Criteria for Appointment and Re-appointment to the Graduate Program in
MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

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1. Preamble

This document sets the criteria and procedures for the appointment of faculty members to the Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering at Lassonde School of Engineering, in accordance with the Policy on Appointments to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) at York University. Its ultimate goal is to ensure that high standards in graduate-level education and academic support of graduate students will be maintained at the Department of Mechanical Engineering and its graduate program via active participation of appointed faculty members in all facets of graduate education.

Continuing and potential candidates are invited to apply for appointment to the Graduate Program in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at various levels, which are outlined in Section 2. These candidates are typically tenured, tenure-stream and contractually limited faculty members at both professorial and alternate stream levels from the Department of Mechanical Engineering at York University. However, faculty members from other departments or programs at York University may also apply for an appointment to the Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering. Depending on the category of appointment, they will be entitled to various privileges such as supervision of graduate students at MASc and PhD levels as a principal or co-supervisor; evaluation of graduate student performances as members of supervisory and/or examination committees; teaching graduate-level courses; and/or participation in decision-making processes in accordance with the program governance procedures.

2. Appointment Categories and Terms

Appointments to the FGS are program-specific and made in one of the following five categories. The criteria for appointment to FGS under the Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering are discussed in Section 3. Individuals who meet these criteria should follow the procedure discussed in Section 4 for applying for appointment to the Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering.

2.1 Full Membership

Full Members shall hold a tenure-track/tenured position at York University. They may act as a principal or a co-supervisor of doctoral dissertations and master’s theses; may serve on supervisory and examining committees; may teach graduate courses (including supervision of Major Research Papers/Projects); and may participate in decision-making processes in accordance with the program governance procedures. Full Members may hold an appointment that is continuing for up to six years unless (i) a further limited term is deemed appropriate by the graduate program committee, (ii) it is determined that the individual no longer satisfies the conditions for Full Membership, and/or (iii) his/her tenure-track/tenured position at York comes to an end.

2.2 Associate Membership

Associate Members shall hold a tenure-track/tenured or contractually limited position at York University. They may be permitted to act as a co-supervisor of doctoral dissertations; may act as the principal or as a co-supervisor of master’s theses; may serve on supervisory and examining committees; may teach graduate courses (including supervision of Major Research Papers/Projects); and may participate in decision-making processes in accordance with the program governance procedures. Associate Members cannot act as a principal supervisor
of doctoral dissertations. They can serve as a co-supervisor of doctoral dissertations on the condition that the other co-supervisor is a full member of the Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering. Based on the Faculty of Graduate Studies and program-specific appointment criteria, Mechanical Engineering Graduate Program Committee may place further limitations on the activities of Associate Members. Associate Members may hold an appointment that is continuing for up to six years unless (i) a further limited term is deemed appropriate by the graduate program committee, (ii) it is determined that the individual no longer satisfies the conditions for Associate Membership, and/or (iii) their tenure-track/tenured or contractually limited position at York comes to an end.

2.3 Members Emeriti

Members Emeriti may be permitted to act as co-supervisors of doctoral dissertations; may act as principals or as co-supervisors of master’s theses; may serve on supervisory and examining committees; and may teach graduate courses (including supervision of Major Research Papers/Projects). Members Emeriti may continue ongoing principal supervisions of doctoral dissertations that had begun prior to retirement. Should the program need arises, Members Emeriti may be eligible to act as principal supervisors of doctoral dissertations, on the condition that another member of the supervisory committee would be willing and able to act as principal supervisor should the need arise, and subject to the approval of the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. Members Emeriti may serve as a co-supervisor of doctoral dissertations on the condition that the other co-supervisor is a full member of the Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering. Based on the Faculty of Graduate Studies and program-specific appointment criteria, the Graduate Program Committee may place further limitations on the activities of Members Emeriti. The appointment term of Members Emeriti is normally for a maximum of five years and is renewable. Distinguished Research Professors are appointed to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for life. Upon retirement, Distinguished Research Professors are subject to the eligibility conditions of the Members Emeriti category.

2.4 Adjunct Membership

Adjunct Membership is for individuals who hold academic or professional positions external to York University (including visiting professors and adjunct faculty members) and postdoctoral fellows, but whose expertise is relevant to the Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering. Although senior academic qualification (e.g. PhD or equivalent) and experience teaching and/or supervising at graduate level are desirable for Adjunct Membership, these are not essential and are largely contingent upon the nature of the program and its associated activities. Adjunct members may be permitted to serve on supervisory committees and may act as co-supervisors of doctoral dissertations or master’s theses, subject to the approval of the Department of Mechanical Engineering Graduate Program Committee. For doctoral dissertations and master’s thesis, the other co-supervisor must be a full member of the Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering. Adjunct members may be permitted to serve on examining committees but may not act as Chair or Dean’s representative on examining committees. Based on the Faculty of Graduate Studies and program-specific appointment criteria, the Graduate Program Committee may place further limitations on the activities of Adjunct Members. The appointment term of Adjunct Members is normally for a maximum of six years and is renewable. Adjunct faculty, visiting professors and postdoctoral fellows may be eligible for graduate course directorship in addition to and outside of their Adjunct Membership. With respect to appointment procedures, eligibility for principal supervision of major research papers/projects is considered equivalent to eligibility for graduate course directorship.
2.5 Instructor Membership

