



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA

University Council

August 14, 2026

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2026-2027

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Undergraduate Student Representative – TBD

Graduate Student Representative – TBD

Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal from the College of Engineering to reorganize the School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering will be an agenda item for the August 21, 2026, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

Rodney Mauricio, Chair

cc: Interim Provost Ron Walcott

Dr. Marisa Anne Pagnattaro

PROPOSAL TO REORGANIZE THE SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL, CIVIL, AGRICULTURAL, AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Contents

Abstract

- I. Background
- II. Originator
- III. Faculty Vote
- IV. Goals & Objectives
- V. Rationale for Separate Schools of Civil & Environmental and Mechanical & Agricultural Engineering
- VI. Organization and Administration
- VII. Impact on Faculty, Staff, Students, and Programs
- VIII. Resource Implications
- IX. List of Faculty within Units
- X. Designation of related faculty and units
- XI. Timeline for Approval and Implementation of the Change

Appendices

- A. Civil and Environmental Engineering Faculty
- B. Mechanical and Agricultural Engineering Faculty

Abstract

This proposal is to reorganize the School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering (ECAM) in the University of Georgia's College of Engineering and create Schools of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE) and Mechanical and Agricultural Engineering (MAE). The proposal shall include the following:

- a. Originator of the proposal and name of academic unit.
- b. A diagram of the organizational structure before and after the proposed change.
- c. Goals/objectives the change is expected to accomplish.
- d. Rationale for change. This shall include an analysis of the impact of the proposed change on the academic mission of the university. Where appropriate, reference shall be made to the strategic plan of the university, strategic plan of the unit to be changed, strategic plan of any unit of which the affected unit is a subunit, and any relevant 5-year plans.
- e. Impact on faculty, staff, students, and programs.
- f. List of faculty within the unit.
- g. Designation of related faculty and units that shall be informed of the proposal and given an opportunity for response.
- h. Timeline for approval and implementation of the change. This timeline shall include the vote of the faculty in the unit and allow time for input from related departments allowing ample time for their consideration while, at the same time, ensuring the progress of the proposal.
- i. Implementation plan.
- j. Resource implications (faculty lines, staff positions, space, equipment, moving expenses, remodeling expenses, etc.) available upon request.

The establishment of both schools will create new opportunities that benefit students and enhance research activity at the University of Georgia.

I. Background

College of Engineering

Founded in 1920, the College of Engineering builds upon a long history of engineering programs at UGA, which awarded its first engineering degrees in 1868. During the Depression, all engineering programs except agricultural engineering were moved to the Georgia Institute of Technology. Expanding beyond agricultural engineering, the biological engineering program was initiated in 1992 and the Institute of the Faculty of Engineering in 2001. The College of Engineering currently consists of four schools: the School of Chemical, Materials, and Biomedical Engineering; the School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical

Engineering; the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering; and the School of Computing (jointly with the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences). The College of Engineering currently has 73 full-time tenure-track engineering faculty, 44 full-time non-tenure-track faculty, and over 3,400 students — 3,092 undergraduate students and 349 graduate students. The College offers eight undergraduate degree programs, nine master's degree programs, and seven doctoral programs.

School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering

Founded in 2016, the School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering is the largest of the schools in the College of Engineering. ECAM currently has 40 full-time tenure-track faculty (50% of college), 27 full-time non-tenure-track faculty (64%), and over 2,200 engineering students (67%) - 2,072 undergraduate students and 180 graduate students. In addition, ECAM is larger than many established schools at UGA, including the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, and the Odum School of Ecology. ECAM administers four undergraduate degree programs whereas other schools in the College of Engineering administer two.

II. Originator and Name of Academic Unit

C. Brock Woodson, Professor, Deputy Chair
School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering

III. Faculty Vote

Faculty in the School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering voted to approve (32 Yes 0 No) the proposed reorganization on February 13, 2026.

IV. Goals and Objectives

The primary goal for the proposed reorganization is to provide improved instructional, research, and student support for the faculty, staff, and students in the current School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering. To do so, this proposal will address three objectives:

1. Create two schools that individually manage fewer degree programs, enabling more effective curricular management, strengthening student engagement and identity through more focused academic and co-curricular experiences, and enhancing overall student success by allowing leadership and administration to be more responsive to the needs of students and faculty.
2. Strengthen the College of Engineering's research identity and competitiveness by having an administrative structure similar to peer and aspirational engineering programs which will make it easier to elevate the scholarly strengths of the disciplines, enabling faculty to more easily showcase their expertise and advance impactful research. A more defined research profile will enhance the university's reputation and thereby attract top faculty and graduate students and position the university more competitively.
3. Improve operational effectiveness by balancing resources and administrative responsibilities more in alignment with other units across the College of Engineering and the University.

