

External Review Report of the Department of Mechanical Engineering

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External Review Committee

Sanjeev Bedi, University of Waterloo

Peter Constabel, University of Victoria

Sheldon Green, University of British Columbia

Executive Summary

The Department of Mechanical Engineering houses a dynamic group of researchers, staff, and graduate students. Collectively the faculty have strong publication records and funding rates, and train an impressive number of PhD, MAsC, and MEng students. The committee was impressed by the commitment to high quality research and training, as well as the department's proactive and forward-looking leadership and dedicated and hard-working staff (tech. and admin.). New initiatives are timely and if implemented carefully will serve the department well. In particular, the proposed new M.Eng. in Aerospace Engineering would build on a strong base, but would require substantial additional resources from the benefitting companies, from the department, from the Faculty, and from VPAC.

Recommendations

1. The department should continue its strong course in research funding and publication rates.
2. Provide resources for increased staffing levels for technical and administrative staff.
3. Enhance graduate student experience by improved transparency of funding, considering minimum stipends, and ensuring appropriate TA workloads.
4. Prioritize graduate student space needs and support graduate student community.
5. Consider alternatives to MECH601/602 as required grad courses, and work towards a greater number of stand-alone and high-level grad courses to promote student engagement.
6. Continue to support the BISO MENG program and pursue working towards launching the Aerospace MENG program.