

MUSE Faculty Handbook

Mercer University
School of Engineering

Operating Guidelines and Procedures
A Supplement to the University Faculty Handbook

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The *University Faculty Handbook* describes the organizational structure and governance of the University, sets forth the major policies and procedures affecting faculty members, and describes faculty retirement and benefit plans, current as of the date of publication. Because the University is a dynamic institution, it is inevitable that changes will occur, new policies and procedures will be adopted, and existing descriptions will be superseded. This handbook will be revised periodically, but changes between handbook revisions will take effect as they are duly adopted. Policies and Procedures in this edition supersede all former editions unless there is a statement in the text of this edition noting otherwise.

In addition to the *University Faculty Handbook*, college and school supplemental operating guidelines and procedures are available in each of the colleges and schools of the University. These supplemental handbooks, including the *MUSE Faculty Handbook*, are attached to the *University Faculty Handbook*. The provisions of the *University Faculty Handbook* supersede collegiate policies and procedures.

Wherever the University has chosen to adopt policies or principles similar to or incorporating portions of statements of the American Association of University Professors or other external bodies, the University reserves the right to interpret such policies or principles for itself and is not bound by external interpretations.

Additional policies and procedures affecting all University employees are published in the *Employee Benefit Handbook*.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mercer University School of Engineering (MUSE) educates students to become practicing engineers and related professionals, advances the practice of engineering, and enhances the pedagogy of engineering education. To achieve its Mission, MUSE

- engages in scholarship for educational, engineering, and scientific inquiry;
- recruits, develops, and retains talented and diverse students, staff, and faculty;
- pursues best practices in teaching and learning through assessment and innovation;
- fosters a global perspective of engineering with an emphasis on ethical practice and civic engagement; and
- increases the accessibility of engineering education for non-traditional students.

MUSE graduates are prepared to deliver outstanding, state-of-the-art service to clients and employers and to contribute responsibly to their local and global communities.

I. ORGANIZATION, ADMINISTRATION

1.01 Administrative Organization of the School

The Mercer School of Engineering is composed of Academic Departments, Assistant and/or Associate Deans, Program Directors, Department Chairs, faculty members, staff support and service personnel. The School is administered by a Dean who is assisted by an Advisory Board, Assistant/Associate Dean(s), Program Directors, Academic Department Chairs, Research staff, and such support staff and students as are necessary to operate and sustain a quality operation.

1.01.1 Academic Administration

The School of Engineering is organized into administrative departments and academic programs as established by the Board of Trustees. Each department or program has a chair or director who coordinates the activities of that unit. The Dean, as principal academic officer of the School, is responsible for administration of the departments, academic programs, and research activities.

1.01.2 Administrative Staff

The Administrative Staff of the School consists of Assistant/ Associate Dean(s), Program Directors, and support staff including Administrative Assistants, secretaries, and mechanical, electronic, and computer laboratory technicians, who provide support for both academic programs and administrative operations.

1.02 Dean of the School of Engineering

The Dean is the chief academic officer of the School; presides over the meetings of its faculty; presents policies for the consideration of the faculty; prepares an annual report on the work, prospects, and needs of the School; approves and recommends all budgets submitted from the School; supervises the registration, progress, and educational wellbeing of its students; and is held responsible for the efficient execution of all University policies so far as they affect the School.

1.03 Department Chairs

The activities of each department are coordinated by a Department Chair who is elected by vote of the Department faculty and approved by the Dean. The Chair facilitates day-to-day operations of the department, long-range planning for departmental development, and maintenance of a productive departmental atmosphere for every faculty member.

Department Chairs oversee the planning and coordination of course offerings, faculty loads, and laboratory facilities for the Department. In the exercise of these responsibilities, the Chair seeks, so far as is practicable, to share with members of the faculty and staff through discussion and other democratic procedures the responsibility for these department activities. The Chair also represents the Department in interactions with other University organizational units, with students, and with the public.

Department Chairs will typically serve a 3-year renewable term, subject to yearly concurrence of the faculty and the Dean.

1.04 The School of Engineering Faculty

Faculty in the School of Engineering shall mean all employees of the School in teaching, research, or service whose notice of appointment is as a lecturer, instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor, or persons who are otherwise designated as faculty on the notice of appointment. Graduate students, who serve as assistants, associates, or otherwise, are academic appointees as well as graduate students, but are not members of the faculty.