V. Rationale for Separate Schools of Civil & Environmental and Mechanical and Agricultural Engineering

By establishing two schools from the current School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering, the University will create new opportunities for excellence in instruction and research while strengthening the reputation of its engineering programs and elevating the University's overall academic profile. The proposed new schools follow similar structures as existing programs at peer and aspirational universities with Civil and Environmental Engineering and Mechanical Engineering. In a recent faculty meeting (held on January 9, 2026) to discuss the reorganization with the Dean of Engineering, faculty in ECAM were, in a straw poll, unanimously supportive of the reorganization.

Size Alignment

Currently, the School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering is the largest single academic unit on campus in terms of students (2,195) and one of the top three in terms of faculty (67 full-time faculty with only Warnell and Social Work having more). Reorganizing the School of ECAM into two schools will bring each within the typical range of student enrollment and faculty size across the University (Table 1).

Table 1. Department Size Across University

Unit (Dept or School)	Total Faculty	Tenure- Track Faculty	Total Students	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students
University Avg (Std)	36 (31)	21 (11)	485 (261)	329 (273)	129 (123)
ECAM	67	40	2,252	2,072	180
CMBE	21	16	556	448	108
ECE	26	20	672	572	100
Computing (Joint)	46	30	1,838	1,577	261
<i>CEE (Proposed)</i>	32	18	744	637	107
<i>MAE (Proposed)</i>	35	22	1,508	1,435	73

Note: please see Appendices A and B for the list of faculty members for the proposed two schools (CEE and MAE), respectively.

Reputational Benefits

Most peer and aspirational institutions have separate schools or departments of civil/environmental and mechanical/agricultural engineering, each with specific strengths that resonate with prospective students and industry partners. Establishing more focused schools at UGA will enable the University to develop a recognized identity within these fields and attract students whose interests better align with our areas of expertise. While many of these strengths already exist, they are sometimes obscured within the broader, larger school structure. Creating two distinct schools will provide the opportunity to highlight these programs and increase UGA's overall reputation in engineering. Further, clear and focused identities for each school will create new opportunities for development and fundraising.

Instructional Benefits

Separate schools in Civil & Environmental Engineering and Mechanical and Agricultural Engineering will allow for more effective delivery of instruction to engineering students. Currently, ECAM administers four undergraduate degree programs while other schools in the College of Engineering administer two. A total of 2,072 undergraduate students are enrolled in these majors, with an additional 180 graduate students across four M.S. programs and four Ph.D. programs also offered by ECAM. Over the past five years, ECAM's undergraduate student population has increased by over 30% and the graduate student population by over 80%. Based on early admission data for fall 2026, these growth rates are expected to continue. Separate schools will allow for more focused student experiences, allow leadership to be more responsive to student needs, and better management of growth.

Research Synergies

ECAM is the highest grant generating school in the College of Engineering with over \$18M in research expenditures in 2025 out of approximately \$28M for the College of Engineering including the new School of Computing. In 2025, the new schools would have generated approximately \$10M (CEE) and approximately \$8M (MAE) in research expenditures and remain the two most productive schools in the College. Research within the new schools will become more focused and allow for clearer articulation of each school's strengths, creating more opportunities to highlight faculty achievements and ongoing research. The structure will allow school chairs and the dean to more effectively communicate each school's vision as well as major research and center activities when engaging with potential donors and industry partners. The organizational improvements will enhance interdisciplinary opportunities by giving the school chairs and other leadership capacity to work closely with faculty to develop emerging research directions ultimately expanding the research enterprise within each school. Current collaboration within the school is not likely to be affected.

Trends and Comparisons

Currently, the University of Georgia is one of the only institutions in the United States that combines Civil, Environmental, Mechanical, and Agricultural Engineering within a single school or department. This unique structure has created challenges in establishing a clear identity for these programs across the state and nation and has complicated reporting for U.S. News & World Report, which evaluates programs based on nationally recognized disciplinary categories. The proposed re-organization will bring UGA's programs into alignment with these national categories and with the structure used by peer institutions, making it easier to report accurate data and participate fully in national rankings. By allowing each school to focus more clearly on the needs and opportunities within its respective fields, the reorganization will enhance program visibility, improve competitiveness in national rankings, and help attract top students.

