Engineering Design Optimization Group Lab
Mentor-Mentee Contract
Updated 11/6/19

Section I - What you can expect from Dr. Frecker as your advisor and mentor.

I, Dr. Frecker, will work diligently for the success of my students and our lab group. Helping my students succeed is a major reason why I enjoy my job as a professor and researcher.

Degree and program: I will help you navigate your program of study by providing advice on course selection and how many courses to take, selection of PhD committee members, etc.

Publications: I will assist in developing the outline, determining the focus and results to present, and advise you on authorship. When a draft paper is submitted to me by the deadline we have agreed upon, I will review the manuscript and provide edits and detailed comments within one week. If you need to improve your writing skills, I will recommend resources on campus. A student will serve as the first author on their paper unless I edit the paper so much that I have essentially written it myself, in which case I will be the first author.

Conferences: I will do my best to support your travel financially and expect you to abide by university policies on travel and use of my purchasing card.

Mentoring: I am committed to mentoring you, even after you graduate. I will provide guidance on career development and assist with building your network by introducing you to mine. Realizing that each student has different mentoring needs, I will strive to tailor my mentoring appropriately to help you achieve your goals. If there is something that I can do to be a better advisor/mentor to you, please discuss it with me.

Section II - What Dr. Frecker can expect from me as her student and mentee.

I, the student, will work diligently for my success as a student and the success of our lab group as a whole.

Degree and program: I am responsible for being aware of and ensuring that I meet all my degree requirements, including the forming of my dissertation committee in the case of doctoral students. I am responsible for attending class regularly.

Conferences and publications: I understand that submitting to conferences and journals is fundamental to my progress and the advancement of engineering and science in general. As such, I will strive to present my work at conferences and publish in top-tier refereed journals. So that paper reviews by my advisor can focus primarily on content, I will write with significant care and attention to detail, organization, formatting requirements, and proper grammar. I will be prompt with my publication submissions and revising. Funding permitting, I will strive to present a paper at a conference relevant to my field at least once per year. Conference travel will be viewed as an opportunity to learn as much as I can while building my professional network. I will behave professionally, attend the sessions, participate in conference activities, and ask questions. I will keep my ASME student membership up to date to take advantage of student registration rates at ASME conferences.

Additionally, I will contribute to Penn State and the ME department by presenting my work at least once per year at an event such as the ME Graduate Research Forum (GRF), Materials Day, or Graduate Recruiting.

Collaboration within the lab: I will endeavor to spend the majority of my working hours in the lab, contributing to a collaborative lab culture. I acknowledge the invaluable benefits that are fostered by the communal workspace, particularly discussions with other lab members about roadblocks in our research. To help build my own mentoring skills, I will mentor less experienced students in our lab group, both formally and informally.

Active learning: I will attend seminars and workshops that are relevant to my research, my professional skills, and my soft skills. Special consideration will be given to those events that are recommended by my advisor.

Clubs and leadership activities: I will take advantage of opportunities to participate in groups or clubs to collaborate and socialize with other students at Penn State. I will ensure that participation in leadership roles or in groups in general does not interfere with my research progress.

Vacation and time off: I will treat my position as a graduate assistant as a full-time job and will behave professionally. I acknowledge that I am not expected to work on major holidays, and that I have two weeks of personal time off per year discounting major holidays. I understand that I may need to work during university breaks in accordance with a typical full-time job. Vacation time should be scheduled to not interfere with major deadlines such as paper submission or conference deadlines.

Section III - What we can mutually expect from each other as professionals.

Meetings: Recognizing that we both have busy schedules, we will plan meetings in advance. We will both behave professionally by being prepared and on time for meetings. If something comes up that makes either of us late for a meeting, we will text or email ahead of time. We can also discuss any issues outside of our regularly scheduled meetings on an as-needed basis, but we will keep in mind we both have deadlines to meet.

Communication: We will be completely honest with each other. We will respond to emails within 24 hours. If either of us has a problem, we will openly communicate it. We will be supportive, encouraging, and respectful to those around us.

Yearly review: Each year I, the student, will write a professional development plan for review with Dr. Frecker. Dr. Frecker will contribute by reviewing the development plan and providing comments on strengths/weaknesses for us to discuss. We will work together to make this an opportunity to review progress, set goals for the future, and address any deficiencies before they become major problems.

Mentor signature: ___________________________ Date: ____________

Mentee signature: ___________________________ Date: ____________