Based on program needs, the Graduate Program Committee in Mechanical Engineering may recommend for approval the limited term appointment of an individual to teach a specific graduate course(s). Instructor Membership is for individuals who hold academic or professional positions external to York University (including visiting professors and adjunct faculty) and postdoctoral fellows, but whose expertise is relevant to the Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering. Although senior academic qualifications and experience (e.g. PhD or equivalent, and academic teaching experience) are desirable for Instructor Membership, these are not essential and are largely contingent upon the nature of the program and specified course. The appointment term shall be coincident with the terms over which the graduate course(s) is offered and is renewable. Recommendations for appointment, including a rationale, are required for each instance in which a course is taught.

Note: An individual may be appointed to more than one graduate program, in such event, he/she shall designate one of the programs as his/her primary graduate program. Although this designation is intended to signify an individual’s principal, but non-exclusive, commitment in relation to graduate supervision, teaching, and service, a faculty member may shift their principal commitments over the course of their career.

3. Appointment Criteria

The appointment criteria for the Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering are governed by and consistent with the Policy on Appointments to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, including the Faculty of Graduate Studies appointment criteria.

3.1 Faculty of Graduate Studies General Appointment Criteria

Candidates for appointment to the Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering must fulfill the minimum criteria set by the FGS and

1. Hold a PhD (or equivalent) degree or otherwise have demonstrated achievement as a researcher, scholar, or professional in accordance with the expectations in the mechanical engineering discipline;
2. Demonstrate continuing contributions to research, scholarship or professional activity, as evidenced by a clear process of peer review and critical analysis;
3. Demonstrate satisfactory performance as an instructor and/or supervisor, if previously engaged in graduate teaching or supervision.

Insufficient evidence of continued research, scholarship, or professional activity at an advanced level will normally result in an appointment that excludes principal supervision of doctoral and masters dissertations.

For full description and interpretation of the criteria above, applicants are referred to the unit-specific criteria in Section 3.2.
3.2 Interpretation of Appointment Criteria at the Department of Mechanical Engineering

Expectations for members in the Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering will vary according to their status, role and administrative responsibilities. Normally, it is reasonable to expect a lower level of scholarly activity (e.g., fewer publications and lower levels of research funding) and graduate teaching and supervision for faculty members who are either (i) untenured and recently appointed to the university (i.e., within the past 6 years), (ii) working in a developmental and/or supportive role in private sectors or government research labs, (iii) heavily involved in administration, or (iv) on parental, maternal, or sabbatical leave. However, the majority of the faculty members do not fall into the above "exceptional" categories and should meet the “standard” scholarly, graduate teaching and graduate supervision criteria below.

3.2.1 Scholarly Activities

Relevant and appropriate scholarly activities at the Department of Mechanical Engineering are defined as maintaining an acceptable level of publication of peer-reviewed scientific papers in journals, conferences, and any other modes of presenting work in a public forum which has been subjected to a clear process of peer review; acquiring external research funding for the independent management of a research laboratory; and contribution to professional, or other, organizations and activities relevant to mechanical engineering or related fields. The graduate program places significant importance on the publication of high quality papers, judged based on the dissemination of original research outcomes in reputable refereed journals and prestigious international conference proceedings in mechanical engineering or related fields. In some fields, an argument might be made that a refereed conference paper is equivalent to a good journal article or that a specific conference is the premier venue for publication in that field.

The following guidelines will be used by the Graduate Program Director and the Graduate Program Committee to interpret the criteria of sustained scholarly activity (under normal circumstances and for “standard” candidates) for appointment/re-appointment of faculty members to the Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering.

1- The requirements for appointment of recently hired (in professorial stream) and untenured PhDs as Full Members are (i) at least an average of one (1) refereed publication every two (2) years since the completion of their PhD and (ii) having completed at least one (1) year of postdoctoral fellowship, industrial research and development, academic appointment or equivalent in the past three (3) years of their career. Otherwise, an “Associate Membership” may be recommended for the first year of appointment.

2- The requirements for appointment of tenured and re-appointment of existing faculty members (in professorial stream) as Full Members are (i) publishing a minimum of six (6) refereed publications over the course of the last six (6) years, out of which three (3) must have been refereed journal publications, (ii) acquiring external research funding in the past six (6) years, for the research assistantship support and graduation of at least one MASc or PhD student; and (iii) contributing to professional, or other, organizations (especially within the Department of Mechanical Engineering at York University) relevant to mechanical engineering or related fields.

