

Johns Hopkins University  
G.W.C. Whiting School of Engineering

Department, Center and Institute\* Advisory Committee Guidelines  
2016

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*\*The word "department" will be used in this document to refer to all departments, centers and institutes.*

## Introduction

The mission of the G.W.C Whiting School of Engineering is to:

- Provide an outstanding engineering education that is innovative, rigorous, and relevant, and that prepares its graduates to be 21st century leaders.
- Advance the boundaries of engineering inquiry through research and the creation and dissemination of knowledge that improve the well-being of society.
- Solve important societal problems through translational activities.

Within the School there are nine departments and several centers and institutes. Each of these operates as its own entity within the larger organization, just as the School operates on its own as a part of the larger Johns Hopkins University. To follow our mission as well as to meet and exceed our goals, it is important to continually review current progress and success to further improve with time.

Each department, center and institute is strongly encouraged to have an advisory committee to assist with the process of improvement and increased success. The following pages are meant to act as a guide and reference as you build and work with an advisory committee.

The advisory board for the School is the WHITING ADVISORY BOARD. This group is comprised of alumni and friends of the School who have various backgrounds and experiences which allow them to assist the Dean in making decisions and continually improving the standing and stature of the Whiting School. Below is an overview of the WHITING ADVISORY BOARD for the reference of departments as you work with your boards.

**The Whiting Advisory Board members bring important insights and expertise to assist the School in reviewing critical issues.**

**The WHITING ADVISORY BOARD's mission is to:**

- ◆ Provide candid and constructive advice, based on insights and expertise, on issues critical to the success of the Whiting School of Engineering.
- ◆ Serve as an advocacy arm of the School of Engineering to industry and government, informing them of educational and research opportunities.
- ◆ Increase the School's resources and support.
- ◆ Promote the Whiting School's efforts to Hopkins constituents, such as the Board of Trustees, alumni, and officers.

**WHITING ADVISORY BOARD Membership Guidelines**

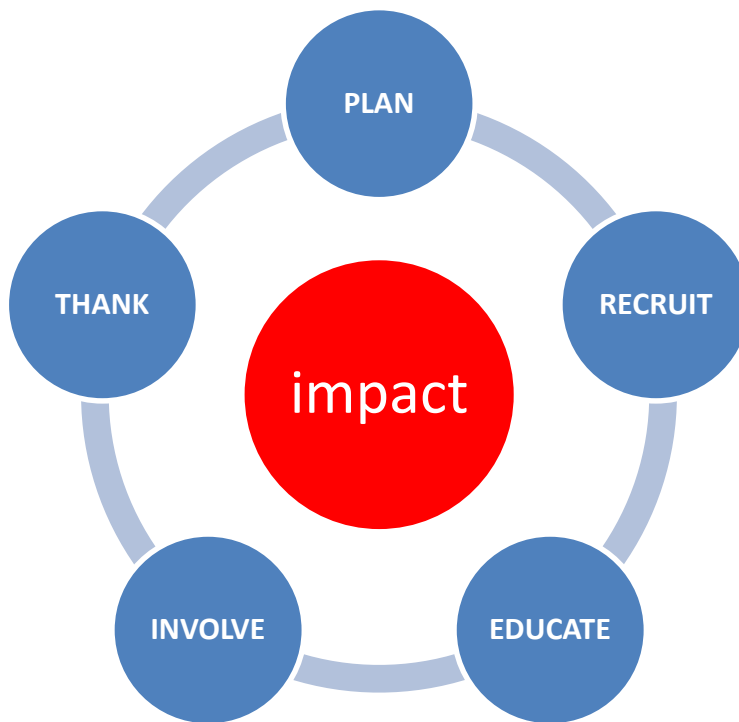
- ◆ Members will serve a three-year term, with the option to renew once. After the second term, members will step down for at least one year before being considered for further service on the council.
- ◆ Members will be asked to attend two Council meetings each year.
- ◆ Members will be called upon by the Dean outside of the Council meetings to respond to ideas and issues relating to the Whiting School of Engineering.
- ◆ Members will be asked to help increase the School's financial resources and expand its base of charitable support.