VI. Organization and Administration

Structure and Leadership

The new schools would follow the same structure and leadership as the current School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering, as well as the other schools in the College of Engineering. Each school would be led by a school chair and two associate chairs, one for each discipline program.

Transition Period

Faculty will be assigned to each school based on disciplinary expertise, current appointment, and teaching obligations. Faculty will have the opportunity to provide input into their school assignment and may change current degree program affiliation. A proposed faculty assignment for each new school is provided in Appendices A and B. New school chairs will be appointed upon the founding of the new schools (Spring 2027). Until these positions are filled, an interim chair for each school will be appointed by the Dean in consultation with the faculty.

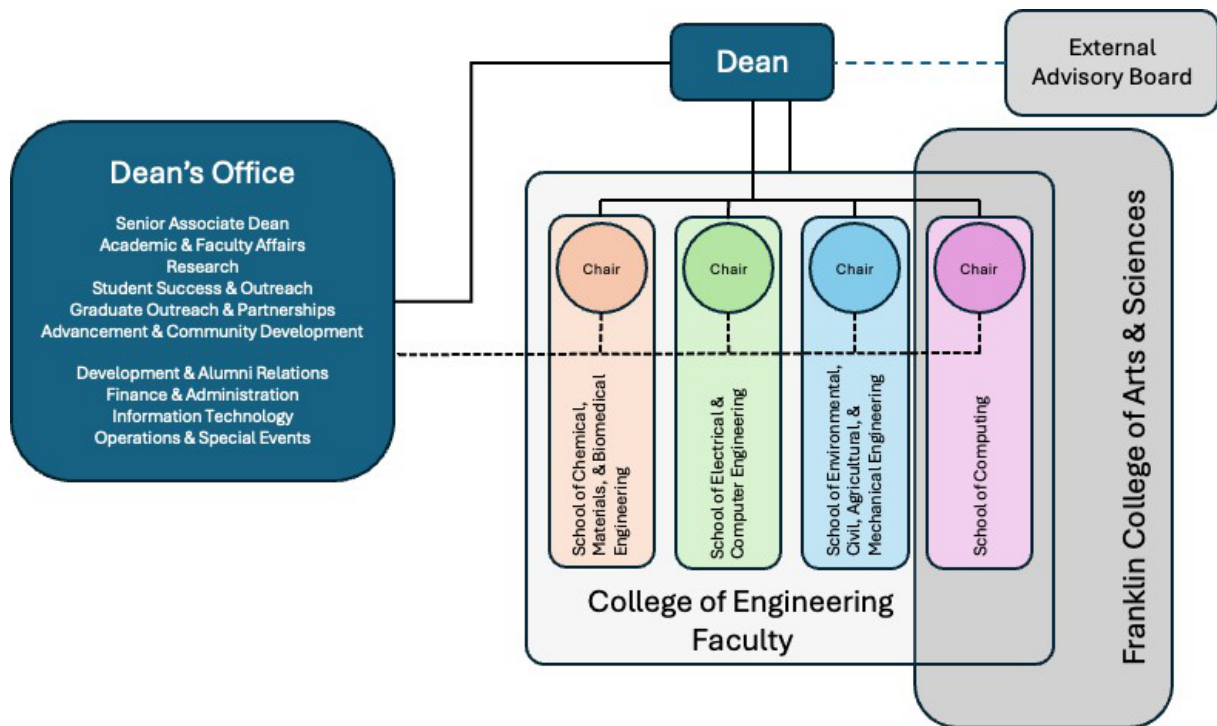


Figure 1. Current Organizational Structure

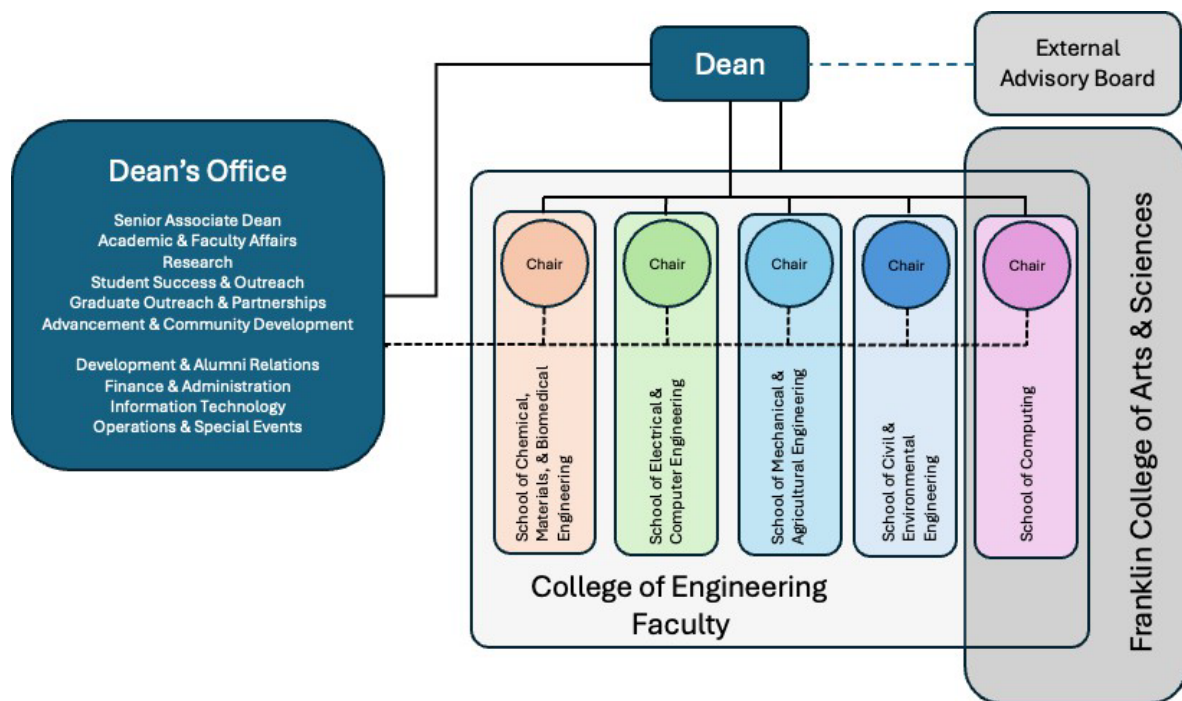


Figure 2. Proposed Organizational Structure

Advisory Boards

The ECAM Advisory Board will be reorganized into discipline-specific groups, with additional seats created to maintain the board's overall size. This structure would allow each advisory board to focus more directly on the unique needs, priorities, and strategic direction of its respective discipline.

VII. Impact on Faculty, Staff, Students, and Programs

a. Impact on Faculty

Current faculty within ECAM and their proposed new designations are provided in Appendices A and B.

Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure

Faculty in the new schools will be governed by the same policies and by-laws set by the University and the College of Engineering. Both schools will function as a Promotion and Tenure Unit (PTU), and the School Chair will serve as the PTU head. Each school will initially adopt the current ECAM PTU guidelines, and these will be revised accordingly within the first year after establishment of the new schools to provide a unified set of teaching, scholarship, and service expectations for each unit. All faculty will follow the same set of established guidelines and expectations. These expectations will form the basis for annual faculty evaluations and determine merit-based pay raises when available.

