# FAMU/FSU College of Engineering
# Department of Mechanical Engineering

# Interim Design Report

# Team #20
# *High Cycle Fatigue of Electroactive Membranes*

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# ABSTRACT

A device is needed to produce fatigue on electroactive membranes that are being studied for implementation onto robot legs to provide more efficient mobility. Little research has been performed on the fatigue of electroactive membranes. The design analysis of three design concepts: a solenoid actuated mechanism, a crank slider driven mechanism, and a cam driven mechanism were considered. The analysis of the designs included concept details, analytical calculations, advantages and disadvantages, manufacturing considerations, and risks associated with each design. The crank slider was selected as the final design and detailed drawings were created. A decision matrix was developed based on the design and performance specifications for the mechanism. Using the decision matrix and the design analysis, the three concepts were ranked in order of best choice. The crank slider was ranked the highest followed by the cam driven design and the solenoid design, respectively. As a proof of concept, a prototype was assembled and operated successfully providing the expected sinusoidal motion. Dynamic force analysis was conducted to determine the motor specifications for the crank slider design. It was calculated that the motor must provide at least 1500 rpm and 2.5 N·m of torque. As a proof of concept, a prototype was assembled and operated successfully providing the expected sinusoidal motion. Over the break between semesters, the components will be ordered to ensure they arrive on time for assembly.

# I. INTRODUCTION

Currently electroactive membranes are being studied for implementation onto robot legs to provide more efficient mobility. Little research has been performed on the fatigue of electroactive membranes [1]. Dr. William Oates and Dr. Jonathon Clark are sponsoring our team to build this machine to test specimens that they have been developing in the past couple of years. This project's goal is to develop a high cycle test mechanism to quantify the fatigue of these membranes so the design can be optimized. The project requires the fatigue mechanism to be implemented onto the MTS machine to simultaneously measure membrane loads and displacement. The frequency of the fatigue and the stroke distance are to be variable. Multiple design were considered with two designs being chosen for further analysis. Research must be conducted to determine which will optimize the goal of the project. Once a choice is made for a design, materials selections and force analysis must be performed to determine the best solution. The contact information and individual roles for the group is shown below in Table 1. Any questions should be directed to the team.

## *A. Background Research:*

This project is to develop a machine to test high fatigue cyclic loading on electro-active membranes. Dr. Clark in the STRIDe lab has previously built a robot that functions similar to that of a cockroach, known either as "Sprawlita" or "iSprawl". Figure 1, shown below, shows the current iSprawl platform. This robot at one point in time was the fastest robot per body length when it was running around on flat surfaces. At this point in time Dr. Clark is directing his attention towards making the robot be able to run or walk on multiple types of surfaces, and potentially be able to jump from certain heights. This is where Dr. Oates' research comes into play, he researches smart materials. He and his researchers have been working to develop a membrane that can be implemented into the iSprawl robot. An example of the membrane and a schematic of the set-up of the membrane can be seen below in Figures 2(a) and 2(b). The membrane is made of VHB 4910 which is an adhesive tape which produces a great strain and elastic energy density [2].This allows the material to be very compliant. This membrane will be added to each one of the six legs and may be used alone of in pairs stacked together on one leg. Our team has been given the task to build a machine or mechanism that can be used in Dr. Oates lab to test the fatigue on various membrane specimens that have been created. The machine also must be able to adapt to testing on membrane at a time versus testing a stack of them, as they may be used in this manner on the robot.

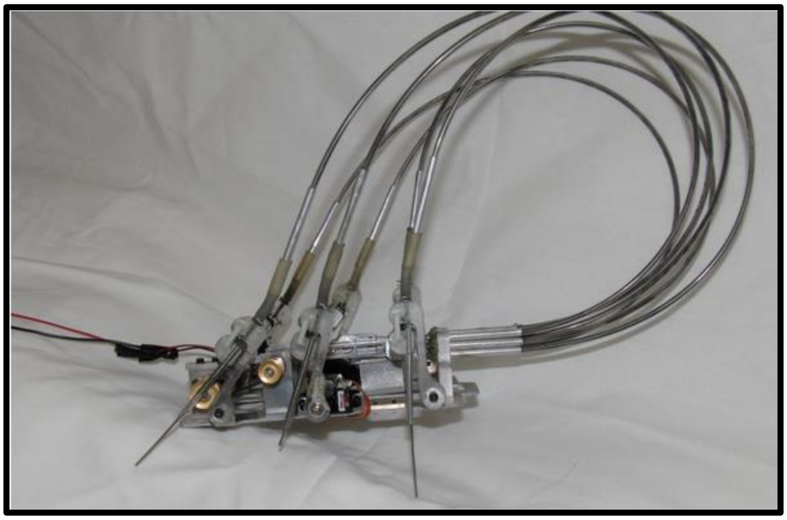


Figure. 1. The image above is the current iSprawl platform that the membrane will be implemented onto. The robot is a 0.3 kg hexapod that is able to run at 2.5 ms−1. [3]

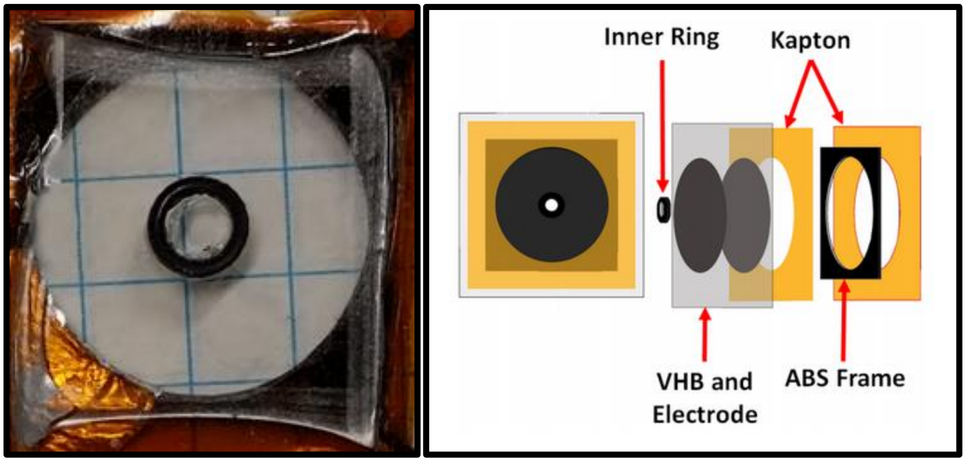


Figure. 2(a). and 2(b). The figure on the left is an actual sample of the membrane. The figure on the right is a schematic of the setup of how the membranes are assembled. [3]