Each department needs to create a mission statement for its advisory council that accurately represents what the department expects of its council members. It should be clear and to the point.

Example:

***“The Advisory Council of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering exists to support the department and the GWC Whiting School of Engineering in its efforts to achieve the department's vision, actualize its mission, and continually improve the quality of education it provides to its students while also bringing resources into the department.”***

**A helpful visual to refer to when planning and strategizing about your advisory committee:**



## **Chapter 1:**

### **What is an advisory committee? What are the benefits of having an active committee?**

An advisory committee is a body that provides non-binding strategic advice to the management of a corporation, organization, or foundation. The informal nature of an advisory committee gives greater flexibility in structure and management.

In academia advisory committees for departments are often made-up of academics from other institutions. At the Whiting School we would like to have a mix of alumni, academics and corporate representation on each department committee. These committees can offer ideas and advice to help programs grow and progress.

There are many benefits to having a functioning and active advisory committee:

- Assistance for the department and its programs – academic and otherwise: Members of the committee can offer ideas and insight beyond what our current faculty can provide. They can [endorse, affirm] or challenge ideas to improve our education and research activities.
- A group of advocates for the department within the companies, organizations and the sectors its members represent.
- A sounding board of outside professionals for the department chair and other members of the department.
- A core group to fundraise from as well as a way to cultivate alumni and friends who make major contributions to the department.

See [attachment 1](#) for an example advisory committee mission statement.

## **Chapter 2: Recruitment and Membership Guidelines & Responsibilities**

The total number of committee members should be 10-15 and as equally as possible represent academics from peer institutions, alumni from undergraduate and graduate programs, and representatives from industry. The department will want to plan the mix of members in terms of successful alumni, corporations, key industries, and potential for partnerships that the department would like to develop. Determine an optimum size and manage membership to ensure that the group does not become too large (over 30) or too small (less than 5).

Potential members should be chosen by the chair/director through consultation with the faculty in the department, Office of Development and Alumni Relations, and current members of the advisory committee (once established). Development officers, alumni directors, faculty members, career placement directors, etc. all can be valuable sources of referrals. Effective networking is a key element of developing a strong advisory committee. Alumni members are very important because of their knowledge and their networking with other alumni as well as their commitment to their alma mater. They also bring knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the institution and its policies which can be invaluable.

Membership guidelines should be established – below is an example that can be modified per the department’s needs. These guidelines should be shared clearly and in writing to all those invited to become members of the committee.

### **EXAMPLE: Membership Guidelines**

- ◆ Members will serve a three-year term, with the option to renew once. After the second term, members will step down for at least one year before being considered for further service on the committee.
  - ◆ Members who have served a number of years and terms may be assigned emeritus status. If the member is an alumnus, this is at the discretion of the chair and Development Liaison.
- ◆ Members will be asked to attend at least one Committee meeting each year.
- ◆ Members will be called upon by the Chair outside of the Committee meetings to respond to ideas and issues relating to the department.
- ◆ Members will be asked to help increase the Department’s financial resources and expand its base of charitable support.

Once individuals are identified by the department head, faculty, development or dean, the department head should approach the prospective member about joining the committee, either via email or phone. If the prospective member agrees to join the committee, a formal letter of invitation to join the board will be sent from the dean. The letter from the dean should state the term of office as well as the next meeting date if known. ([See attachment #2](#)). The department head or office coordinator should facilitate this letter by working with the assigned development staff person liaison ([see chapter 6](#)). Once the letter has been sent, the department head should follow up with a phone call to answer any additional questions that the proposed member may have.

From time to time the department will have members who cannot or are unwilling to regularly participate. These members should be given the opportunity to resign or move to an inactive status. This is an issue that should be handled carefully as it is easy to hurt feelings and offend potential supporters.