The School of Engineering Faculty shall consist of the Dean of the School as Chair, and all faculty members of the departments assigned to the School. The voting members of the faculty are all full-time personnel (excluding lecturers, visiting faculty, adjuncts, faculty research associates, faculty associates, residents, or clinical appointees) who hold the rank of Instructor, or above. The President and the Provost of the University shall be ex-officio members of the School of Engineering Faculty.

1.04.1 The Department Faculties

Department Faculties consist of regular, temporary, and part time faculty in numbers sufficient to conduct and maintain a quality program of classroom instruction, laboratory experiences, and research and special project activity.

1.04.2 Responsibility and Authority of the Faculty

Faculty exercise authority in the governance of the school through their vote on matters brought before the faculty and through participation in faculty committees, and through the maintenance of a school mission statement and vision. The authority of the faculty includes the design and presentation of course materials within their specialization, always subject to overall curriculum objectives, and maintaining necessary classroom discipline.

1.04.3 Student Access to Faculty

Student access to faculty is a vitally important component of effective teaching. All full-time members of the faculty shall designate at least 5 hours outside of class time during the week where they can be reached either in person or with other communication tools. These hours must be stated in course syllabi. Likewise, part-time faculty should designate at least 3 hours per week where they can be reached and these hours are presented in their course syllabi. Faculty have flexibility in how they use technology to be available to students over the wide range of course delivery methods.

1.05 Advisory Board

The National Engineering Advisory Board is a group of nationally recognized leaders in education, government, and industry who are appointed by the President of Mercer University to provide educational, research, and financial guidance to the School of Engineering. This Board usually meets semi-annually.

1.06 Mercer Engineering Research Center

In order to conduct the engineering portions of its research and development activities, to establish and maintain an image and reputation of scholarly and technological excellence, and to contribute to the intellectual and technological well-being of the Middle Georgia region, Mercer University established the Mercer Engineering Research Center (MERC). MERC engages and

maintains a staff of research scientists, engineers, analysts, and support personnel to conduct fundamental and applied research and development in the physical, life, and mathematical sciences in conjunction with the faculty of the School of Engineering and other campus elements as appropriate.

II. FACULTY APPOINTMENT POLICIES

2.01 Criteria for Faculty Appointments, Salary Increments, Promotions, and Tenure

The criteria for initial appointment, promotion, salary increments, and tenure in the School of Engineering support the school's aspiration to become recognized as the premier engineering teaching institution in the region. The criteria include

1. Teaching effectiveness;
2. Comprehensive scholarship; and
3. Service.

Teaching effectiveness results when technically skilled faculty who are and remain current in their field give serious and sustained attention to improving teaching effectiveness, as demonstrated in the assessment of student learning. Effectiveness in teaching includes not only traditional classroom activities but also advising, participating in student design activities, supervising undergraduate and/or graduate research, developing or revising courses for classroom or distance delivery, etc. It can be demonstrated through innovative teaching techniques, reflective summaries of student course evaluations over time, strategies to improve pedagogy and classroom management, peer reviews of teaching, and other methods.

Comprehensive scholarship is broadly construed to include all activities associated with professional achievement and scholarship that are relevant to enhancing faculty effectiveness within a teaching environment.

Professional achievement can be demonstrated by high-level consulting; experiences in industry, education, or government; participation in short courses, conferences, and seminars; attaining advanced credentials or licenses, etc.

Scholarship can be demonstrated by active involvement in at least one of these areas:

- Original research, contributing to advancement of knowledge
- Interdisciplinary research, making connections across different fields of knowledge
- Applied research, bringing theory into practice
- Educational research, applying scholarly rigor to the study of teaching and learning

In each type of comprehensive scholarship, demonstration includes publications, presentations, or projects that have been peer reviewed.

Service is broadly defined as service to the profession, the department or school, the university, and the community. Professional service includes participation and holding of office on

committees, in organizations, or boards, which represent the professional and educational interests of both the faculty member and the School of Engineering. Departmental or school service includes contributions to tasks associated with faculty duties (committee work, curriculum development, course and laboratory development, faculty governance activities, assigned administrative duties, and the preservation of a collegial atmosphere). Service to the University or greater community includes similar tasks. Service to the public should be based on the faculty member's professional expertise. Service may be demonstrated by presenting evidence of contributions.