A device to produce and measure the mechanical fatigue of the electroactive membranes has not been researched previously. Much of the background information, in regards to the reasoning behind implementing this membrane on the robot comes from a thesis paper published by a graduate student from the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering named Jason Newton. Newton describes that his work "focuses on the development process of a dielectric elastomer based variable stiffness mechanism as a replacement for traditional springs on a legged hexapedal robot." [3] The idea behind this comes from how biological systems rather than mechanical ones operate, "biological systems show reliance upon their capability to adapt limb stiffness as a means to achieve dynamically similar locomotion over a wide range of terrains." [3]

### *B. Motivation:*

Team 20's motivation is that little research has been performed on electroactive membrane that are currently being implemented onto robot legs to provide more efficient mobility. A device must be developed to determine the fatigue behavior of these membranes.

#### *1) Need Statement:*

The purpose of this project is to design and implement a mechanism to produce and measure fatigue on electroactive membranes. There is insufficient data on the fatigue behavior for electroactive membranes. It is desired to optimize the design of the membrane to handle repeated mechanical cycling over a range of frequencies and displacement.

**There is a lack of information on the fatigue of electroactive membranes.**

#### *2) Goal Statement:*

Goal Statement: Design and build a device that produces high cycle sinusoidal mechanical fatigue of electroactive membranes.

### *C. Objectives & Constraints:*

To complete the overall project goal, several objectives have been established. All of the following objectives must be accomplished for the project to be considered successful.

- Accurately measure the fatigue placed on the specimen
- Produce various frequencies of cycling
- Produce varying stroke distances to displace the membrane
- Allow for tracking of the displacements controlled by the fatigue machine

- Measure the load associated with the stroke by implementing with the MTS machine

The fatigue mechanism design must meet the following constraints to be considered successful. If these constraints are not met, the design will not be a plausible consideration for production.

- System should be a tabletop mechanism that is mounted to the MTS machine
- Fatigue machine must have a 10mm stroke to displace the membrane
- System must be able to produce frequencies ranging from 0 Hz to 25 Hz
- System should produce consistent functionality for various specimens
- Overall design should be completed within the budget (to be defined after further analysis)

The customer initially requested the mechanism be able to operate up to 100Hz. However, after dynamic force analysis, this was found to not be feasible due to the motor that would be required. Therefore, the maximum frequency was reduced to 25 Hz. This was acceptable for the customer because it exceeds the maximum operating frequency of 10Hz of the current applications.

### *D. Approach:*

Research will be conducted to better understand the need of this project and to obtain possible solutions. From here design concepts will be developed and preliminary analysis will be performed to determine an optimal design. Once a final design is chosen, detailed analysis will be conducted that may include fatigue and FEM analysis. A prototype will be assembled to be used as a proof of concept for operation and dimensional feasibility. From here material selection will be considered to provide the optimal performance of the mechanism. Lastly, machining and assembly will be performed to provide a final product.

## II. DESIGN AND ANALYSIS

Three possible design concepts including analysis, advantages and disadvantages, manufacturing considerations, risks, and programming needs are outlined in this section. It is important to consider all of these aspects carefully in order to determine the most plausible final design.

### *A. Functional Analysis:*

The fatigue mechanism design must meet the following requirements before implementation into a product. The dimensional constraints of mounting to the MTS machine and securing the VHB frames for the design are shown in Figures B-1 and B-2 of Appendix B.

- Fit current VHB specimen frame
- Fit into MTS mounting connection
- Withstand a load of 500N dynamically
- Weigh less than 10kg
- Powered by DC power supply
- Be mobile to be removed from MTS and attached to table top

The mechanism must be able to perform the following constraints to meet the customer's needs.

- Variable frequency from 0 Hz to 25 Hz
- Variable stroke distances up to 10mm
- Measure load and displacement of membrane
- Low noise
- High resolution for measurements
- Variable number of specimens able to be tested at a single time
- Use a GUI
    - Input functions
    - Output data (graphically and files)

### *B. Design Concepts:*

Three designs were developed for further evaluation. These designs include a solenoid actuated device, a crank slider mechanism, and a cam driven machine. The support platform to hold the specimens during the test has been designed. This design is capable of attaching to any of the three concepts. The assembly of the platform, with the VHB frames, is shown in Figure B-11 in Appendix B. The support platform consists of two parts: the support and the clamp. These are shown in Appendix B in Figures B-12 and B-13. When less than five specimens are to be tested, empty frames will be stacked above the specimen to allow the clamp to secure the specimen.

#### **Solenoid Concept**

**Concept:** This design uses a linear actuated solenoid to provide a force, generated by thrust, to move a platform holding the electroactive specimen. This platform is guided by a track from the lower housing in which the platform is placed upon. There will be springs that apply a compressive force to bring the platform back to zero after actuation. The solenoid is controlled by the user interface to vary the frequency and stroke. This design is shown in Figure 3.

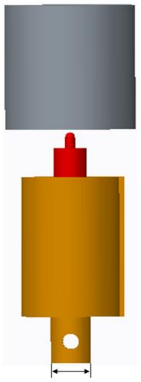


Figure. 3. Solenoid concept

**Analytical:** The force exerted from the deflection of the specimen is expected to be 5N. The weight of the platform will also generate a force that the solenoid must overcome to perform the proper motion. The springs attached to outer housing will also generate a force that will affect the solenoid. Therefore, the force exerted by the solenoid to move the platform 10mm (the maximum stroke) must be greater than 5N plus the weight of the platform and the force of the springs. This exact force will be determined after a final platform dimensions and materials are decided. To select the solenoid for use, the manufacturer suggest using a safety factor of 1.5 [4]. The thrust the solenoid exerts decreases with increased stroke length; therefore, the thrust at 10mm stoke must exceed the load applied. The safety factor will be applied to the total load applied to the solenoid for selection of a proper solenoid. The calculations for the force are shown in Appendix C.

