3.2 Leadership Team

The following document outlines the responsibilities for the School of Design and Construction (SDC) Leadership Team.

History and Composition
The Leadership Team (LT) of the School of Design and Construction (SDC) was formed in 2012 to facilitate the management of a new school with four accredited programs, two of which had previously been stand-alone departments with department chairs. Because the school is structured to mirror the integrated, collaborative workplace of contemporary design and construction, there are integrated requirements and initiatives that encompass all of the school's programs—or multiple programs. Achieving synergy among and within programs requires shared governance and, at times, ongoing conversations.

Initially comprised of the director, assistant director, and the program coordinators (heads) of the four disciplines in the school, by 2014 the LT included the school's administrative manager and academic program manager. The assistant director position was eliminated. The composition of the LT is determined by the selection, appointment, or hiring process for the director, program heads, graduate program head(s), administrative manager, and academic program manager.

Roles, Responsibilities, and Oversight
The LT is encouraged to act in a collaborative manner, and to do its best always to favor the best interest(s) of the school. Responsibilities are manifold. They include, but are not limited to, the following:

* Fall and spring course scheduling
* Summer course selection
* TA process and selection
* Recruitment and retention
* Commencement planning
* Award selection
* SDC advisory board meeting planning and coordination
* Education abroad/study tour selection and review
* Leadership transitions
* SDC-wide fundraising
* Integrated event planning (symposia, etc.)
* Major facility improvements or maintenance decisions
* Copyright license mediation (initial review)
* Safety
* Student conduct
* Policy creation and review

Ad-hoc Committee Responsibilities
If school committees do not already exist for the determination of various needs and responsibilities, the director may ask the LT to serve as an *ad hoc* committee during the course of

the academic year (e.g. SDC course committee, search committee for staff or administration). Should the need be ongoing, the director should consider the formation of a new faculty-staff committee for that purpose. Furthermore, the director may ask the LT to serve as an advisory or oversight committee to other existing school committees, such as the scholarship committee or the computer/digital/software committee. In assigning *ad hoc* committee work, the director must be cognizant of individual contracts, which may be ten months/year as opposed to twelve months/year.

The LT should work to respect the recommendations of the various faculty-staff committees in the SDC (on which members of the LT may serve). Only when circumstances are financially difficult, logistically challenging, or, in the opinion of the LT, seeming to lack in larger school-wide vision, should the LT categorically deny the decision of a faculty-staff committee. However, it may at times become necessary to make final decisions, provide oversight, and/or offer additional recommendations to ensure equality or to forecast situations that faculty/staff committees may have otherwise been unaware. In making selections of school committees, the director should be clear to those committees what is expected and whether (and when) committee recommendations should be brought to the LT.

Policy Creation and Review
The LT is often faced with situations that necessitate new or adjusted policies that were either not forecasted at the time of original creation, or because circumstances have arisen that have made an existing policy untenable or no longer relevant. The LT should exercise its best judgment in bringing small policy adjustments before the entire faculty and staff for approval and discussion, although the director should alert the faculty and staff of changes at faculty-staff meetings and/or through other communication (e.g. email, website updates). Brand new policies should be brought before the faculty and staff and given a maximum two-week window for comments, which should be taken under advisement by the LT. Following the period of review, the new (or adjusted) policy may be inserted into the overall SDC Policies and Procedures Manual, or may replace an existing policy.

Decisions and Voting
As an academic unit, decision making authority as it pertains to school issues lies with the director and program heads. SDC staff members (the academic program manager and administrative manager) provide support and are highly encouraged to participate in the daily operations of the LT and decision-making process, but do not have an official "vote" for those issues brought to a "ballot."

The LT is encouraged to take the necessary time to reach consensus on any single issue, and should continue a discussion or decision over email or special meetings if such consensus is not reached during the regular meeting time. However, it is understood that not all issues will reach consensus, and such divergence of opinion may be healthy to continue to improve the school's leadership structure and to re-evaluate initiatives or structure. Timing also may necessitate that a decision must be made.

In the event that a decision does not reach consensus, the director may choose to invoke "Robert's Rules of Order" and move the decision to a non-binding "vote" in whichever way s/he chooses (verbal, email, sealed ballots, online poll, etc.). Any and all eligible LT members may choose to "abstain" from initial voting, but the director must ultimately make a decision within a prescribed period of time once the voting process is initiated.

The director should cast her/his vote within the same time frame as the program heads, and is under no obligation to make a decision that favors the majority vote. The director may choose to bring a "vote" back to the LT table for further discussion, or bring the issue to the entire faculty and staff, but should not allow this process to linger for longer than one week prior to issuing a final decision. The director has the ultimate authority to make decisions on any and all matters regarding the SDC, but is encouraged to consider seriously any final decision that may run counter to the majority LT vote. Given the decision making process and recommendations herein, the LT is encouraged to support the final decision as a necessary action in order to move forward.

Meeting Process and Structure
The LT meets weekly, in person, during the academic year, at a day/time that is mutually convenient for all members and does not conflict with teaching responsibilities (e.g. scheduled class time). The LT should, with the assistance of the academic program manager, begin planning for LT meeting times by November for the spring semester, and by May for the fall semester.

LT members are encouraged to prioritize LT meetings above all other teaching, research, and service duties to the programs, school, colleges, and university—unless conflicts are inevitable. If LT members must miss a meeting, absences should be communicated to the director (or his/her designees) as early as possible. The director may choose to cancel or reschedule a meeting at any time, but is encouraged to do so if two or more members of the LT are unavailable. If a particular meeting is absolutely essential, the director may hold it anyway and/or request substitutes for absent members.

At any time, the director may invite "outside" individual(s) to attend the meetings and may reserve a portion of the agenda for them. Outside individuals could include, but are not limited to, SDC faculty or staff, SDC committee chairs, students, administrators, development officers, and/or chairs or directors of other units on campus. LT meetings are public, and the director is encouraged, if possible, to allow time for "public" comment should non-regular members be present at any single meeting. Those comments may be recorded in the minutes.

The director is expected to create and distribute an agenda to the LT prior to the meeting, ideally by the previous day. LT members are encouraged to contribute ideas for possible agenda items in advance of the distribution of the agenda. Agenda items should reflect school-wide issues and endeavors, rather than those that affect single programs or staff areas. The director should think carefully through the agenda to ensure that this is so; although discussion about individual programs or units is inevitable, during meetings, all members should be cognizant of the importance of discussing issues applicable to all programs.

Minutes
A designated member of the SDC staff or faculty will be asked to record minutes at each meeting (depending upon resources, this may be an existing LT member). Those minutes should be sufficiently detailed to capture the major points of discussion, but should not necessarily record every opinion. Minute-takers must review and edit their notes following the meeting and provide them to the director in a consistent format that has been mutually agreed upon. The director must review those notes and send them back to the LT for approval and/or changes. The meeting minutes must be posted to the SDC website prior to the next LT meeting.

Membership Transition

Should an LT member require replacement for any reason (resignation, sabbatical, leave without pay, retirement, medical leave, etc.), the impending leave should be communicated as soon as possible and the director should work with program head(s) to identify a suitable replacement. If possible, a director-elect, program head-elect, or interim replacement member (hereafter: incoming member) should begin a transition period at least one (1) month prior to beginning the new position. The structure of this transition may vary, but it is recommended that the incoming member attend LT meetings, be included in LT correspondence, and engage regularly with the person whose position s/he will be assuming. Opinions and recommendations of the incoming "elect" member should be welcomed, but should not be officially counted if any issue moves to a vote.