**INTRODUCTION**

This Manual of Design has been developed as a tool for Architects and Engineers (also referred to herein as “Design Professional”) engaged in the design of new construction, renovations or alterations to buildings and related facilities at West Chester University of Pennsylvania (WCU). It has been prepared in order to set forth those standards and procedures that the University has found to be most appropriate; and, to identify WCU’s preferences regarding materials, details, and other specifics to be used in the design and construction of its buildings and improvements to its campus grounds. These Guidelines shall also apply to the University’s in-house design, construction, maintenance, and repair projects.

Technical requirements for materials and methods of construction provided throughout this manual reflect the University’s expectations for minimal standards in the selection of materials and quality of workmanship. Where the Guidelines do not address any particular material or assembly, it is intended that prevailing industry standards will apply. Any material / methodology in variance to these Guidelines or in excess of industry standards shall be submitted as part of a Design submission for review/acceptance by the University prior to its formal inclusion in the project.

Unless otherwise stated herein or directed by the University, where manufacturers are listed in project specifications, at least two manufacturers shall be named. Where a preferred manufacturer is listed in these Guidelines, that manufacturer shall be included as the first choice in the list given in the specifications and identified as the *“basis of design*”. A listing of specific manufacturers provided in any section herein does not preclude the use of other manufacturers on a project, provided pre-approval from the University is secured.

Presented as a template to assist in a project’s development, these Guidelines are not intended to be so restrictive as to preclude variation to its contents. WCU will be amenable to alternative methods or product/material selections, provided such deviations are deemed to be in the best interest of the University. Variations shall be brought to the attention of WCU before inclusion in project documents. All requests shall be submitted in writing and be supported by data indicating cost savings, increased life expectancy, improved technology or industry standard, upgraded code requirements, or aesthetic value.

It remains the responsibility of the Design Professional to design a building and/or project that address the University’s program requirements; are within the constraints of a stipulated budget; provide the best life cycle cost possible, and meet the requirements of all governing agencies. The Design Professional shall use his or her professional judgment in developing its project design and specifications; however, when such judgment indicates materials or methods contrary that prescribed by these guidelines, the Design Professional shall submit a written request for variation to the Executive Director of Facilities Design & Construction c/o of [pbrunner@wcupa.edu](mailto:pbrunner@wcupa.edu) outlining the reasons for the change. All proposed changes will be reviewed by the Executive Director, and if approved will be made a part of these guidelines.

Before beginning any project for the University, all Professionals shall review these guidelines and note any updates.  Design Professionals are responsible for executing their contract using the version of the standards as exists on the day the contract was signed.

The use and inclusion of these standards in a project’s bid documents does not relieve the Design Professional of the responsibility, correctness and legal liability for any bid documents developed for a project.