**Advantages & Disadvantages:** A major advantage the solenoid design utilizes is simplicity in its operation to optimize performance. Systems that involve complex assembly often result in high maintenance and is susceptible to failure more frequently than that of simple construction. The solenoid itself meets every performance requirement of this project. It can vary its stroke length as well as operate at a broad range of frequencies. Also, the price of a solenoid is relatively inexpensive compared to that of DC motors.

Although it is capable of these things, there are tradeoffs. The longer the stroke that the solenoid produces, the smaller the thrust it is capable of yielding. Also, the performance specifications for solenoids reduce as the duty cycle is increased. Since the mechanism to be designed should operate continuously, any solenoid used should be able to operate at 100% duty cycle. This means that the solenoid will be performing at its minimum capacity.

Other considerations for the solenoid design that may be considered weaknesses is whether the electromagnetic field that it produces will affect any sensors on the MTS machine or the device itself. Also, the life of the component will only last anywhere from 1-25 million cycles depending on the type of solenoid chosen. Another possible weakness may be the solenoid heating over prolonged use.

**Manufacturing Considerations:** The manufacturing of the components for the solenoid design are fairly simple. A solenoid should be selected to meet the required displacement distance and provide enough thrust to overcome the force needed to move the specimen and the weight of the platform. The cylindrical base for the solenoid will be machined to fit securely to the MTS base. An outer housing will be machined as a hollow cylinder to fit over the inner base that will act as the platform. A Teflon sleeve, or something comparable, will be attached to the track used as a guide inside of the outer housing to reduce friction. Since the solenoid will control the displacement distances, the tolerances on the machined components are not as critical, making the manufacturing process for the components relatively simple.

**Uncertainty and Risks:** The design relies on level and smooth operation via tracks on the housing used to guide the platform. If the track does not have suitable tolerances in the fit between the platform and the housing, then improper operation will result. If the track is too loose then the mechanism will “wobble” and if it is too tight then it will create additional friction in the system. Also, failure in this design will most likely occur in two places. It will be due to the springs that apply a resistive force against the solenoid shaft motion in which they may break; or it may be due to the solenoid exceeding its life expectancy.

### Crank Slider Concept

**Concept:** This design uses a crank slider, resembling that of a piston, powered by a DC motor to move a platform holding the electroactive membrane to produce a sinusoidal motion. The angular velocity of the motor will provide the desired frequency to displace the membrane and will be controlled by varying the voltage through the user interface. The stroke would be varied by altering the location of the platform. This design is shown in Figure 4.

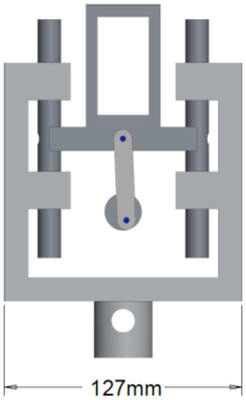


Figure. 4. Crank slider

**Analytical:** The motor that rotates the crank to produce the sliding motion must provide sufficient torque to perform the desired motion and displacements. A torque will be induced from the force exerted by the specimen and the weight of the platform. The motor must have a torque larger than this torque. If the motor rotates in a counterclockwise direction, a maximum torque should be observed at 0°. This will be taken into consideration when selecting a motor. A factor of safety of 1.2 will be used to ensure the system will perform if it were unexpectedly loaded more than calculated. This factor of safety was chosen because it provides a safe operating range without greatly limiting the motor selection. The motor must also provide a sufficient angular velocity to produce the motion at the maximum frequency of 25 Hz. The calculations for the torque and angular velocity are shown in Appendix C.

**Advantages & Disadvantages:** The advantage of the crank slider design is how it exploits rotational motion and translates that into reciprocal motion. This allows the use of a DC motor, which can provide a wide range of torques and angular velocities. With a given applied load and frequency needed, a motor can be selected upon this criteria. The life of DC motors exceed that of solenoids making the maintenance of lower importance when considering part replacement. However, the cost of the DC motors relative to that of the solenoid is considerably more expensive.

A weakness of the crank slider design is that the zero position of the stroke must start at a specific position such that no load is applied before testing is conducted. This would require the user to manually set the start position of the mechanism before each test is conducted. Also, for there to be stroke variation the platform that holds the membrane must be able to move manually by the user before testing is performed.

**Manufacturing Considerations:** The manufacturing of the crank slider design requires fairly complex processes. A DC motor will be selected to produce the required angular velocity and torque as calculated in Appendix C. Due to the small displacements required by the design, high resolution tolerances are necessary for the machining of the crank slider mechanism. The design will require a platform that sits within a housing to keep it level throughout operation as the disc is rotating. This will require tight tolerances between the platform and housing to minimize any motion that might occur. A Teflon sleeve, or something comparable, would be attached to the housing to minimize the friction between the two components. Another platform would be manufactured to support the specimen. This platform would have to be attached to guides so the height could be varied and the stroke displacement could be variable.

**Uncertainty and Risks:** Failure for this design may occur in multiple places. Locations that utilize pins such as at the disc or where linkages connect may have a possibility to shear if over stressed or after prolonged fatigue from use. Considering the small size of the components of this design, there is a possibility of damage during assembly or maintenance. This would cause the mechanism to operate incorrectly and give rise to the possibility of giving inaccurate data.

## Cam Driven Concept

**Concept:** This design uses a cam powered by a DC motor to move a platform that holds the electroactive specimen. The frequency of the motion will be controlled by varying the voltage supplied to the motor through the user interface. The stroke distance will be varied by changing the cam size. Therefore, multiple cams will be needed to provide various stroke distances. This design is shown in Figure 5.

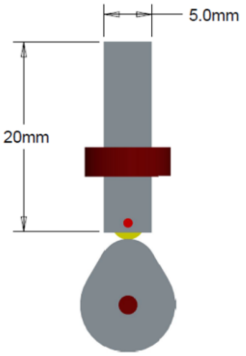


Figure. 5. Cam concept.