2.02 Annual Performance Evaluations and Salary Increments

The professional activities of each faculty member are expected to support the mission of the school and contribute significantly to the school's stated vision while following the criteria described in section 2.01. Performance will be evaluated annually by the Dean of the School based on a goals and accomplishments report prepared by the faculty member. Annual performance assessments may be used at the discretion of the Dean to assign salary increments.

2.03 Qualifications for Academic Rank

Instructor: The rank of instructor is normally used for the faculty member who does not possess the terminal degree in his or her discipline. This rank may also be used for the faculty member who possesses the terminal degree in his or her field, but has limited postgraduate experience. Instructors do not accrue time toward a tenured appointment or sabbatical leave.

Assistant Professor: For appointment to the rank of Assistant Professor, the faculty member should possess the terminal degree in the appropriate discipline. The faculty member must show promise in teaching, comprehensive scholarship, and service. Experience, practice, and success in the profession shall be considered in determining qualification for this academic rank. Persons appointed to this rank normally accrue time toward a tenured appointment.

In exceptional cases, the requirement of a terminal degree may be waived for a faculty member who holds the Master's degree and shows evidence of satisfactory progress toward the Ph.D. and/or significant industrial/research experience.

Associate Professor: For appointment to the rank of Associate Professor, the faculty member must have met the criteria for the rank of Assistant Professor and must demonstrate evidence of outstanding teaching and a significant record of accomplishment in comprehensive scholarship and service. Experience, practice, and success in the profession shall be considered in determining qualification for this academic rank. Persons initially appointed to this rank normally accrue time toward a tenured appointment.

Professor: The rank of Professor is among the highest honors that the University can bestow on a faculty member. This rank is granted only to faculty members whose professional accomplishments have been sustained and recognized as meritorious by external peers within the chosen area of expertise. Experience, practice, and success in the profession shall be considered in determining qualification for this academic rank.

Emeritus Professor or Associate Professor: The title Emeritus may be bestowed upon retired faculty who have made distinguished, sustained contributions to the School of Engineering and Mercer University for at least ten years.

2.04 Faculty Rank

The ranks of **Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, and Instructor** are the traditional ranks of appointment at Mercer University. Full-time faculty with the ranks of Professor, Associate Professor, and Assistant Professor are eligible for promotion and tenure review. Faculty appointed to these traditional academic ranks are members of the School of Engineering Faculty and enjoy faculty benefits.

Lecturers are persons having a record of distinguished professional training or experience who are temporarily appointed to teaching positions. Lecturers are not voting members of the School of Engineering Faculty, and do not accrue time toward tenure or sabbatical leave.

Visiting Faculty are temporary appointees who are normally expected to return to their permanent employment at the conclusion of the appointment. They are appointed as visiting instructors, visiting assistant professors, visiting associate professors, or visiting professors.

If an individual with a visiting appointment in one of the regular tenure-eligible ranks (assistant professor or above) is offered a regular appointment for the following year, only one visiting year may be counted as the first year of probation, if the appointee so requests, and the Dean and the EVP/P of the University agree at the time of regular appointment.

Emeritus Faculty A tenured faculty member may be awarded an emeritus title upon retirement. A department may also recommend that the title be bestowed on a non-tenured faculty member at retirement.

Adjunct Faculty are persons appointed to adjunct academic rank, instructor or above. Normally they have had academic experience elsewhere, or have valuable nonacademic experience, and are appointed in order to enhance the professional needs of the School. Adjunct faculty are not voting members of the School of Engineering Faculty and do not accrue time toward tenure or sabbatical leave.

2.05 Promotion

The purpose of promotion is to recognize and reward significant accomplishment. Faculty promotion shall be based on the qualifications for appointment to the respective academic rank. Promotion shall be justified by the faculty member's demonstrated skill and competence as an effective teacher, demonstrated comprehensive scholarship, and demonstrated service.

2.06 Terms of Appointment

Full time faculty appointments are usually for an academic year unless otherwise stated. Once tenure has been achieved, reappointment is assured within the confines of the features and conditions of the university's regulations governing the award and retention of a tenured appointment.

2.06.1 Tenured Appointment

A tenured appointment means that the President shall offer to a faculty member who has attained such status an appointment for each succeeding fiscal, or academic, year until retirement, resignation, termination for budgetary reasons or educational policy change, or dismissal for just cause. Persons appointed to faculty positions shall not be eligible for tenure if their appointment is preceded by designations such as visiting, adjunct, resident, or clinical.

