DATE: September 1, 2015

TO: Atul Kelkar, committee chair
    John Wagner
    Robert Brown
    Ashton Archer
    Barbara Lograsso
    Carolyn Darling
    Soumik Sarkar

FROM: Caroline Hayes, Chair

RE: Charge: 5-year Strategic Plan

At the 2014 Mechanical Engineering Retreat, faculty expressed a desire to participate in additional strategic planning. While we have an excellent long-term strategic plan in place that runs through the year 2025: “Vision 2025” http://www.me.iastate.edu/the-department/strategic-plan/, conditions are very different now than in 2008 when “Vision 2025” was created. It is appropriate to provide course corrections and medium-term guidance to channel our projected growth most productively. Towards this end, I am charging this committee to create an advisory document outlining a 5-year plan, to guide the department though the academic year starting in 2022.

Objectives. The 5-year strategic plan must meet many objectives. It must:

1. Provide flexible directions and goals, without being overly prescriptive.
2. Provide alignment with the organization with respect to mission, vision and objectives of each level: department, college, university and state levels. (Cindy Bartleson will provide the group with materials). We can achieve the most when all levels pull together towards mutually compatible ends.
3. Respond to current and anticipated conditions over the next 5 years, to the extent that they are known. This is what distinguishes the 5-year strategic plan from Vision 2025 (a long-range strategic plan covering 17 years); the 5-year strategic plan will interpret the long-range goals in a more immediate context.

We are currently experiencing the most dramatic and prolonged expansion in the history of our department. This phase had not yet begun when “Vision 2025” was conceived. While our high-level goals have not changed, the challenges created by rapid expansion have changed the context in which we address them, and our foci.

Deliverables:
- A two page summary report outlining a 5-year vision for the department. The report will be an advisory document to the chair.
- Provide a recommendation: should we update our pillars of excellence, and if so, how?
- Provide a list of development priorities to engage potential donors.

Timeline: Please complete the report by Friday, November 20th. I will meet with the committee during the process, and shortly afterwards to discuss it.

You have my heartfelt thanks for your efforts to insure the future excellence of the department. Your efforts will benefit many people for years to come.