A. Introduction

Faculty joint appointments can be beneficial in encouraging interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary collaborations in both the research and education areas. The department in which a faculty member is administratively located (ad loc), and where their tenure or tenure track appointment is held, is identified as the faculty’s home department. Appointments can be requested at varying levels of faculty participation in the involved departments, such as 60-40%, 75-25%, or 100-0%, with the latter category corresponding to courtesy appointments. It is recommended that there be one department where more than 50% of the appointment is located so that the home department is clearly identified.

This document focuses on joint appointments between two departments within the College of Engineering. The concept can be extended to appointments involving departments in different colleges, as currently allowed by University Rule.

The college desires that its jointly appointed faculty be successful without incurring additional hurdles. Some of the issues to be addressed by the participating parties include:

- Different evaluation criteria or weights in different departments.
- Different teaching loads in the participating departments.
- Coordination of service between the two involved departments.
- Assimilation of a jointly appointed faculty and efforts that should be made to mitigate potential problems.

B. General Guiding Principles

The following general principles will guide the establishment of agreements for joint appointments:

1. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) is required. It is a clear, written, understanding, prepared by the involved departments, that states what their respective rights and responsibilities are, and what operational procedures will govern the joint appointment. The MOU must clearly and unambiguously address all faculty issues as outlined in Appendix 1, and must be agreed upon by all involved parties.

2. It is critical that the faculty member fully understands the process for annual, intermediate, and promotion and/or tenure review, and how each department will contribute to the single, collaborative, review process. See section C.3 for further details.
3. Faculty in budgeted joint appointments should not be unduly burdened by the appointment. Departments must coordinate assignments and resource allocations to insure that the jointly appointed faculty perceives an experience similar to faculty in a single department appointment.

4. Faculty in joint appointments should discuss problems and conflicts arising because of the dual appointment with the involved department heads. The department heads should immediately take steps to resolve the issues.

5. A faculty member has the right to initiate change or termination of a joint appointment (see Section C.2).

There are several scenarios where disagreements may arise in terminating a joint appointment. The executive associate dean will either serve as a mediator or will appoint a faculty to mediate. In all cases, the interest of the faculty will be given primary consideration in making a final decision.

C. Recommended Joint Appointment Practices

1. Initial Appointments

Joint appointments can happen in several ways:

- Two departments obtain authorization to recruit a joint appointment position. The home department will process the hiring paperwork, and the joint appointment request will accompany the approval to hire packet.

- During recruiting for a single department appointment it becomes clear that the candidate prefers a joint appointment, and the department heads agree that it will be mutually beneficial. In this situation the home department would make the initial faculty appointment, and the joint appointment would be requested immediately after the hire is approved by the dean of faculties.

- A current faculty in a department wishes to have a joint appointment with another department to enhance his or her academic endeavors.

In all cases, an MOU must be prepared and agreed to between the participating departments and the faculty, with approval from the college dean and the dean of faculties. The home department is responsible for structuring the final MOU agreement. Department heads of participating departments must meet at least once a year, together with the faculty member, and as needed in between, to discuss and address any issues that arise. The MOU must address, among other things (see Appendix 1 for further detail):

- The home department. In consideration of the joint appointment, the home department is defined as the department where the faculty member is administratively located (ad loc). This should also be the
same department that holds the faculty member's tenure or tenure track appointment. The home department head is responsible for initiating communication with the other department head(s) regarding administrative processes for faculty reviews.

- The percentages of participation in each department. This affects the salary provided and workload assigned by each department.

- The workload of the faculty in each department as it relates to teaching and service.

- A plan for the indirect cost allocations. Departments must agree in the MOU on indirect cost research allocations on contracts and grants involving the jointly appointed faculty.

- Mentoring plan for faculty holding joint appointments will follow a mentoring plan agreed upon by the participating department heads.

- Faculty voting: The college mandates that the jointly appointed faculty member may only participate in the department in which the faculty member holds the majority appointment (>50%) for voting on all tenure and promotion matters, as well as all voting pertaining to the hiring and retention of the department head. This participation must be explicitly stated in the MOU.