Tenured faculty members will normally hold the terminal degree.

2.06.2 Tenure-Track Appointment

A tenure-track appointment includes the condition that the faculty member is on a probationary appointment which may lead to consideration for tenure. Faculty members on appointments designated as tenure-track will be evaluated annually to determine progress and continuation. At a time no later than that as normally set forth in the initial contract letter, the School will decide whether to recommend tenure.

2.06.3 Non-Tenure-Track Appointment

A non-tenure-track appointment means an appointment for a specified period of time, which shall be indicated in the initial contract letter. It will not lead to tenure consideration. At the end of the period specified, the appointment may be renewed. All persons appointed to faculty positions of Instructor or with the designations visiting, adjunct, resident, invitational, or clinical must be in this classification. Persons on non-tenure-track appointments of at least 50% time shall be reviewed annually in a manner similar to tenure-track faculty.

Persons on appointments of less than 50% time shall be considered to be non-tenure track, and normally do not receive automatic notice of reappointment. They are appointed term by term, course by course, etc. and they may continue receiving appointments as long as performance is satisfactory.

2.07 Criteria for Tenured Appointment

All University criteria for tenured appointments apply to tenured appointments in the School of Engineering with the following amplifications. The faculty member shall demonstrate effectiveness as a teacher, comprehensive scholarship in the field of specialization, and service.

2.08 Review Procedures Leading to Promotion or Tenure

These review procedures are meant to guide both faculty who apply for promotion or tenure or sabbaticals and the committee charged with reviewing those applications. Following these guidelines should allow the applicant to provide adequate and appropriate information to the committee. This in turn should allow the committee to exercise responsible professional judgment. In addition, the committee should be able to provide the faculty member with specific suggestions for the further improvement of his/her performance and further development of his/her competence.

The criteria considered in a review for promotion or tenure are based on qualifications for faculty appointment and promotion as described in section 2.01, 2.03, and 2.05 above. The criteria considered in a review for tenure are described in section 2.07.

2.08.1 Role of the Mentor

The Dean will assign each new, untenured faculty member a mentor in consultation with the new faculty member's Department Chair. The mentor will serve in this role through the Mid-course Review (see description below) performed by the Promotion and Tenure Committee. The mentor will provide annual written feedback to the faculty member, supplying copies to the Department Chair and Dean. (The untenured faculty member is encouraged to share Goals and Accomplishments Forms and Student Evaluations of Teaching to make the review more meaningful.)

2.08.2 Preparation by the Faculty Member

Preparation for promotion or tenure ordinarily begins some years prior to the submission of an application for promotion or tenure. The faculty member must plan and develop a career that will justify promotion and/or tenure. The faculty member then executes this plan, and documents the execution and results of the plan. This documentation can form a major portion of the application portfolio.

The plan should be organized around the criteria listed in section 2.01 or 2.07, as appropriate, with professional activities appropriate to each of the criteria. The faculty member should take advantage of his/her annual review with his/her department chair to review the plan and progress along the plan. The candidate should include progress against the goals established in these reviews in the appropriate parts of the application portfolio.

The candidate must adequately self-assess and provide a portfolio of his/her assessment for review that, as a minimum, will have tabbed sections containing the following materials:

1. Letter of transmittal
2. Curriculum vita (should include these entries in addition to normal CV entries)
 - List of courses taught, noting dates and any leadership roles (director of multi-section course, etc.)
 - List of new courses developed
 - List of teaching awards, if any
 - List of awards acknowledging excellence in scholarly research (self and student)
 - List of scholarly publications in refereed journals
 - List of books and book chapters
 - List of presentations or papers at conferences focused on areas of specialization (include co-authorship with students)
 - List of non-refereed publications of a scholarly nature

- List of funded and non-funded proposals
- Description of consulting work specifying contributions
- List of activities associated with undergraduate and/or graduate research
- List of activities associated with senior design projects, honors projects, and Mercer on Mission
- List of roles and non-publication activities associated with professional organizations.
- List of committee appointments with specific roles and inclusive dates
- List of membership and summary of activities in service organizations
- List of awards for service
- Other activities that demonstrate excellence in teaching, comprehensive scholarship, and service

3. Self-assessment letter

- A. Must be a single document (not a series of documents scattered throughout the portfolio)
- B. Must address separately each of the following three criteria (see section 2.01), discussing both strengths and weaknesses. Must discuss plans to build on strengths and overcome weaknesses.
 1. Teaching effectiveness
 2. Comprehensive scholarship
 3. Service
- C. Must address plans to contribute to both Mercer University and the School of Engineering in the future. Must include the candidate's vision of his/her future role in the School.

