

**Proposal to dissolve the Department of Engineering Professional
Development in the College of Engineering**

January 2019

Background

In 1973, the University of Wisconsin's Board of Regents established a policy on outreach and assigned UW-Extension with responsibility to lead, coordinate, plan, and administer a System-wide extension function across all institutions comprising the University of Wisconsin System. Following a two-year study of Extension, the 1982 Board of Regents Policy on Extension reaffirmed the importance of the Wisconsin Idea and mandated the continuation of UW-Extension as an institution, along with integration of the extension function with the programs and faculties of the other UW institutions. This mandate initiated the transition of the engineering outreach activities within UW-Extension to CoE at the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus in 1983, with the full integration of the unit as an academic department completed in 1985. The new unit in CoE was titled the Department of Engineering Professional Development (DEPD).

The transition process included the transfer of the sixteen (16) tenured faculty and one (1) tenure-track faculty from UW-Extension to CoE. The integration agreement called for the faculty transitioning from UW-Extension to the UW-Madison campus to be granted their equivalent faculty rank and tenure status following their transition to the UW-Madison Campus (UWEX Faculty Document No. 46). The UW-Madison Faculty Senate confirmed the same on November 5, 1984. EPD reached a high watermark of tenured/tenure-track faculty in 1992 with 22 faculty members in the department. In the years that followed, the number of tenured/tenure-track faculty members within EPD steadily declined due to retirements and other transitions and by 2010, the number of faculty members in the department decreased to 12. At the present time, EPD has 4 tenured faculty members (two professors and two associate professors) with one of the faculty members planning to retire within the next eighteen months, which will leave the department with three faculty members.

Through DEPD, the College of Engineering has had a long and rich tradition of providing opportunities for engineering professionals to continue their education through either in-person short courses and or on-line programs leading to certificates or Master's degrees. The product is well respected in the marketplace as evidenced by the national ranking of the online programs, which consistently ranks in the top ten. CoE plans to continue to provide such opportunities and to build on past success by bringing new opportunities to the market place.

Recommendations from the External Review Committee

The department has been reviewed by an external committee of visitors, as have all other academic departments in the CoE. This review was conducted in 2017. The following are highlights of recommendations from this committee:

- *[Department of]* EPD is doing ok, but is fairly tactically focused. They have managed to find a set of faculty who work with them and have been opportunistic in this regard. However, there are some brittle spots across program offerings where looking at gap analysis could allow them to be more strategic as well as better aligned with the College.
- The culture of *[Department of]* EPD, CoE, and the University seems steeped in tradition, not unlike many universities. Determining what are the needs of current and future

students/industry (stakeholders) and beginning to make preparations to meet those needs present opportunities.

- The existing online strategy seems to be a ‘bolt-on’ to the College and University, a financial goal, rather than a strategy. With the rich history in Wisconsin, home to the Wisconsin Idea, a concept that the entire nation understands for access, many opportunities exist for creating the next kinds of access strategies that the State and other university stakeholders could utilize.
- Online strategy expertise exists in [*Department of*] EPD but not leveraged across College/University.
- [*Department of* EPD] is the front door to stakeholders of the university, bringing people to the faculty and university, but is not currently leveraged as much as it might enable.
- Sustainable growth comes best from scale, not always boutique and could tie to statewide efforts for industry cultivation.

The complete report of the external review committee is provided as Attachment 1.

The College of Engineering is committed to continuing to provide high quality educational programs as part of its commitment to life-long learning. However, as

1. The Dean has decided that tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty positions will be allocated to the academic units to meet the growth in demand from undergraduates for engineering degrees and to continue the discovery of engineering solutions to challenges of national and societal importance;
2. The continuing education efforts, including staffing of the programs, must become integral to the broader educational mission of the CoE;
3. The continuing engineering educational efforts must be more agile, offering a broad array of programs that are relevant to the customer base, and developing new offerings rapidly in emerging areas;
4. The continuing engineering efforts must become revenue generators for the CoE and the academic departments;

To achieve these objectives, the dean has decided a new strategy is needed. Correspondingly, CoE has launched the Office of Engineering Professional Development (OEPD), which will be led and managed by an Associate Dean who will report to the Dean. Consequently, CoE seeks approval to dissolve the Department of Engineering Professional Development.

