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Venkatesh Kodur named chair of MSU Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

Venkatesh Kodur has been named chair of the Michigan State University Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE), following a national search. His appointment is effective July 1, 2016.

Leo Kempel, dean of the MSU College of Engineering, said Kodur brings a strong international reputation and worldwide industry network to the position.

“Professor Kodur is one of the world’s leading experts in structural fire engineering,” Kempel said. “He has substantially increased the reputation of CEE at MSU through the capabilities he has established and the accomplishments of his research group. He will continue as an active researcher while leading the department on a growth trajectory across a broad range of research and service.”

Kodur is a professor and director of the MSU Center on Structural Fire Engineering and Diagnostics, and associate chair for CEE graduate studies. He joined MSU in August 2005.

“Emerging trends such as increasing natural and manmade disasters, deteriorating infrastructure, climate change, and the need to enhance living standards of vast sections of the population, pose significant challenges to society. These
challenges provide unique opportunities for civil and environmental engineering profession to develop innovative solutions and technologies that can have significant impact on society,” Kodur said. “The MSU Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, with some of its recent initiatives, is very well positioned to capitalize on the emerging opportunities offered by the profession.”

He said he is excited and pleased to lead the CEE department at this critical juncture and utilize the opportunities provided by the profession.

“My vision is to further advance the research and teaching missions of civil and environmental engineering programs, and to further enhance the CEE department recognition, nationally and internationally for innovative research and advancing knowledge. I look forward to working with the faculty, staff, students, administration, and stakeholders of the CEE department to achieve this vision,” he added.

Kodur’s academic contributions have led to the development of fundamental understanding on the fire behavior of material and structural systems, and have also resulted in numerous design approaches and innovative and cost-effective solutions for enhancing fire-resistance of structural systems. He has published more than 350 peer-reviewed papers in journals and conferences, and has given numerous invited keynote presentations.

He is a fellow of two academies and three institutes. He is an associate editor of the Journal of Structural Engineering, and Journal of Structural Fire Engineering, and chairman of ASCE-29 (Fire) Standards Committee.

He has won many awards including AISC Faculty Fellowship Award, MSU Distinguished Faculty Award, NRCC (Government of Canada) Outstanding Achievement Award, and NATO Award for collaborative research. Kodur was part of the FEMA/ASCE Building Performance Assessment Team that studied the collapse of WTC buildings as a result of September 11 terrorist incidents.

At MSU, he has established unique structural fire test facilities and a high-profile research program in structural fire engineering. MSU was the first university in the United States to host the world’s leading international workshop on performance, protection, and strengthening of structures under extreme loading when it hosted PROTECT2015 in June 2015.

Kodur earned a bachelor’s degree (1985) in civil engineering at Bangalore University in India; and a master’s (1988) and a PhD (1992) in structural engineering at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

He will replace Thomas F. Wolff, associate professor of CEE, who became interim chair of the department when former chair Neeraj Buch became associate dean for undergraduate students in the MSU College of Engineering.

Related Website: MSU Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering Communications contact: Patricia Mroczek

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