4. Letters of Recommendation

All candidates for promotion and tenure are encouraged to solicit letters of recommendation from former students, their department chairs, MUSE colleagues, and individuals outside the university that attest to their effectiveness in the three areas on which they will be evaluated (teaching, comprehensive scholarship, and service). These letters should be addressed to the MUSE Promotion and Tenure Committee in care of the Dean's office. Referees should be advised that the letters will be held confidential and will be available only to the Committee, the Dean, and the Provost. Under no circumstances will they be shared with the candidate.

Candidates should request letters from those who can speak knowledgeably and specifically about their teaching, comprehensive scholarship, or service. Letters from current students are discouraged.

The criteria for promotion to Professor include the necessity that the individual is recognized by professional peers as an authority and/or leader in his/her field. The candidate must provide evidence of recognition by peers outside of Mercer University.

Candidates for promotion to Professor are encouraged to demonstrate their achievements by soliciting external letters that demonstrate their regional and national reputations.

Where any of the above material is voluminous (for example, when the candidate has extensive publications), the portfolio may be divided into two volumes. The first volume would contain all of the above material except that the voluminous matter (e.g., published papers) may be simply listed, and the supporting material (e.g., copies of publications) may be placed in the second volume.

2.08.3 Schedule

Applicants must submit their promotion or tenure portfolios to the committee by *noon on the first Friday in October* in the appropriate academic year. The committee must receive the complete application portfolio by that day for the application to be considered.

The committee Chair, in consultation with the Dean, shall establish a date by which the committee must report its recommendations to the Dean. The committee shall establish its internal schedule for the review of applications.

2.08.4 Committee Procedures

The Committee will make its review based on consideration of the facts and supportive evidence contained in the candidate's portfolio. In particular, the Committee will assess the candidate's performance and potential contributions.

The Committee shall vote on its recommendation for the action to be taken on each candidate. This vote shall be by secret ballot. Only the result of the vote (recommended or not recommended) shall be recorded; the numerical vote shall not be recorded or reported. The Committee's recommendation regarding each application shall be reported in writing to the Dean. In addition, the Committee shall provide the Dean a separate written statement for each candidate that summarizes the rationale for the committee's recommendation in view of the applicable parts of sections 2.01, 2.03 and 2.04. The rationale for recommendations supporting promotion and/or tenure need not be exhaustive, but the rationale for recommendations denying tenure and/or promotion should provide the faculty member guidance for achieving promotion and/or tenure in the future.

The Dean will review the Committee's recommendations and may, at his/her discretion, schedule a meeting with the committee for elaboration of the Committee's reasoning regarding any recommendation.

The Dean will advise each candidate of the Committee's recommendation. Candidates "not recommended" may, at their option, request from the Dean a copy of the Committee's report to the Dean that summarizes the rationale for the recommendation. The candidate shall have the option of providing additional information to the Dean. In addition, the

candidate may elect a meeting with the chair of the Promotion and Tenure Committee as an aid in understanding the recommendations

The Dean will forward his/her recommendation to the Provost of the University for further consideration. The Dean will notify each candidate of his/her recommendation to the Provost. In addition, the Dean will provide each member of the Promotion and Tenure Committee the recommendations sent to the Provost. The Dean will also provide the appropriate Department Chair the Promotion and Tenure Committee's analysis of the portfolio of candidates not recommended for promotion and/or tenure. The purpose of this information is to allow the Department Chair to work with the candidate to improve his/her chances for future promotion and/or tenure.

As a separate letter, the Promotion and Tenure Committee may furnish the Dean any necessary recommendations for improving the assessment, counseling, professional development, etc. of the faculty.