Instruction

Teaching effort (EFT) in each new school will follow the current policies of the University and the College of Engineering. For 9-month faculty, a 100% teaching appointment corresponds to 24 credit hours per academic year (four 3-credit hour courses per semester). Most tenure-track faculty hold a 50% EFT resulting in a standard load of two 3-credit hour courses per semester. Annual evaluations may reduce a tenure-track faculty member's teaching load by 3 credit hours, allowing those with a 50% EFT to teach three 3-credit hour courses across the academic year instead of four.

Faculty Governance

The faculty of each school will be eligible to participate and contribute to faculty governance in their respective school and College of Engineering, including promotion and tenure decisions, faculty affairs, curricular affairs, and other academic functions that require faculty vote.

b. Impact on Staff

Staff positions will be reassigned between the new schools based on current roles and assignments. ECAM has 1.5 administrative support positions; this will be increased to two, with one full-time position allocated to each new school. This structure will allow staff to provide more focused and

direct support to faculty and students, improving responsiveness and overall service.

c. Impact on Students

Student access to resources, staff, and administration will improve under the new structure. By aligning leadership and staff more closely with each discipline, students will receive more direct, tailored assistance related to their specific major. This model also strengthens the connection between disciplinary leadership and students, fostering clearer communication and better overall support for students' academic and professional development.

d. Impact on Programs

No changes to degree programs are being requested based on the proposed organizational changes in the college.

Academic programs within the new schools will remain the same with the degrees separated as outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Degree and Certificate Programs administered by new schools.