**Analytical:** A motor must rotate the cam to produce the desired motion. The motor must provide a torque greater than the induced torque from the membrane force and the weight of the platform. A factor of safety of 1.2 will be used to ensure the system will perform if it were unexpectedly loaded more than calculated. This factor of safety was chosen because it provides a safe operating range without greatly limiting the motor selection. The motor must also provide a sufficient angular velocity to produce the motion at the maximum frequency of 25 Hz. The calculations for the torque and angular velocity are shown in Appendix C.

**Advantages & Disadvantages:** The cam design is similar to that of the crank slider. It will also utilize a DC motor and provide a piston like motion to accomplish the necessary motion. The advantage the cam design has over the crank slider design is that it's simpler in construction. The sinusoidal motion is provided by the shape of the cam itself which requires no adjusting of the position of the membrane to supply the needed displacement. However, to vary the stroke, a different cam must be placed onto the mechanism each time the user wishes to displace the membrane different distances. This will generate additional costs to the design since multiple cams will be needed to accomplish this.

**Manufacturing Considerations:** The cam design would require a DC motor to provide the rotation of a cam. The motor will be selected to produce the required angular velocity to rotate the cam and move the follower with the load of the platform. For the cam design, the various sized cams would need to be manufactured. The cams must have tight tolerances to provide variable displacements in 1mm increments. The roller for the follower must also be considered in the manufacturing process. Bearing would be needed to allow the follower to roll freely with the cam. A platform for the specimens would be machined along with a housing that the platform would move along. This would be similar to a piston design; therefore, it would require a Teflon sleeve, or something comparable, to reduce friction between the two components.

**Uncertainty and Risks:** In this design there are not many foreseeable ways that one could see failure. The follower guide offers one location in which if there are not proper tolerances that the follower could "wobble" and cause it to jam and cease operation. This would result in the possibility that the motor would stall and burn out.

### *C. Evaluation of Designs:*

The team developed a decision matrix shown in Table 2 to be used as a tool to guide the decision for a final design. The decision matrix used the key design and performance specifications as categories. The criteria and method of creating the decision matrix is explained below.

TABLE I. DECISION MATRIX.

| **Team 20 Design Decision Matrix** | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Design | **Safety** | **Low Cost** | **Ease of Use** | **Reliability** | **Performance (vary stroke & frequency)** | **Total** |
| | **0.20** | **0.05** | **0.10** | **0.20** | **0.45** | |
| **Solenoid** | 5 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 3 | **3.7** |
| **Crank Slider** | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 5 | **4.3** |
| **Cam** | 3 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 5 | **4.1** |

1) Criteria, Method:

The decision matrix shown in Table 2 was created after discussing with the sponsor his requirements and desires for the system. The sponsor communicated that he wanted a robust system that would perform well. This led to performance, the ability of the system to vary the stroke and frequency effectively, to have the highest importance therefore being weighted the highest at 45%. Reliability and safety were rated the next highest at 20%. Reliability is an important quality when justifying a robust system. The mechanism reliability is dependent upon several factors: life of the components, cost to replace the components, and ease of access to the components. The mechanism should require little maintenance so it can be operated over long periods of time without extensive attention to servicing. As with all devices, safety is important to protect the operator and surroundings. Ease of use was weighted at 10% because the system must be easily controlled to coordinate the various functions of varying stroke and frequency. Cost was weighted the lowest at 5% because it was determined that the mechanism should perform the desired functions with little regard to the cost due to its application in the research field instead of industry. The initial cost of components were used for basis of cost performance excluding the materials costs because each design will use nearly the same amount of materials. The designs were ranked for each category based on their ability to meet the desired criteria. A ranking of 1, 3, and 5 is used with 5 being the best, 3 being adequate, and 1 being poor. The design total was then calculated using the weight values. This gave a basis for which design would perform best.

The solenoid design received top scoring across the board with the exception of reliability and performance since the solenoid has a limited lifetime of operation and thrust. The cam and the crank slider designs ranked near equally to one another based on their relative complexity to that of the solenoid design. The cam design scored slightly lower though than the crank slider design in ease of use due to the nature of its operation which would require more user input.

2) Selection of Optimum Ones:

From the analysis of each design and the decision matrix, the three designs were ranked. The crank slider design was chosen to be the optimal design based on ranking and preliminary analysis. This design is complex and requires multiple components; however, it will perform the required the tasks.

The next best design was determined to be the cam design. This design had the second best score in the decision matrix showing it would also meet the desired specifications fairly well. However, based off preliminary analysis this design would complex to manufacture. The cam design is more complex than the solenoid design but is still fairly simple. This was a key factor in ranking the cam design.

The solenoid design was ranked as the lowest design. The thrust exerted by the solenoid is limited and would be insufficient to provide the needed performance. Though it is the simplest design to manufacture, the design would not perform. These were key factors in ranking the solenoid as the lowest overall design.

Considering the rankings of the three designs, the crank slider has been chosen to be focused on for further analysis. This design meets the customer's requirements. Further detailed analysis will be performed on this design so that the best components will be chosen and it is manufactured to withstand the conditions it will be operated in. Upon analysis, if this designs does not meet the customer's needs, we will return to the customer for possible reduction in constraints.

### 3) Risk and Reliability Assessment:

The largest risk in this project is the safety of the mechanism, with several components moving in multiple directions. The team will need to mitigate this risk by building a proper housing to prevent the user from having the ability to be in close proximity with moving components. Another risk will be preventing high amounts of friction as the linear guide rails are moved vertically, this risk will be diminished by implementing a material such as Teflon sleeves in between the frame and the guide rails.

A risk of damaging the small components of the mechanism could also arise, this will be mitigated by using a factor of safety of 2 in selecting materials for components that will be under stress. This will in part increase the reliability of the mechanism. Also, the use of a computer to drive the motor will remove uncertainties that would otherwise be made by human error. Lastly, the purchase of a high quality motor will provide the greatest reliability for operation of the mechanism.

### *D. Programming Needs and Control:*

A user interface is required to simplify the operation and control of the fatigue mechanism. LabVIEW will be used to create the user interface. This program will allow for control of the motor through a Graphical User Interface (GUI). The GUI will allow the user to adjust the frequency of the motor by entering a value between 0 and 25 Hz. The user will also enter the displacement of the mechanism even though it will be controlled by the user adjusting the actual device. LabVIEW will also be used to collect the force measurements from the MTS machine. The data will be received through a DAQ board and read into the LabVIEW program. The data will be displayed in the GUI as a plot of force versus time for the user to easily observe the results in real time. The data will also be written to a file for storage and later analysis through Matlab or other analytical program. The file will contain the frequency and displacement of the mechanism as entered by the user, and the force and time measurements from the MTS machine. This information is all that is needed to determine the fatigue behavior of the electroactive membrane.