2.08.5 Mid-course Reviews

Each faculty member who intends to apply for tenure and promotion must request an evaluation by the Promotion and Tenure Committee. The Committee will request portfolios during the fall semester of the fourth year on a tenure track. The Committee will conduct mid-course reviews immediately after all candidates for promotion and/or tenure have been considered. If a large number of candidates submit requests for mid-course review, consideration of some may need to be carried over until the beginning of the spring semester.

The faculty member, to the maximum extent possible, should follow the procedures in section 2.08. This would include a complete portfolio. The faculty member is strongly encouraged to solicit letters of support from his/her department faculty members and his/her mentor when applying for mid-term review. An incomplete portfolio results in inadequate guidance to the faculty member. The Promotion and Tenure Committee will review the submitted materials and furnish the faculty member recommendations designed to enhance his/her chances of achieving promotion and tenure at his/her official submission.

The Promotion and Tenure Committee will not provide the recommendations to anyone other than the faculty member, the faculty member's Department Chair, and the Dean. The purpose of providing the material to the Department Chair and Dean is to enable these individuals to assist in preparing the faculty member to gain promotion and/or tenure. The faculty member is free to share the appraisal with any other person or group he/she feels is appropriate. While the Promotion and Tenure Committee will not provide the recommendations to succeeding Promotion and Tenure Committees, the faculty member may elect to include the information in his/her formal portfolio.

2.08.6 Pre-promotion Reviews for Associate Professors

Each faculty member holding the rank of Associate Professor is encouraged to request a pre-promotion evaluation by the Promotion and Tenure Committee every three to five years. The Associate-to-Full-Professor Subcommittee will request portfolios during the fall semester. The Subcommittee will conduct pre-promotion reviews for associate professors immediately after all candidates for promotion and/or tenure have been considered and all mid-course reviews have been conducted. If a large number of candidates submit requests for mid-course reviews and for pre-promotion reviews for associate professors, consideration of some may need to be carried over until the beginning of the spring semester

The faculty member, to the maximum extent possible, should follow the procedures in section 2.08, including a complete portfolio. The faculty member is strongly encouraged to solicit letters of support from his/her department faculty members when applying for pre-promotion review. An incomplete portfolio results in inadequate guidance to the faculty member. The Promotion and Tenure Committee will review the submitted materials and furnish the faculty member recommendations designed to enhance his/her chances of achieving promotion at his/her official submission.

The Promotion and Tenure Committee will not provide the recommendations to anyone other than the faculty member and the Dean. The purpose of providing the material to the Dean is to enable the Dean to also assist in preparing the faculty member to gain promotion. The faculty member is free to share the appraisal with any other person or group he/she feels is appropriate. While the Promotion and Tenure Committee will not provide the recommendations to succeeding Promotion and Tenure Committees, the faculty member may elect to include the information in his/her formal portfolio.

2.09 Sabbatical Leaves.

The Promotion and Tenure Committee has the responsibility of reviewing requests for sabbatical leaves and making recommendations to the Dean. A candidate for a sabbatical leave should submit his/her request to the Promotion and Tenure Committee in accordance with the schedule established by the Dean. The request should provide sufficient information for a careful decision by the Committee. In particular, if the sabbatical is to another educational institution or other organization, the request must include evidence of acceptance by the outside activity. The proposal should include the anticipated benefits to the School of Engineering as well as the benefits to the faculty member. The committee should carefully weigh the contribution to the School of Engineering and the refreshment and revitalization of the faculty member. The Promotion and Tenure committee will solicit a letter from the sabbatical candidate's Department Chair addressing the coverage of the candidate's responsibilities during the sabbatical period.

2.10 Emeritus Faculty.

Department Chairs should recommend candidates for Emeritus status to the Dean. In general, these nominations should be limited to faculty members who are retiring. In other words, a faculty member who is leaving Mercer for another institution or position

would normally not be eligible for emeritus status. The Dean will forward the Department Chair's recommendation to the Promotion and Tenure Committee for consideration. The committee will judge the faculty member's length of service and contributions to the School of Engineering and make a recommendation to the Dean.

III. FACULTY SERVICE: TEACHING, RESEARCH, GENERAL POLICIES

Duties of the faculty in the School of Engineering are described broadly in the initial contract letter. These include teaching assigned courses and laboratories, participating in administrative and/or academic committee assignments at department, school, and university level, and providing advice and counsel to students. In addition to teaching and administrative assignments and responsibilities, the faculty is expected to actively pursue opportunities for consulting and research, including grants and contracts to enhance their professional competence and stature and to advance the engineering program at Mercer University.