In the following, responses to the relevant sections of FP&P are provided.

Section 5.02B of FP&P

1. *An explanation of the precipitating circumstances or rationale for the proposal. Such explanations may be based in the unit’s declining faculty.*

DEPD started in 1992 with 22 tenure-track or tenured faculty members, this number decreased by 2010 to 12, and by 2018 to 4, with one retirement planned in the eighteen months. As CoE is not investing faculty positions in this department, the numbers have declined to sub-optimal levels for operation as a department.

The continuing education activities of CoE need to be embedded within the teaching framework of CoE. This will increase the number of faculty who can be engaged in teaching within the continuing engineering education program.

2. *An explanation and evidence of efforts made to confer with and to notify parties affected by this change.*

The main thrust of communication on the proposed changes have been with faculty and staff within DEPD as well as department chairs within the College of Engineering and colleagues in the Division of Continuing Studies. As the continuing engineering education programs are not impacted directly, the customer base and partnering industries have not been included in these communication efforts. No changes to the credit or non-credit offerings in the CoE are being proposed as part of this reorganization. It is possible that the Associate Dean for EPD will make changes once the position has been filled.

Communication with DEPD faculty and staff on this matter has been both prolonged and extensive. The first communication started at a department meeting held on August 12, 2016 when faculty and staff were notified of efforts to update DEPD's strategic plan for inclusion in the department's self-study document that would be used for the external review conducted in April 2017. Further communications on this topic with updates on progress were made at numerous meetings within DEPD during 2016 and into 2017 as well as with the broader CoE Department chairs in 2017. The table below summarizes these meetings and includes time demarcation for the meetings pre-external (shaded blue) and post-external review.

Table 1. Summary of meetings held both within EPD and at the CoE-level relating to the department external review and organization transformation. Blue shading indicates meetings prior to the pre-external review and unshaded to meetings after the external review.

Venue	Date	Agenda item
Executive Committee	August 4, 2016	Department external review
Department meeting	August 12, 2016	Department Strategic Planning/DEPD External Review
Department meeting	October 14, 2016	Department Strategic Planning/DEPD External Review
Executive Committee	December 2, 2016	Strategic Planning Team Department Review
Department meeting	December 16, 2016	Department Strategic Planning/External Review/Updated Mission and Vision
Department meeting	February 17, 2017	Department Strategic Planning Update/DEPD External Review
Department meeting	April 21, 2017	DEPD External Review
Department leadership	May 1, 2017	External review committee report received
Dean of Continuing Studies	June 8, 2017	DEPD External Review Findings
Department meeting	June 23, 2017	DEPD External Review (reorganization)
Executive Committee	July 6, 2017	External Review Follow-up
External Review Response	July 27, 2017	Roundtable meeting with DEPD's Educational Support Services staff

Venue	Date	Agenda item
		Roundtable meeting with DEPD's Program Directors
		Roundtable meeting with DEPD's Marketing, HR, and Finance staff
Executive Committee	August 3, 2017	External Review Follow-up – department transformation
Department meeting	August 18, 2017	External Review discussion with Dean Ian Robertson
Executive Committee	September 7, 2017	External Review Follow-up
Executive Committee	October 5, 2017	External Review Follow-up
CoE Leadership Council	October 23, 2017	EPD Overview and External Review Response (reorganization)
Executive Committee	November 9, 2017	External Review Follow-up
Department meeting	November 10, 2017	External Review Response
Department meeting	December 15, 2017	External Review Response
CoE Leadership Council	December 20, 2017	DEPD Overview and Reorganization options
CoE Leadership Council	January 31, 2018	DEPD Reorganization
University Committee	February 26, 2018	Announcing that planning is in process to reorganize DEPD
CoE Department Chairs	February 27, 2018	DEPD Reorganization
CoE Department Chairs	March 13, 2018	DEPD Reorganization
CoE Leadership Council	March 14, 2018	DEPD Reorganization direction
DEPD Department meeting	April 6, 2018,	Update on department reorganization plans
DEPD Executive Committee	April 12, 2018	DEPD Reorganization
CoE Leadership Council	April 30, 2018	DEPD Reorganization/structure
DEPD Program Directors	May 30, 2018	DEPD Reorganization plan forward
DEPD Department meeting	June 1, 2018,	Update on department reorganization plans
DEPD Executive Committee	June 7, 2018	DEPD Reorganization planning
DEPD Department meeting	August 17, 2018,	Update on department reorganization plans
DEPD Executive Committee	September 13, 2018	DEPD reorganization planning
DEPD Executive Committee	October 11, 2018	EPD reorganization update
DEPD Department meeting	October 19, 2018	Update on department reorganization plans
Dean of Continuing Studies	October 25, 2018	Update on department reorganization plans
DEPD Executive Committee	November 15, 2018	DEPD reorganization planning
DEPD Department meeting	December 20, 2018	Dean meets with department to discuss DEPD reorganization

