Amr Elnashai
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Vice President/Vice Chancellor for Research and Technology Transfer
University of Houston (since July 24, 2017)

Past Positions

- Harold and Inge Marcus Dean, College of Engineering, Penn State (2013-2017)
- Head of CEE, Emeritus Professor, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (2000-2013)

CAREER SUMMARY

Fellow of the British Royal Academy of Engineering Amr Elnashai is Vice Chancellor and Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer at the University of Houston, Texas. Prior to his current position, he was Dean of Engineering at the Pennsylvania State University, and the Harold and Inge Marcus Endowed Chair of Engineering. As dean, Amr was responsible for all aspects of operation and leadership of the College of Engineering, with 11,000 students, 300 professors, 400 staff, $240M total budget, $137M research expenditure, over $210M endowment, 12 departments, 2 institutes and 20 research centers. He is member of the Academic Leadership Council and chairs the university Committee on Inclusive Penn State. Amr served as the chair of one of five Penn State research thrusts development committees, focused on Managing Resources. During his time as dean, Amr initiated a one-year MS and MEng program comprising 16 disciplinary and interdisciplinary degrees that are transforming the profile of the college and significantly expanding its graduate student populations. He has targeted biomedical and mechanical engineering for growth and secured 22 new faculty lines between the two departments. He also raised resources from the Provost and other partners to expand the faculty by over 20%. He created, with the heads, associate/assistant deans, and directors, a strategy and an implementation plan, a five-year hiring plan for faculty, staff and development of infrastructure, a strategy for inclusion, created a Communications office and two offices of Associate Dean for Research and Associate Dean for Innovation. He also started an office of Corporate Research and Philanthropy, and an office of Data and Assessment. He hired 45 professors since he joined Penn State, many are joint appointments with life sciences, ethics, agricultural science, medicine, and materials research institutes and colleges. He also hired 4 associate deans, 4 department heads and a center director who is a member of the National Academy of Engineering.

He was previously head of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (June 2009 to December 2013) and the Bill and Elaine Hall endowed professor. During his tenure as department head, research expenditure increased by 30% and graduate tuition income increased by more than 500%. He created three interdisciplinary majors, minors, MS and PhD programs that have attracted large percentages of students. He was Director of the NSF multi-institution interdisciplinary Engineering Research Center (ERC), MAE Center (2004-2009). He was also Director of the NSF Network for Earthquake Engineering Simulations (NEES) Laboratory at Illinois (2002-2009). His total research expenditure during his 13 years at Illinois was in excess of $20M. He was the professor with the highest research expenditure in this top-ranked department for 4 consecutive years (2006-2009).

Amr obtained his Bachelor of Science degree from Cairo University (1977), followed by MSc and PhD degrees from Imperial College (1980, 1984), University of London. Before joining the University of Illinois in June 2001, Amr was Professor of Earthquake Engineering and Head of Division at Imperial College (1985-2001). He was Visiting Professor at the University of Surrey, UK (1997-2014). Other visiting professor appointments include the University of Tokyo, the University of Southern California, and the European School for Advanced Studies in Reduction of Seismic Risk, Italy.

He is founder and editor-in-chief of the Journal of Earthquake Engineering (Taylor and Francis, SCI-expanded) and editorial board member of several other journals, a member of the drafting panel of the European design codes, past chair of the UK earthquake engineering association, UK delegate to and past senior Vice-President of the European Association of Earthquake Engineering and a member of the Council of the UK Institution of Structural Engineers (ISE; 2013-2015). He serves the ISE as ‘US Education Ambassador’. He is the winner of the Imperial College Unwin Prize for the best PhD thesis in Civil and Mechanical Engineering (1984), the Oscar Faber Medal for best paper in the Institution of Structural Engineers, and two best paper medals from the International Association of Tall Buildings, Los Angeles.

Amr’s research interests are multi-resolution distributed analytical simulations, network analysis under stress and disruption, large-scale fire ignition and spread modeling, hybrid testing and field investigations of the response of complex networks and structures to earthquakes. He is currently the sole advisor of one PhD student at Penn State and serves on the PhD committee of another student at Illinois. He has produced more than 250 research publications, comprising 148 refereed journal papers and many conference papers, keynote and prestige lectures, research reports, 3 books and several book chapters, magazine articles and earthquake investigation reports. His Google-based H-index is 41, with 7760 citations. His highest downloaded publication is his report to FEMA/DHS on impact of earthquakes on the central USA, with 51,813 unique downloads from the Illinois digital database (IDEALS). Amr has supervised 46 Doctoral and over 100 Master of Science theses. Many of his students hold significant positions in industry, academia and government around the world.