## **Advisory Committee Chairperson**

Each committee should have a chairperson to work with the department chair in guiding the activities of the committee. The committee chair will be chosen by the department chair and should be asked to serve a specific amount of time. The amount of time a chair is asked to serve is dependent on the needs of the department and committee. We suggest having a three-year term which may be renewed at the discretion of the department chair. The committee chair works with the department chair to create agendas for meetings and leads the meetings. Outside of meetings the committee chair is responsible for assisting with communications to all committee members and ensuring the department is getting the assistance they need from the committee.

## **Member Responsibilities**

Advisory committee members want to be used and valued. Do not be afraid to ask them to evaluate programs, to review and suggest new approaches to teaching, to actively assist with finding mentors for seniors, or any other reasonable request. They will let you know if the task does not fit their interest or if they are not going to be available during the time period suggested for the project.

Faculty will usually respect the opinions and reports of the advisory committee and will often look at issues afresh if presented by the committee. Advisory committees are usually viewed as unbiased and interested in improving outcomes. Getting a fresh perspective from those in industry is a good idea.

Other responsibilities should include:

- ◆ Advising the department, through the department head, on issues that impact mission and strategy.
- ◆ Performing tasks in support of the department where the member has interest, expertise, and available time.
- ◆ Serving as a sounding board on planning issues, new programs, and activities.
- ◆ Identifying opportunities for students to interact with business, both public and nonprofit organizations, through internships, mentoring, and experiential learning.
- ◆ Serving as an advocate for the school's interests with the external community.
- ◆ Providing access to business leaders for the dean and faculty.
- ◆ Assisting in acquiring resources and personal contributions in support of the mission and department.
- ◆ Attending at least one meeting per year.

## **Fund Raising**

As stated above, part of an advisory committee member's responsibility is supporting the department through financial contributions. Most universities do establish minimum giving guidelines for advisory committee members.

We suggest a minimum at least \$500 - \$1000 should be required from each member to support a department or school priority annually. A department can establish a fund and/or project to which advisory committee members can contribute. If a member is already a donor to the school or university, no expectation of further gifts will be made. Development staff liaisons should assist in this regard.

The expectations related to fund raising, including specific minimum contributions from the members, should be explained in the initial conversations with a potential member of the board.

### **Chapter 3:** **Committee Meetings**

It is recommended that advisory committees meet formally two or three times a year. If committees or task forces are formed, they can of course, meet as needed. It appears that one meeting in the fall and one in the spring is the most common practice.

Most advisory committees meet on campus and department coordinators should assist with logistics.

The meeting agenda ([see attachment #6](#)) should normally follow a standard business meeting protocol. The meeting should have a formal opening, introduction, approval of minutes, report on the school by the department head and/or dean, unfinished business, committee reports, new business, fundraising, etc. It is common for the department head to give a state of the department address with PowerPoint. It is also best to have plenty of opportunities for members to speak and interact.

- ◆ Focus on principal strategic and forward-looking issues, rather than reviewing past history.
- ◆ Document meetings in concise, timely written minutes.
- ◆ Utilize remote meetings and on-line tools where possible, but not as a substitution for personal interaction and meeting attendance.

A half day meeting is suggested, starting at 9:00am, with continental breakfast served, and then ending after lunch. Meeting minutes should be taken and shared in a timely manner with all members of the committee (see [attachment #7](#) for example minutes).

A registration list should be kept of who attended, and if there are any address or email updates, the office coordinator should note them, as well as ensure the development liaison has the updates.

Department Heads are encouraged to invite the Dean or other relevant Whiting Leadership to give presentations or updates. Please work with the appropriate support staff to reserve on their calendar and to provide them with the agenda and the expectation one may have for the meeting.