# III. DETAILED DESIGN AND DESIGN FOR MANUFACTURING

The crank slider mechanism will have multiple components to perform the required tasks. The final assembly of the crank slider is shown in Figure 4. The detailed drawings of the crank slider components are shown in Figures B-5 – B-9 of Appendix B. The crank slider mechanism will have a housing that will attach to the MTS machine using a standard pin for the MTS machine. The housing has two guides on each side to support the platform as it moves during the cycling. To reduce friction and noise a small gap will be between the guides and the rails. The clearance must be small enough to prevent any misalignment in the system. Also a Teflon sleeve or dry lubricant spray will be applied to the rails to further reduce friction and noise.

A motor mount will also be attached to the housing to support and secure the motor. The motor will be clamped such that it may be easily removed for maintenance or replacement. The motor mount specifications have not been finalized pending ordering a motor to ensure definite dimensions are known.

To vary the displacement, a flywheel with various holes will be used. This flywheel will attach to the motor using a coupler that connects from the motor shaft to the outer edge of the flywheel. This coupler will allow small displacements to be tested by allowing holes to be drilled close to the center of the flywheel. When the displacement is to be changed, the user will move the pin to the hole at the desired location. The flywheel will attach to the platform using a connector link. This link has no effect on the displacement. It must allow for the platform to clear the guides throughout the entire cycle.

The specimen holder will be attached to the top of the platform. This holder, shown in Figure 6, secures five specimens for testing. When less than 5 specimens are to be tested, empty frames will be used as spacers to fill the space. The specimens are secured by using a top plate that bolts to the holder. This ensures that the specimens stay secure through the testing. The holder has an empty area below the specimens to allow for the deflection of the membranes without interference. The holder must be constructed on nonconductive material because large voltages on the order of kilovolts will be passed through the specimen during testing.

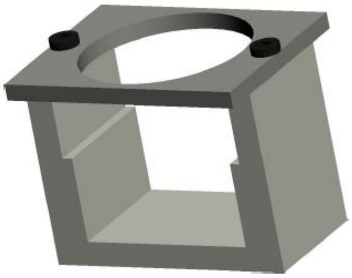


Figure. 6. VHB membrane holder

The components for the crank slider will be manufactured using conventional machining. The rails for the platform will attached separately since they are of a round cross section and the center of the platform is of a rectangular cross section. The center section will be milled out to allow the rails to fit securely into the center section. They will also be drilled and tapped to bond the two parts to one another with bolts. The housing will have the two lower and upper rail guides milled out and drilled to allow a rigid connection between the housing and the platform. The housing will also have a hole drilled into either side to allow final assembly of the rails to the platform. The specimen holder will be 3D printed or machined to achieve the final shape.

Due to cost and weight constraints a type of aluminum will be used; however, the final material will be determined after further cost analysis is done. A block of aluminum will be purchased for the parts to be machined from. Pins to attach the linkages will be purchased because they are so small. Bearings for all the two connection points on the linkage will also be purchased. This will ensure that friction is minimized and the connection points are secure. The machining of the parts must have a tolerance of ±0.25mm to ensure proper alignment of the mechanism.

# IV. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

For our goals to be achieved, we will develop a system that can run the specimen through a standard fatigue test but also be able to count how many oscillations occur to determine the life of the specimen. Additionally, we have taken measurements of the MTS machine so that our device can accurately mount onto it while maintain dimensional stability with minimal vibrations and movement.

To come up with the type of system we would like to implement for the fatigue testing, we have developed multiple designs and created a decision matrix comparing each option. The decision matrix is shown below in Table 2. When we conclude the type of system that we want, we will make technical drawings of the entire system that fit to the dimensions of the MTS machine. Once the drawings are completed, they will help us determine what types of materials and parts we will need to start building the system. Before building a prototype though, we will consider making a design simulation using computer software to determine if we should move forward to a physical prototype. If the next step is to move forward with a prototype, materials will be collected and machining and assembly will follow. Some sample runs will be made once the prototype is completed to determine competency and accuracy in measurements. If everything is acceptable and up to par, if time permits, experiments can be carried out to determine the best fatigue material that could be implemented in the actual robotic legs. A flow chart of the project planning is shown below in Figure 3.

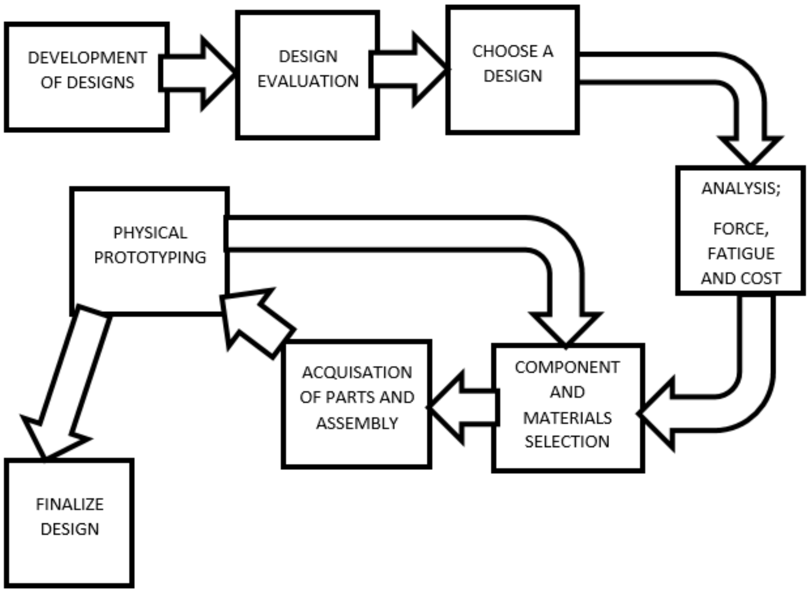


Figure. 7. Flow chart of project plans.