School of Civil and Environmental Engineering	School of Mechanical and Agricultural Engineering
B.S. Civil Engineering	B.S. Agricultural Engineering
B.S. Environmental Engineering	B.S. Mechanical Engineering
M.S. Civil & Environmental Engineering (campus)	M.S. Agricultural Engineering
M.S. Civil Engineering (online)	M.S. Mechanical Engineering (proposed)
	M.S. Engineering (Mechanical Emphasis)
Double Dawgs BSCE + MS: Civil & Environmental Double Dawgs BSEnvE + MS: Civil & Environmental	Double Dawgs BSME + MS: Mechanical Double Dawgs BSAE + MS: Agricultural
Ph.D. Engineering (emphasis areas) - Environment & Water - Resilient Infrastructure Systems	Ph.D. Engineering (emphasis areas) - Energy Systems - Fluid & Thermal Systems - Mechanics & Materials
Ph.D. Civil & Environmental Engineering	Ph.D. Mechanical Engineering
	Ph.D. Biological and Agricultural Engineering
Certificate in Coastal & Oceanographic Engineering (UG)	Certificate in Aerospace Engineering (UG)
Certificate in Coastal & Oceanographic Engineering (G)	Certificate in Atmospheric Sciences (G)
Natural Infrastructure Certificate (G)	

Administration of general engineering degrees will be handled by emphasis area as is currently done in the College of Engineering. Plans for any new degrees will be developed following school reorganization as needed. There will be no changes to existing programs of study during the reorganization of ECAM into two separate schools.

Course Prefixes

Course prefixes within the current ECAM comprise agricultural (AENG), civil (CVLE), environmental (ENVE), and mechanical engineering (MCHE) as well as general engineering (ENGR) courses since ECAM is the largest school in the College.

Table 3. Proposed course prefix assignments for new schools.

School of Civil & Environmental Engineering	School of Mechanical & Agricultural Engineering
CVLE	AENG
ENVE	MCHE
	ENGR

Current ENGR prefix courses will be administered by the proposed School of Mechanical and Agricultural Engineering since this school will be the largest of the 5 schools in the College. These courses are taken by students across all engineering degree programs and will be managed in coordination with other schools following current College of Engineering policy.

The new schools will maintain the current student-advising structure used within the College of Engineering and the School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering. Academic advising for all undergraduate students is centrally managed through the College of Engineering's Office of Student Success. In addition to course planning and degree progression support, this office provides students with assistance related to tutoring resources, experiential learning and career readiness programing, and engagement opportunities.

VIII. Resource Implications (faculty lines, staff positions, space, equipment, moving expenses)

The proposed organizational changes will require a limited amount of additional resources. The primary adjustments include an increase from 1.5 to 2 administrative support positions (one per school) and the addition of one unit head position. Although not guaranteed, the financial impact associated with the additional unit head may be negligible if the role is filled internally and could potentially result in overall cost neutrality or even savings if both unit head positions are filled internally. All necessary resources will be accounted for in the College of Engineering's budget projections.

Funding

The new schools will be established with funds available to the existing School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering (ECAM) as currently placed within the College of Engineering. FY28 school funding, which includes operating and instructional funds, will be provided by the College of Engineering model allocation to ECAM.

IX. List of Faculty within Units

See Appendices A and B.

X. Designation of related faculty and units

List of faculty and units to be informed of the proposal and given opportunity to respond. See Appendix C.

Table 4. Faculty and units to be informed.

Unit	Representative	Title	Rationale
Department of Chemistry	Aaron Aponick	Department Head	Joint Faculty
Department of Workforce Education and Instructional Technology	Rob Branch	Department Head	Joint Faculty
Department of Mathematics	Michael Usher	Department Head	Joint Faculty
Department of Crop and Soil Sciences	Jodi Johnson-Maynard	Department Head	Joint Faculty
Department of Geography	Deepak Mishra	Department Head	Joint Faculty

XI. Timeline for Approval and Implementation of the Change

Reorganization of the existing School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering (ECAM) into two schools, Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE), and Mechanical and Agricultural Engineering (MAE) will begin in the year immediately after approval by University Council and the President.

During this first year, all support staff will be assigned to one of the new schools depending on their current effort allocation and job responsibilities. Currently, ECAM has 1.5 administrative support positions. This will be increased to two with one allocated to each new school. In addition, budget allocations to the new school will be developed in coordination with the Dean's office.