#### **Department Coordinator Role**

Most departments find that assigning one office staff person to the role of facilitating and overseeing the advisory committee works best. That coordinator can work as a liaison with the development staff and with the actual members of the committee. The coordinator also works as the 'keeper' of the membership lists and membership terms (see [attachment #4](#) and [attachment #5](#)), regularly ensuring it is accurate and up to date. Other tasks can include finding an appropriate space for meetings, setting up the room and arranging for food and beverages, corresponding with members about attendance, and answering questions from outside sources about the meeting.

## Chapter 4: Beyond Committee Meetings

### **Members Acknowledgment and Stewardship**

The members of the advisory committee are giving of their time and sharing their expertise with the Department head and the faculty. In many respects, the members could view this as a “gift” requiring the same stewardship that one would provide for a valuable cash donation. The dean needs to recognize and honor the advisory committee members whenever possible.

Some schools put the pictures and information of their advisory committee members on their website; some prefer to print a brochure with a brief biographical statement on each member; and some list the members on the back or inside of programs and publications. While most committee members are not on the committee for publicity, it is important to give them time to network with others, to promote their companies, and honor their service.

**Departing members:** It is important to offer special recognition of members who are ending their term with the committee. You can do this in person during their final meeting, having the Dean join you for this portion the meeting is a nice way to make these members feel special. It is also expected that departing members will receive a thank you letter from the Dean ([see attachment #3](#)).

### **Regular Communication with Members**

It is very important to stay in contact with the committee, as a group and with individual members, during the time in-between meetings. Here are a few ways to accomplish this without making a great deal of work:

- ◆ Thank members for attending meetings with a letter in the mail from the Department Chair within two weeks of the meeting
  - Can be a form letter with small personalization as needed
  - Development liaison can assist with this process and personalizing the letters
- ◆ Send minutes and follow-up tasks for the Committee to complete after each meeting
  - Should go out within a month of the meeting
  - Can be sent via email
  - Ensure all follow-up items from meetings are completed and communicated in a timeline manner – this may require multiple emails and communications from the chair to the members, which is a good way to keep them involved.
- ◆ Encourage the chair of the committee to communicate one-on-one with members to ask for feedback and ideas outside of the meeting setting
- ◆ When there is news from the department (faculty hire, student or faculty awards, etc.) send a special notice to the advisory committee members from the chair.
- ◆ Work with the development staff to create a strategy for members with the potential to make large gifts. The strategy could include asking them to do something more focused for the department as a part of their member duties.

**Chapter 5:**  
**Partnership with the Office of Development & Alumni Relations**

Each department is assigned a liaison within the development office to collaborate with on all advisory committee matters (see [chapter 6](#)).

The liaison's role is primarily to provide a development component to the makeup of the committee and assist with any development-focused activities associated with the committee.

The liaison's role will include the following activities:

- ◆ Provide the department head with guidance and advice on adding new members to the advisory committee.
- ◆ Participate in at least one departmental meeting yearly to present information on development and its role within that department as well as the School.
- ◆ Meet with the department head at least twice per year to discuss the advisory committee, such as whether members are leaving, new members need to be added, scheduling of the annual or semi-annual meetings (no conflicts with other events), and whether there needs to be a development component added to the meeting. Also, funding priorities for the department should be identified, such as new research projects.
- ◆ Meet with the respective department coordinator/staff member who handles the activities of the advisory committees at least twice per year to get updates on membership. New members who have accepted the invitation to be on the advisory committee should be added to the department's advisory committee list and updated in the alumni database. The updating of the advisory committee list for each department is the responsibility of the liaison officer.
- ◆ Coordinate with the department invitation and departure letters to be sent from the Dean.