## A. Schedule:

The Gantt chart shows the sections of the task the team must complete. It allows time management for the project to flow smoothly having completed one task before the next is performed. The project has been broken down into five stages for the entire year. These sections include Design of Machine, Analysis of Machine, Developing a User Interface, Assembly, and Testing. The Gantt chart is shown in Figure A-1 of Appendix A. The final two stages are not included because the Gantt chart only includes tasks for the fall semester.

## B. Communications:

The team communicates effectively with one another, our advisor, and sponsors. The use of the time is efficient during meetings. Meeting with the team's advisor and sponsor are at the end of each week to discuss progress and gather feedback. The group typically meets twice a week, depending upon the work load and requirements necessary to be completed for the project. Email and a group messaging program are used to communicate outside of meeting times. All documents for the project are uploaded to Google Drive for any group member to view at their convenience.

### *C. Resources:*

Specific tasks have been assigned to each team member. For each task, a primary and a secondary person have been assigned. This will ensure that the task will be completed on time if at any point the primary person cannot complete their designated task.

Design of Machine
Decision Matrix –Victor, Matt (4 days)
Dimensional constraints – Nick, Matt (1 day)
CAD drawings – Nick, Kristina (19 days)

Analysis of Machine
Force – Kristina, Nick (5 days)
Fatigue – Kristina, Nick (5 days)
Frequency to Velocity – Matt, Adriane (10 days)
Material selection – Adriane, Victor (10 days)
Motor and power source selection – Matt, Victor (10 days)
Cost- Nick, Victor (5 days)

Developing of a User Interface
Synchronized with LabVIEW – Adriane, Matt (48 days)
GUI – Adriane, Nick (48 days)

Assembly
Machining– Kristina, Nick (TBD in spring)
Mount to MTS – Victor, Matt (TBD in spring)
Connect to computer – Adriane, Kristina (TBD in spring)

Test
Repeatable trials – Matt, Kristina (TBD in spring)
Capable of data acquisition (displacement and force) – Adriane, Victor (TBD in spring)

### *D. Budget:*

The sponsor has allocated approximately $2000 to the budget of this project. If the cost of any materials or components exceed the budget, the team may request for approval to increase the budget as long as the additional expenses are justifiable. The breakdown of the budget is shown in Figure 8. The largest portion of the budget has been allocated to the motor and controller. The team has allocated 25% of the total budget to materials and 5 % to hardware. To account for any uncertainties that may arise during the project, 10% of the budget has been allocated for miscellaneous components or needs. These budget percentages are subject to change as Figure 8 represents an anticipated budget breakdown.

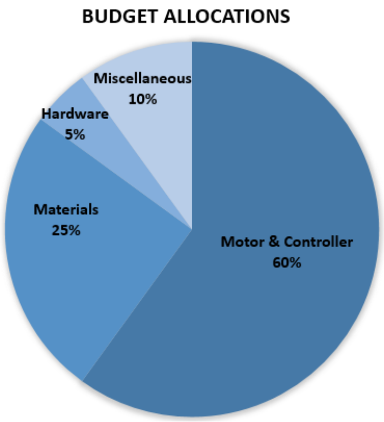


Figure. 8. Breakdown of budget.

### *E. Procurement:*

The procurement of all purchases will be made through the AME center. Machining will be done through the College of Engineering machine shop and will not be an expense to the project. By December 12, 2014 the motor and controller for the mechanism will be purchased to ensure arrival by the beginning of the spring semester. The items to be purchased are summarized in Table II. Miscellaneous components have been included to account for any additional components that might be required.

Table II. Items to be purchased for the project.

**Procurement Items**

| Component | Quantity |
|---|---|
| Motor & Controller | 1 |
| Bulk Material | 1 |
| Pins/Shafts | 2 |
| Bearings | 2 |
| Teflon sleeves/spray | 2 |
| Miscellaneous | Various |

## V. PROTOTYPING

With a final design selected, a rough prototype has been assembled. Figure 9 illustrates the assembled prototype for the crank slider design. The platform, housing, rail guides, linkage, and flywheel were developed with close to expected dimensions using Creo Parametric CAD software. Once the drawings were complete, the components were cut out from a sheet of ¼" thick ABS plastic using a laser cutter to ensure high dimensional tolerances. ABS plastic was used because it was readily available to the team to test the concept of the chosen design.

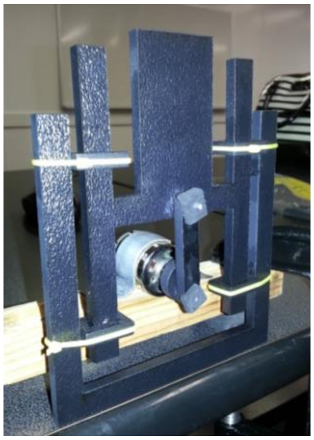


Figure. 9. Assembled prototype of crank slider design

Once the components were cut, they needed to be cleaned to remove the residue left by the cutting process that would otherwise affect the performance during operation. Then the rail guides were attached to the housing in a manner that the platform could move within the slots. It is important to note that because of the material being used, the process of assembly was not precise. As a result there was some friction between the rails of the platform and the guides. Using lubricant helped mitigate the problem and friction was reduced.

Next, the flywheel was pressed onto a motor to ensure that the motor shaft did not slip within the flywheel. This motor was not the selected component as previously discussed in the report but one that was readily available to use for testing. Lastly, the linkage needed pin joint connection, having only one degree of freedom, to that of the platform and the flywheel. Small pins, with bushings that fit into the holes, were used to connect the linkage in a fashion that allowed for free rotational motion during operation.

The motor was powered by a variable DC power supply so that the angular velocity could be controlled. The prototype operated with the sinusoidal reciprocating motion that was expected. Studying the mechanism's operation during different speed settings will help in evaluating any areas of interest that may aid in creating a more robust system.

Many aspects of the prototype components will be different on the final product. This includes the housing, platform, and rail guides. In the case of the prototype, we were limited to the thickness of the mechanism and had to develop around that to achieve feasible dimensions for the height and width. The housing will incorporate a different base such that it will be capable of mounting on the MTS machine. It will also integrate a type of shielding around the internal parts to maintain safety. The platform will remain mostly the same with the rails being rods instead of having rectangular cross section. This shape, with its sharp corners, allows the opportunity for the mechanism to bind or cause increased friction during operation. The rail guides will mimic in shape to accommodate the platform rails.