Table 5. Timeline for Approval and Implementation Change

1 January 2026	Dean appoints Deputy Chair for Strategic Development to develop proposal
26 January 2026	Proposal Presented to ECAM Faculty
13 February 2026	ECAM Faculty Vote on Proposal
5 February 2026	Proposal submitted to Deans Office for Approval
11 March 2026	Informational Materials submitted to Provost
18 March 2026	Provost's Response Received
19 March 2026	Assuming Provost approval, proposal submitted to University Curriculum Committee and Graduate School
April 2026	Proposal considered by Graduate School
May 2026	Prepare for Chair Searches targeting Spring 2027 start
June 2026	Detailed Reorganization Plan Complete and Approved by Dean
August 2026	Proposal considered by University Curriculum Committee
August 2026	Assuming UCC approval, proposal considered by UC Executive Committee
September 2026	Assuming EC approval, proposal considered by UC
October 2026	Assuming UC approval, proposal submitted to President for approval
4 January 2027	Organizational Changes take effect, Chairs appointed into new roles

APPENDIX A

Proposed Civil and Environmental Engineering Faculty (including Institute for Resilient Infrastructure Systems)

32 total (18 tenure-track)

Lynn Abdouni	Asst Res Scientist	Sung-Hee Kim	Professor
Robert Awuah-Baffour	Clinical Professor	Ke Li	Associate Professor
Virginia Bacon-Talati	Acad Professional	Qianwen Li	Assistant Professor
Matthew Bilskie	Associate Professor	Edwin Lim	Lecturer
Brian Bledsoe	Professor	Taylor Maddalene-Myers	Acad Professional
Todd Bridges	Clinical Professor	Maximillian Ororbia	Assistant Professor
Benjamin Carswell	Acad Professional	Whitney Pagan	Assistant Professor
Matt Chambers	Asst Res Scientist	Felix Santiago-Collazo	Assistant Professor
Mi Guem Chorzepa	Professor	Siddarth Savadatti	Principal Lecturer
Daniel Coleman	Asst Res Scientist	Hillary Tanner	Principal Lecturer
Stephan Durham	Professor	Gokul Dev Vasudevan	Lecturer
Christina Fuller	Associate Professor	Frank Wagner	Public Service Asst
Aditya Gupta	Asst Res Scientist	Linbing Wang	Professor
Alysha Helmrich	Assistant Professor	C. Brock Woodson	Professor
Jenna Jambeck	Professor	Jidong Yang	Associate Professor
Caner Kazanci	Associate Professor	Handong Yao	Assistant Professor

APPENDIX B

Proposed Mechanical and Agricultural Engineering Faculty

35 total (22 tenure-track)

Eliza Banu	Senior Lecturer	Michael Pagan	Asst Res Scientist
Angela Birkes	Clin Assoc Professor	Ramana Pidaparti	Professor
Jamie Camellio	Professor	Jorge Rodriguez	Clin Asst Professor
Yanyu Chen	Associate Professor	Brandon Rotavera	Associate Professor
Keshav Das	Professor	Rawad Saleh	Associate Professor
R. Benjamin Davis	Associate Professor	Yunli Shao	Assistant Professor
Benjamin Fahrman	Senior Lecturer	Kenan Song	Associate Professor
Rachel Figard	Assistant Professor	David Stooksbury	Associate Professor
Tim Foutz	Professor	Hongyue Sun	Associate Professor
Eric Freeman	Associate Professor	Benjamin Thomas	Senior Lecturer
David Gattie	Associate Professor	Benjamin Wagner	Principal Lecturer
Dan Geller	Sen Pub Ser Associate	Xianqiao Wang	Professor
Wayne Johnson	Senior Lecturer	Timothy Whitmoyer	Lecturer
Duckbong Kim	Associate Professor	Adam Wineland	Lecturer
Beiwen Li	Associate Professor	George Vellidis	Professor
Lingling Liu	Assistant Professor	Michael Yoder	Principal Lecturer
Barbara McCord	Senior Lecturer	Xin Zhang	Assistant Professor
Beshoy Morkos	Professor		

Documentation of Approval and Notification

Proposal: Proposal to reorganize the School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering

College: College of Engineering

Department: School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering

Proposed Effective Term: Spring 2027

School/College:

- Interim Chair of the School of Environmental, Civil, Agricultural, and Mechanical Engineering, Dr. R. Benjamin Davis, 2/17/2026
- College of Engineering Dean, Dr. Alessandro Orso, 3/11/2026
- Graduate School Associate Dean, Dr. Anne Shaffer, 4/9/2026