3- The requirement for appointment of recently hired alternate stream and untenured PhDs as Full Members is publication of at least two (2) papers in engineering education, out of which one (1) must have been a refereed journal paper.
4- The requirement for appointment of tenured and re-appointment of existing faculty members (in alternate stream) as Full Members is publication of at least two (2) papers in engineering education over the last six (6) years, out of which one (1) must have been a refereed journal paper.

5- The Department of Mechanical Engineering values and encourages internal and external collaborations, scholarly partnerships, and interdisciplinary and cross-faculty research initiatives. As such, faculty members outside of the Department of Mechanical Engineering are encouraged to apply for appointments at the level of Adjunct or Associate Membership. These membership requests must be initiated and supported by a letter from a Full Member at the Department of Mechanical Engineering. These individuals are expected to meet one of the above criteria, as applicable, and their appointments are normally for a limited term as decided by the Graduate Program Committee of Mechanical Engineering Department.

6- Members Emeriti are expected to demonstrate evidence of scholarly activities as identified for Full Members in condition 2 above.

7- Applicants seeking appointment as Instructor Members are exempt from satisfying the requirements for scholarly activities and must only meet the graduate teaching requirements discussed in Section 3.2.2.

It is well understood that not all forms of scholarly activities are captured by the presented guidelines above. The Graduate Program Committee at the Department of Mechanical Engineering will be responsible for assessing the scholarly activities of applicants who do not explicitly meet these criteria or who fit under the “exceptional” category, in order to determine whether they are commensurate with the above guidelines. The Graduate Program Committee at the Department of Mechanical Engineering will have the ultimate authority to make a recommendation for an appointment.

### 3.2.2 Graduate Teaching

A typical and “standard” expectation from faculty members whose primary appointments are in the Department of Mechanical Engineering is to teach (contingent upon being offered to teach) a minimum of one (1) graduate course every two (2) years.

Satisfactory graduate teaching is defined as effective communication of theoretical and conceptual materials in mechanical engineering or related disciplines at an advanced level to senior undergraduate, MASc, MEng, and PhD students. Performance of graduate-level instructors can be assessed by course evaluations, feedback directly obtained from graduate students by the Graduate Program Director, and feedback indirectly obtained from students’ supervisory committees and supervisors. Factors to be considered are scholarly or creative content of teaching materials, currency of such materials, application of relevant research methodologies, effectiveness of the individual’s communication as a graduate teacher, and use of appropriate pedagogic techniques.

Applicants seeking appointment to the Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering as Instructor Members should be qualified to teach specific graduate courses in mechanical engineering or related fields. Senior academic qualifications such as a PhD degree (or equivalent) and/or a track record of teaching at graduate level are desirable for Instructor Members but not mandatory. Appointment term will coincide with the terms over which a graduate course(s) is offered and is renewable. Recommendations for appointment, including a rationale, are required from a Full Member of Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering for each instance in which a course is taught.
3.2.3. Graduate Supervision

The quality of graduate students’ supervision will be assessed based on the criteria below:

(i) Time to completion of students’ MASc theses and PhD dissertations,
(ii) Successful passing of supervisory committee meetings,
(iii) Quality of graduate seminar presentations,
(iv) Publication of full papers in proceedings of peer-reviewed conferences,
(v) Publication of original research results in refereed journals, and
(vi) Successful defense of students’ theses and dissertations.

4. Appointment/Re-Appointment Procedures

Appointments to the Faculty of Graduate Studies in Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering are initiated at the program level. The Department of Mechanical Engineering Graduate Program Committee serves as the committee that sets the program-specific criteria and procedures for appointment of faculty members to the program. These criteria and procedures will be approved at the Department level by vote of its members. The Graduate Program Committee is also responsible for assessment of applications and mandating the Graduate Program Director of the Department of Mechanical Engineering on appointment/reappointment recommendations and decisions. This committee will notify existing members of upcoming periodic reviews and their entitlement to be considered for re-appointment at least three months before recommendations are to be submitted to the FGS.

Candidates for appointment or reappointment shall submit to the Graduate Program Director an application package that includes a cover letter, a nomination letter by a Full Member of Graduate Program in Mechanical Engineering (if applicable), and an up-to-date curriculum vitae which lists the information on which the individual relies to satisfy the unit-specific appointment criteria. It is expected that the curriculum vitae will reveal a continuing record of publication of full papers in refereed journals, refereed conference proceedings, and conference papers as well as successful acquisition of research funds, training and graduation of MASc and PhD students, satisfactory teaching records, and participation in scientific and professional organizations at internal and external levels. New and renewing applicants should normally deliver a public talk or a lecture (for Instructor Members) at the Graduate Seminar Series (MECH 6000) of the Department and outline their research program in conjunction with mechanical engineering or demonstrate their teaching capabilities of mechanical engineering subjects at the graduate level. This will be arranged by the graduate program committee when planning the MECH 6000 talks and communicated to the applicants.