**Chapter 6:**  
**List of Development & Alumni Relations Office Liaisons & Contact Information (2015-16)**

Departments

<b>Name</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
Applied Mathematics & Statistics	Jessica Schmidt-Bonifant
Biomedical Engineering	Megan Howie
Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering	Kim Willis
Civil Engineering	Jessica Sardella
Computer Science	Kim Willis
Electrical and Computer Engineering	Jessica Schmidt-Bonifant
Geography and Environmental Engineering	Kim Willis
Materials Science and Engineering	Jessica Schmidt-Bonifant
Mechanical Engineering	Jessica Sardella

Centers & Institutes

<b>Name</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
Center for Language and Speech Processing (CLSP)	Tim Richardson
Center for Leadership Education (CLE)	Tim Richardson
Information Security Institute (JHUISI)	Tim Richardson
Center for Bioengineering Innovation & Design (CBID)	Megan Howie
Institute for NanoBioTechnology (INBT)	Tim Richardson
Institute for Computational Medicine (ICM)	Tim Richardson
Laboratory for Computational Sensing and Robotics (LCSR)	Tim Richardson
Stem and Engineering Innovation (CEO)	Tim Richardson
Hopkins Extreme Materials Institute (HEMI)	Tim Richardson
Center for Imaging Science (CIS)	Tim Richardson

**Staff Contact Information**

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**Megan Howie**, Associate Dean, [mhowie@jhu.edu](mailto:mhowie@jhu.edu), 410-516-8606

**Allison Baker**, Director of Development, [abaker@jhu.edu](mailto:abaker@jhu.edu), 410-516-6721

**Jessica Schmidt-Bonifant**, Senior Associate Director of Development, [jbonifant@jhu.edu](mailto:jbonifant@jhu.edu), 410-516-6040

**Kim Willis**, Senior Associate Director of Development, [kwillis@jhu.edu](mailto:kwillis@jhu.edu), 410-516-6568

**Jessica Sardella**, Associate Director of Development, [sardella@jhu.edu](mailto:sardella@jhu.edu), 410-516-5307

## **ATTACHEMENT 1**

### **EXAMPLE MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Johns Hopkins University Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering External Advisory Committee is to:

1. Support the Department Chair executing his/her strategy for improving both the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering
2. Provide advice and support for improving the educational effectiveness of the Department
3. Improve the educational experience and attractiveness of the Department for both undergraduate and graduate students

The term “support” above encompasses committee members taking tangible steps to assist the Department by:

- 1) applying collective experience and expertise of External Advisory Committee members;
- 2) creating internships and permanent employment opportunities;
- 3) furthering connections with industry;
- 4) promoting collaborative research agreements;
- 5) offering financial support;

and taking upon other responsibilities as the Department Chair and External Advisory Committee deem necessary.

### **VISION STATEMENT**

Our vision is to enhance the quality and reputation of Johns Hopkins’ Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering so that it will become a premier educational and research Department, globally respected for its teaching excellence and highly impactful research.

### **VALUE STATEMENT**

The External Advisory Committee of the Johns Hopkins University Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering believes that it can use its resources to improve the stature and effectiveness of the Department by drawing on its collective experience as industrial and academic leaders and providing advice that reflects multiple external views to the University.

### **GOALS**

1. Improve the undergraduate and graduate rankings of the Department in national and global rating systems (including U.S. News and World Report).
  - a. Medium-term Target (5 years): top 15.
2. Longer-term Target (10 years): top 10.
3. Support efforts to attract world class chemical and biomolecular engineering teaching and research talent to the Department.
4. Targets: 1 National Academy of Engineers and 1 Bloomberg Professorship.
5. Bring the faculty to student ratio into parity with the most highly ranked departments.
6. Target: 12 to 1 (which is the current ratio in ME at JHU).

**ATTACHMENT 2**

SAMPLE INVITATION LETTER FROM THE DEAN

DATE

Mr. Joseph A. Smith  
1234 Any Street  
Any Town, ST 12345

Dear Mr. Smith:

On behalf of the Whiting School of Engineering and <DEPARTMENT CHAIR>, name, I would like to formally invite you to join the ENTER DEPARTMENT Advisory Committee.

Departmental advisory committees are instrumental in helping to guide the Whiting School in our educational efforts, as well as in our collaborative strategies with peer institutions and industry. Committees offer counsel and support in curriculum planning, enabling us to provide an engineering education that will meet the challenges of industry, government, and commerce. In addition, the valuable and diverse perspective committee members provide to our department chairs encourages continued growth and success for the school.

