 3 years. The appendix contains articles voted upon by the Governing Faculty ([Article 2b](#)) and can only be changed through a vote ([Article 7c](#)).
- k. Minutes

A full and accurate copy of the minutes of Departmental meetings shall be kept by a member of the staff assigned to this task by the Department Chair. A copy of these minutes shall be distributed to the Faculty within one month of the meeting.

Appendix A

This appendix contains articles voted upon by the Governing Faculty ([Article 2b](#)) and can only be changed through a vote by the Governing Faculty ([Article 7c](#)).

A4. The Executive Committee

b. Membership

1. The committee shall consist of five tenured members of the Governing Faculty ([Article 2b](#)) who are elected, an Associate Chair of the Department, and the Department Chair.
2. The Associate Department Chair only votes in the event of a tie by the elected members of the committee. The Department Chair does not vote and serves as an *ex officio* member.
3. Up to two elected executive committee members can be associate professors. At least three elected persons will be full professors.

d. Methods of Selection of Elected Representatives and Appointed Representatives

1. Nominations will be opened for an advertised time period that lasts the first 2 weeks in May.
2. Nominations must be made by another member of the faculty than the person being nominated. Those nominated must agree to serve in order to be placed on the ballot.
3. The nomination slate must include at least two more nominees than the number of open positions. For example, if the number of open positions is 3, then at least 5 eligible faculty must be nominated.
4. Members of the Governing Faculty can vote for up to number of open positions. Only one vote per nominee per ballot is allowed.
5. The vote will occur by double blind ballot using ballot boxes set up in the department. To accommodate faculty who are out of town during the voting period, faculty may request to vote remotely. Remote voting will occur by mailing a self-addressed stamped envelopes and voting materials through the mail, or by providing a means for confidential electronic voting.
6. Voting will occur during the last two weeks in May.
7. The presiding elected members of the Executive Committee will administrate the voting process.
8. After the voting period has concluded, the ballots will be removed from the locked voting boxes and tallied by two continuing members of the executive committee using the following procedure:
 - i. receipt of up to one unopened, anonymous ballot envelope per eligible faculty member or lecturer will be confirmed by means of the outer envelope (which identifies the person submitting the vote and is the only place a voter's name shows up).
 - ii. Unopened, unlabeled envelopes that contain ballots will be collected into one container.
 - iii. Once all unopened ballot envelopes have been collected, ballots will be opened in random order and tallied.

- iv. The elected executive committee members will be identified based on the criteria set forth above. The executive committee will announce the elected executive committee members to the Governing Faculty.
- v. In the event of a tie in the voting process, a runoff vote will be conducted by the same ballot process just described, but only including those involved in the runoff. If the runoff does not resolve the tie, the tie will be resolved by the flip of a coin to be conducted in the presence of two unaffected faculty members.

In the event that a permanent vacancy develops in one of the elected positions on the Executive Committee, a special election shall be held to elect a substitute who will serve for the period of vacancy. The term of the originally elected person does not change. In extenuating circumstances (for example, when an election cannot be held in a timely manner), the Department Chair shall appoint a recent past member for the remainder of that academic year, with the advice of the Executive Committee. If an Executive Committee member requests a temporary leave (for example, a sabbatical leave request), the Chair, with the advice of the Executive Committee, shall appoint a recent past member to fill the temporary vacancy.