## VI. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SAFETY ISSUES AND ETHICS

The Engineering ethics place high priority on the precision of the performance of the end product. Consumers expect that when they purchase a product that it operates as advertised and we plan to provide a mechanism that performs to the needs of the customer.

The decision matrix used for the design selection indicates safety is of importance with a factor of twenty percent. The design has minimal risks which are mitigated by including measures to prevent any injury due to operational failure or negligence of the user. These measures include a protective housing that surrounds the internal components such that contact cannot be made during operation. This housing will also trap any potential pieces that may break during operation, preventing them from harming anyone in the vicinity of the mechanism. Also, any safety precautions necessary to operate the MTS machine must also be taken into consideration.

The impact this device will have on the environment will be insignificant. The operation of the device directly does not produce any emissions or toxins. The indirect impact, due to the electricity needed to power the DC motor, is not of great significance since the device will not draw much power or operate for long periods of time. The materials used to construct the device will be chosen such that they are recyclable creating a positive environmental impact.

## VII. CONCLUSION

This project is driven by the lack of information on the fatigue of electroactive membranes. By the end of the spring semester 2015, the team shall have completed the objectives stated and shall accomplished the task ahead. These tasks include devising a fatigue mechanism that provides sufficient data on the fatigue behavior of the electroactive membrane. Calculations were developed to determine the forces acting on the drivers for each mechanism. To perform at the maximum conditions of 25 Hz and 10mm displacement with a factor of safety of 2, the motor must produce a torque of 2.5 Nm at 1500 rpm. A decision matrix was developed using the design and performance specifications given by the sponsor. This decision matrix was used to as guide to selection of the final design. The crank slider design was selected as the final design. This design was finalized with detailed drawings. A prototype was assembled for proof of concept and to ensure the finalized dimensions were feasible. The prototype successfully showed proof of concept and functional dimensions. The importance of reducing friction was also shown by the prototype. The final design will made such that friction is minimized as much as possible. A second prototype is planned for construction at the beginning of the next semester based on these detailed drawings. The motor and controller are expected to be ordered by December 12, 2014. Over the break further analysis, including fatigue and FEM, will be conducted on the final design to ensure functionality and finalize a method to vary the stroke distance. The final fatigue mechanism will be delivered to the customer by the end of the spring semester.

## VIII. REFERENCES

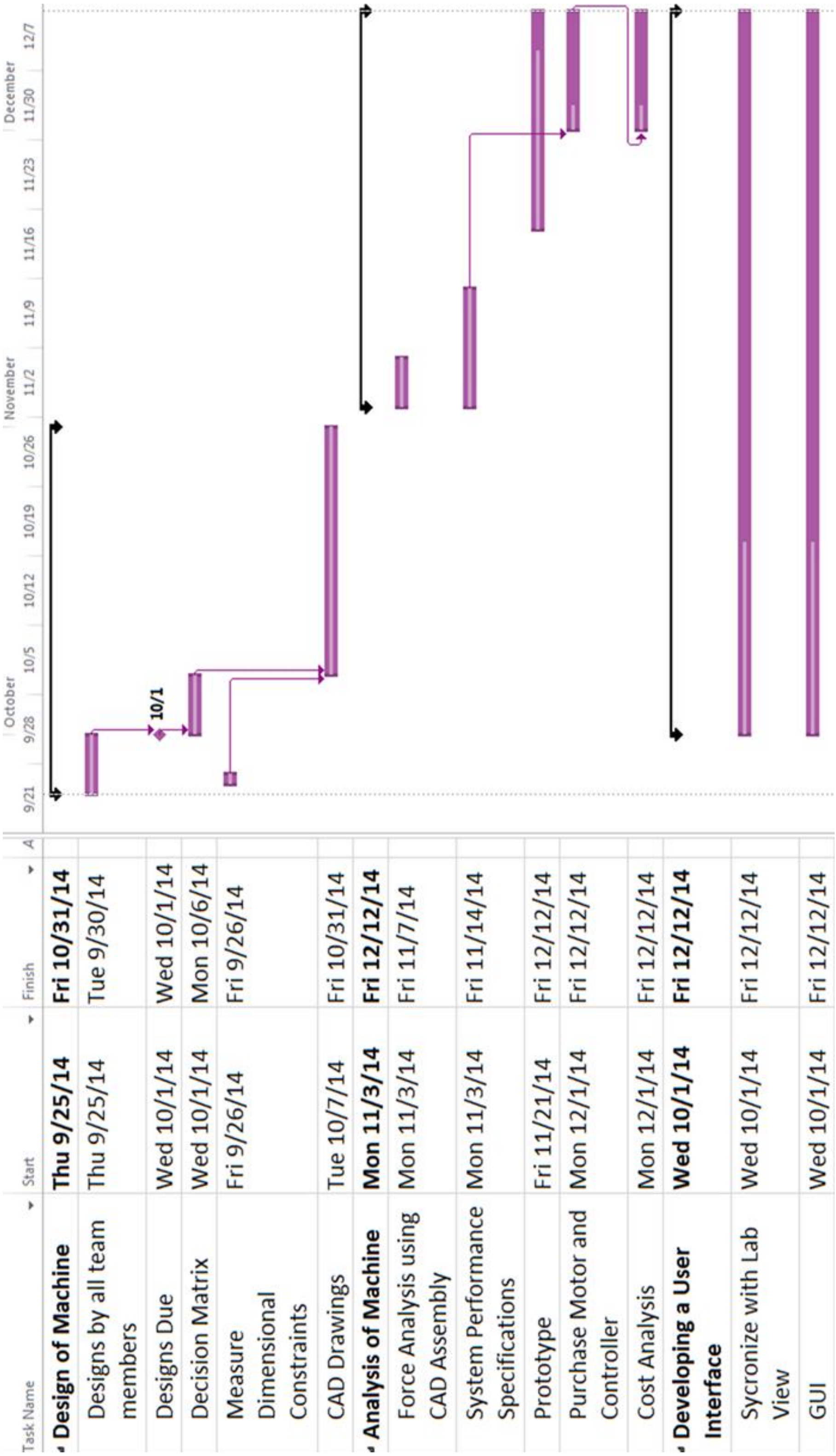
[1] Oates, William and Jonathan Clark. Personal Communication. Florida A&M/Florida State University, 2014.