I hope that you will accept our invitation to serve a three-year term as a member of the <DEPARTMENT> Advisory Committee. We would be thrilled to have you as a partner in furthering excellence at Johns Hopkins and the Whiting School. The committee's next meeting will be held <DATE>.

Sincerely,

T.E. Schlesinger

**ATTACHMENT 3**

END OF TERM LETTER FROM THE DEAN

Date

Address 1

Address 2

City, State Zip

Dear FName:

Thank you for being a member of <Name of Department Committee> over the past # years. The committee and department would not be as accomplished without your valuable service and support. I greatly appreciate your volunteer time that has made this possible.

Your term on the committee has concluded. I hope that you have found your experience personally rewarding and will continue to be actively involved in the Whiting School and Johns Hopkins community. Please accept the enclosed certificate as a small token of our appreciation for your contributions to the <Name of the Department Committee> and the Johns Hopkins University.

Again, thank you for your dedication and your continued commitment to Johns Hopkins Engineering.

Sincerely,

T.E. Schlesinger  
Benjamin T. Rome Dean

**ATTACHMENT 4**

MEMBERSHIP LIST TEMPLATE

<b>Name, Title &amp; Graduation Year (if applicable)</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Email &amp; Phone/Fax</b>
Brandon Smith, PhD ( <b>Chair</b> ) Corporate Vice-President <i>'71 BS, '72 MS, '74 PhD Electrical Engineering</i>	Engineering, Inc. 23367 Innovation Road Baltimore, MD 21218	<a href="mailto:brandon@engineering.com">brandon@engineering.com</a> Phone: (301) 555-1660 Fax: (301) 555-1795

**ATTACHMENT 5**

MEMBERSHIP TERM TRACKING

<b>Name</b>	<b>Grad Year(s)</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>First Year</b>	<b>End Date</b>
Smith, Brandon	'71, '72, '74	MD	Engineering Inc.	President	1 <sup>st</sup>	2013	2016

**ATTACHMENT 6**

**MEETING AGENDA**

**Agenda <DEPARTMENT> Advisory Committee Meeting  
DATE, Start Time – End Time  
Location**

**12:00pm – 1:00pm: Lunch**

**1:00pm – 5:00pm: Advisory Committee Meeting**

**AGENDA**

- 1. Visit by Dean Schlesinger**
- 2. Review of agenda (Committee Chair)**
- 3. Approval of report of previous meeting (Committee Chair)**
- 4. Chairman's Remarks (Committee Chair)**
- 5. Update from the Department (Department Chair)**
- 6. Advisory Committee Initiatives**
  - 6.1 Updates*
    - a. Making JHU/CE interns more attractive to a broader set of firms (Sue)*
    - b. Alumni Network & Engagement (Carl)*
    - c. Multi-institution Collaboration (Jerry)*
    - d. Turning the Bell Vision into a Bell Plan (Mehdi)*
    - e. Historic Preservation at JHU (Ed)*
    - f. Industry Collaboration & Support (Buddy)*
  - 6.2 Assessment*
    - a. Which initiatives should be continued and their objectives for coming year?*
    - b. Are there areas where new initiatives would be useful/required?*
- 7. Advisory Committee Structure**
  - 7.1 Membership*
    - a. Committee size*
    - b. Recruitment of new members*
    - c. Member terms*
  - 7.2 Chairmanship*
- 8. Adjournment**

**5:00: Volunteer Dinner**

**ATTACHMENT 7**

MINUTES

# Department Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

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**Location:** [Location]

**Date:** [Date]

**Time:** [Time]

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## **Attendance**

[List attendees]

## **Agenda Items**

1. Agenda Item / Presenter Name / Due Date
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

## **Action Items**

1. Item Description / Responsible / Due Date
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

## **Other Notes**

Other important details discussed during the meeting can be entered here.