The meetings conducted prior to the external review did not include any substantive discussion on the prospects of forming OEPD. Those early discussions were focused on department strategic planning and preparation for the department's external review. The meetings held during the summer of 2017 included discussions of options for department reorganization with the intent setting forth a vision of the future of EPD while keeping department personnel informed of potential for organizational changes in the future and to gather their input, receive feedback, and hear any concerns. The August 18, 2017 department meeting included Dean Ian Robertson, who shared his thoughts on the external review with department personnel and the need for considering the prospects of reorganizing the department. The Department meeting on December 20, 2018 included Dean Robertson to discuss the plans to dissolve DEPD and form OEDP.

In addition to the above listing of formal meetings, a number of other communications with department personnel and CoE leadership occurred. For example, the DEPD chair provided a copy of the external review committee report to all members of the department on June 7, 2017. The DEPD chair clearly communicated an “open door” policy for any member of the department to discuss ideas, concerns, and suggestions in navigating the path forward following the external review. Many informal discussions were had with members of the department and those details are not explicitly cited herein.

3. *An assessment of the impact of the change on current students, market demand for students with this education that will not be met in the absence of the program, whether other UW-Madison programs provide a related educational experience, whether there are similar or related programs offered at other colleges or universities regionally or in the UW System, and what efforts have been made to resolve the situation to allow the program to continue, including the potential for collaboration with other units.*

With the exception of Technical Japanese, the other degree programs will continue to be offered. Therefore, there will be no loss of opportunities for students to obtain certificates or degrees. Short-courses and other educational efforts will be continued and expanded.

Technical Japanese is being discontinued because of the retirement of the faculty member leading the program who is also the program’s instructor. Approval for discontinuing this program has been obtained, no new students are being accepted to the program, and currently enrolled students will be able to complete their program of study; see Attachment 2.

4. *A “teach-out plan” that explains how students will be supported through to completion of their degree.*

Not applicable. No programs of study or courses are being discontinued.

5. *Timeline and advance communication plan.*

See Table 1.

6. *Specification of any related academic components that are to be discontinued or otherwise affected.*

Not applicable.

Section 5.02C of FP&P

Section 5.02C of FP&P requires the proposal for restructuring an academic unit to be approved by a number of bodies that begins with the originating unit. A summary of the approving bodies is provided below in Table 2.

Table 2. Approval summary.

Approving Body	Date Considered	Comments	Vote
DEPD Faculty*	December 20, 2018	Approved the transition of DEPD as an academic department (Attachment 3). Approved the request for each DEPD faculty member to transition the tenure home to the appropriate academic department within CoE (Attachment 3).	4-0-0
College of Engineering Leadership Council	January 23, 2019	Approved the dissolution of DEPD as an academic department transitioning to OEPD in the College of Engineering.	9-0-0
College of Engineering Academic Planning Council			
Graduate Faculty Executive Committee			
University Academic Planning Council			

* The faculty in DEPD will have their tenure homes transferred to academic departments in CoE. The requests for transfer have been approved by the appropriate academic department, see Attachment 4. One faculty member, because of the field of expertise and an anticipated retirement within eighteen months, will have their tenured appointment within the College of Engineering, rather than in a department.

Attachment 1. Report of the external review committee.

Attachment 2. Approval to discontinue the program on Technical Japanese.

Attachment 3. Documentation that the faculty in DEPD have voted to dissolve the unit and to approve the requests from the faculty to transfer their tenure home to the appropriate academic unit in CoE.

Attachment 4. Letters from the departments indicating the change in the tenure home has been approved by the department.