2. Changing a Joint Appointment

Faculty involved in a joint appointment may choose to restructure or terminate the appointment. A jointly appointed faculty member may make changes to the fraction of participation in each department. This is accomplished by the faculty member collaborating with the participating department heads to come to an agreement on the new terms. Those terms and the request to change the appointment are submitted for approval by the jointly appointed faculty member via a memorandum through the participating department heads and college dean, and to the dean of faculties for final approval.

A faculty member has the right to initiate change or termination of a joint appointment, as does the head of the department where the minority percentage is held, unless that is the tenure home of the faculty member. The termination process begins with a meeting between the faculty member, the involved department heads, and the executive associate dean. Terminations should be done in a mutually agreeable way for all parties involved. The faculty will return to the department where their tenure is held, unless further action is taken to gain approval for transferring the tenure.
3. Joint Appointment Faculty Reviews – Annual, Intermediate and P&T

The relevant review processes must be clearly stated in the MOU that establishes the appointment. It is recommended that:

- The head of the home department will initiate each review process (annual, intermediate, promotion and/or tenure). The process must follow the established MOU and University Rules. The head of the home department should seek input from the participating department/s, and is responsible for the final evaluation.

- All reviews should take into account the interdisciplinary work done by the jointly appointed faculty. In the case of promotion and/or tenure review, special effort should be made to choose external reviewers who are able to evaluate the total appointment as opposed to the individual parts. Referees must be made aware of the joint appointment and asked to consider the faculty’s record in that light in the requesting letter.

D. Elements Required for Joint Appointment Recommendations

Requests for joint appointments are submitted by the participating department heads and routed through the dean and finally approved by the dean of faculties. A complete request will include these elements:

1. Completed “Recommendation for Joint Faculty Appointment” form. This form is available on the Dean of Faculties website at: [http://dof.tamu.edu/forms](http://dof.tamu.edu/forms)

2. A proposal, in memo format, outlining the justification and expected benefits, as related to the scholastic endeavors of all parties, for the joint appointment request.

3. An abbreviated curriculum vita of the faculty member (20 pages maximum).

4. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) containing all elements outlined in the attached sample, and within this procedural document.

Appendix 1: Outline of Essential Elements for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
Appendix 1
Outline of Essential Elements for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Memorandum of Understanding for an Inter-departmental Joint Faculty Appointment in the Dwight Look College of Engineering

I. Define purpose of agreement, parties involved, their locations and general responsibilities
   a. Identify the home department; note tenure home, salary sources and percentages paid by each department, faculty voting rights for tenure & promotion and department head selection/retention
   b. If a new faculty hire, define start-up funding split
   c. Define space and resource commitments of the participating departments

II. Define responsibilities of the faculty member in relation to the joint appointment
   a. Define general expectations of faculty participation in each of the affiliated units in terms of teaching, research and service
   b. State expectations for how the teaching load will be fulfilled, including access to graduate students
   c. State expectations for how the service load will be distributed between the participating departments
   d. Define expectations in regard to research activities of the jointly appointed faculty member, including a plan for the indirect cost allocations, as well as other issues related to research proposal preparation, final awards, and reporting
   e. State how the departments will report metrics data for the jointly appointed faculty

III. Define efforts that will be made by each affiliated unit in regard to the jointly appointed faculty member’s success
   a. State a mentoring plan; include efforts that will be made to assimilate the jointly appointed faculty member into each department
   b. State how the affiliated units will approach the evaluation of interdisciplinary work done by the jointly appointed faculty
   c. Explain the process for annual review, including details of each affiliated unit’s responsibilities
   d. Explain the process for intermediate review, if required, including details of each affiliated unit’s responsibilities
   e. Explain the process for tenure and/or promotion review, and post-tenure review, including details of each affiliated unit’s responsibilities (note that a committee and department head review is required by the secondary department, per University Rule, for tenure and/or promotion cases)
   f. State the plan for an annual meeting between heads of affiliated units and the jointly appointed faculty member, as well as a plan for meetings at the request of the jointly appointed faculty member to deal with urgent issues

IV. Include a statement that any modifications to the MOU must be agreed upon by the faculty member and the administration

V. Include approvals for each participating department head, the jointly appointed faculty member, the college dean, and the dean of faculties