Consulting time within the normal duty assignment is available to faculty members to permit the enhancement of their professional competence and render their talent to the community. In view of this, the School of Engineering permits the use of the equivalent of one day each week for professional consulting activity provided it does not interfere with any of the regular or necessary duties to be performed and is complementary to the educational process of the School of Engineering. Further, this consulting time is not cumulative and is only available on a week-to-week basis. Permission to engage in consulting activity must be obtained in advance from the Dean.

Faculty who obtain external support through grants or contracts will be accorded release time from teaching duties up to 50% of the normal assignment as appropriate.

OUTSIDE CONSULTING ACTIVITIES AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING MERCER UNIVERSITY

Mercer University School of Engineering recognizes that external consulting activities are an appropriate feature of academic employment that consulting contributes to the professional growth of faculty members, and that external consulting and service extends the university's missions of teaching, research and service. The university permits and encourages a limited amount of such activities where (a) they give the individual employee experience and knowledge valuable to teaching, research or scholarship, (b) involve suitable research or scholarship through which the individual may make a worthy contribution to knowledge, or (c) constitute a public service. External consulting activities should not present unacceptable conflicts of interest or commitment concerning the individual's obligations to the university, and performance of his or her university duties. Faculty members, the staff, and administrators must observe the following rules and guidelines.

1. Full-time members of the faculty and professional administrative staffs owe their primary professional responsibility to the university; their primary commitment of time and intellectual efforts should be to their institutional responsibilities. Outside activities may not interfere with the individual's institutional responsibilities.
2. The School of Engineering permits and encourages professional consulting activity provided such activity does not conflict with any regular or necessary duties and provided such activity may not exceed the equivalent of one day per week in the aggregate. Faculty members should also understand that approval to consult does not constitute any release from assigned duties or obligated time devoted to the institution. The Dean, in consultation with the Department Chair, must approve all consulting activities in writing a priori. Faculty members must clarify in their written request to consult how their institutional duties will be handled if the faculty member is off campus in the execution of his/her consulting agreement.
3. Consulting activities must not result in any conflict of interest or commitment with the individual's responsibilities to the university. Engineering faculty members must consider that some consulting activity may assist external units and in fact compete unfairly with other units within Mercer University. Whenever such conflicts appear to exist, faculty members must seek the advice of the director of the Mercer unit with which the faculty member's prospective client may compete. If the director of another Mercer unit determines that a conflict exists, approval to consult will generally not be granted.
4. Normally, professional consulting activities will be assumed to be of limited duration and focused scope. It is further assumed that the professional consulting activity will draw on the high-level professional expertise of the faculty members so that it may fulfill purposes identified in the introductory paragraph under the heading (a), (b), and (c).
5. If a consulting commitment is judged to impact the academic workload of the department, or if it is considered in the best interest of the department and the school, the dean, in consultation with the department chair, may decline to approve the consulting agreement and instead request that the proposed work be completed as a contracted research/development project.
6. When a consulting project is conducted on a contract base through the school, the school will provide release time from selected academic responsibilities to the faculty member. Such release time will be commensurate with the scope and length of the effort. If the faculty member disagrees with the finding of the dean and the chair, the faculty member may appeal the decision to the provost who will be the final authority on whether or not to grant the permission to consult.
7. University resources (including space, facilities, equipment, and support staff) may not be used for outside activities without prior approval and appropriate payment to the university. The department chair and the dean will set prices that will prevent unfair competition with external laboratories or agencies. All agreements to use university equipment must be made in writing a priori.
8. Faculty members employed on a nine-month contract are not obligated to seek permission before accepting professional employment in the summer. However, as in the

regular year, Mercer employees must abide with all applicable conflict of interest policies.

9. The university's name may not be used in outside activities without prior approval.
10. The university is subject to certain legal mandates with respect to managing, reducing, or eliminating potential conflicts of interest in research funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Department of Health and Human Service (HHS). Principal investigators and other persons within the university community who are responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of research or educational activities funded or proposed for funding by these governmental agencies are required to disclose significant financial interests and relationships that may be affected by such research or activity. Each consulting agreement shall comply with at least the minimum financial disclosure and conflict of interest regulations applicable to any government-sponsored research or educational activities in which faculty and staff members are or may be involved.