[2] Kofod, Guggi, Peter Sommer-Larsen, Roy Kornbluh, and Ron Pelrine. "Actuation Response of Polyacrylate Dielectric Elastomers." *Journal of Intelligent Materials Systems and Structures* 14.12 (2003): 787-93. Web.

[3] Newton, Jason. "Design And Characterization Of A Dielectric Elastomer Based Variable Stiffness Mechanism For Implementation Onto A Dynamic Running Robot." Thesis. Florida State University - College Of Engineering, 2014. Print.

[4] “Ledex Tubular Linear Solenoids.” Johnson Electric. Product Specifications. Web.

# APPENDIX A



| Task Name | Start | Finish |
|---|---|---|
| **Design of Machine** | **Thu 9/25/14** | **Fri 10/31/14** |
| Designs by all team members | Thu 9/25/14 | Tue 9/30/14 |
| Designs Due | Wed 10/1/14 | Wed 10/1/14 |
| Decision Matrix | Wed 10/1/14 | Mon 10/6/14 |
| Measure Dimensional Constraints | Fri 9/26/14 | Fri 9/26/14 |
| CAD Drawings | Tue 10/7/14 | Fri 10/31/14 |
| **Analysis of Machine** | **Mon 11/3/14** | **Fri 12/12/14** |
| Force Analysis using CAD Assembly | Mon 11/3/14 | Fri 11/7/14 |
| System Performance Specifications | Mon 11/3/14 | Fri 11/14/14 |
| Prototype | Fri 11/21/14 | Fri 12/12/14 |
| Purchase Motor and Controller | Mon 12/1/14 | Fri 12/12/14 |
| Cost Analysis | Mon 12/1/14 | Fri 12/12/14 |
| **Developing a User Interface** | **Wed 10/1/14** | **Fri 12/12/14** |
| Sycronize with Lab View | Wed 10/1/14 | Fri 12/12/14 |
| GUI | Wed 10/1/14 | Fri 12/12/14 |

Figure. A-1. Gantt Chart

# APPENDIX B

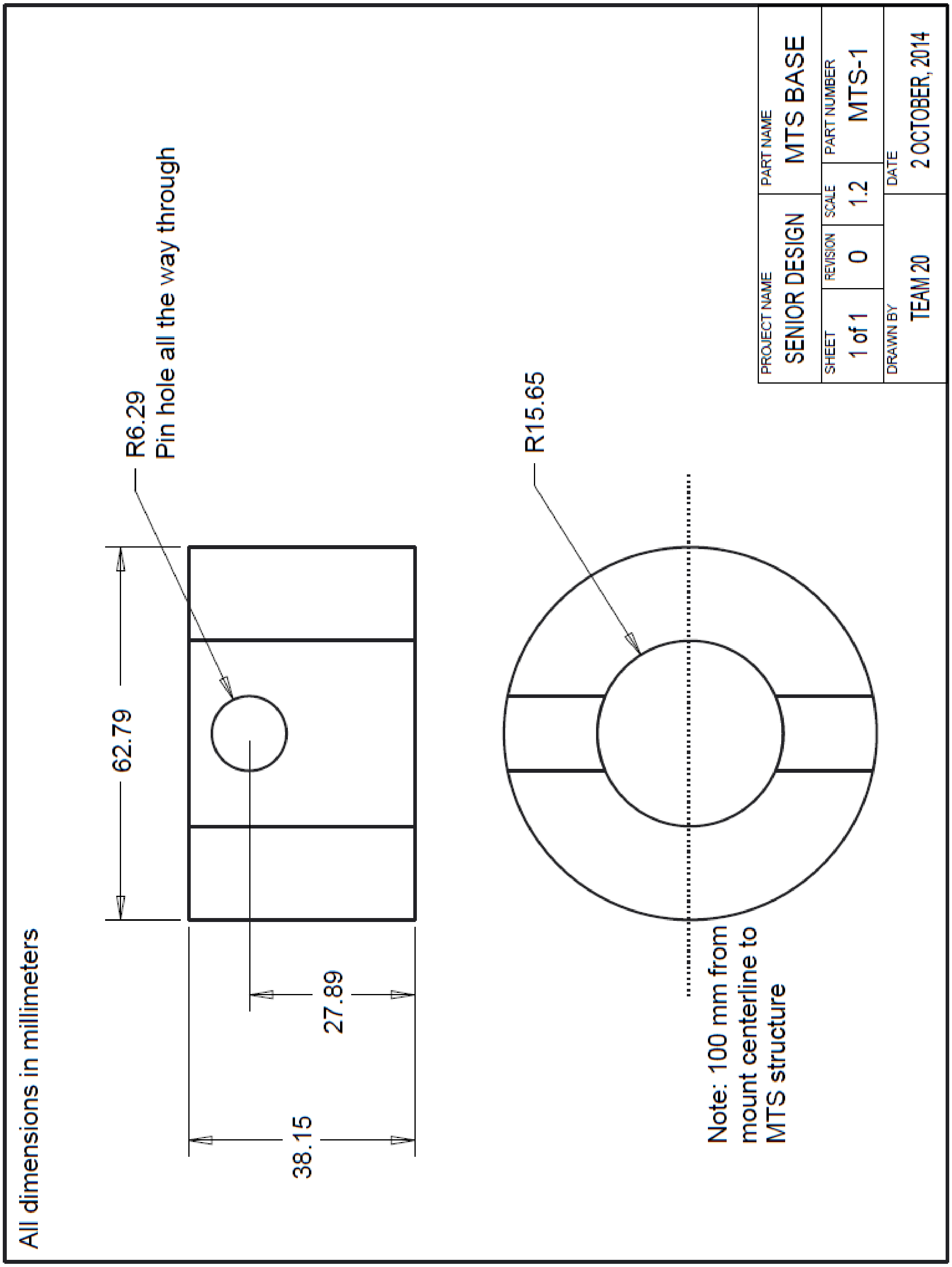


Figure. B-1. MTS base drawing.

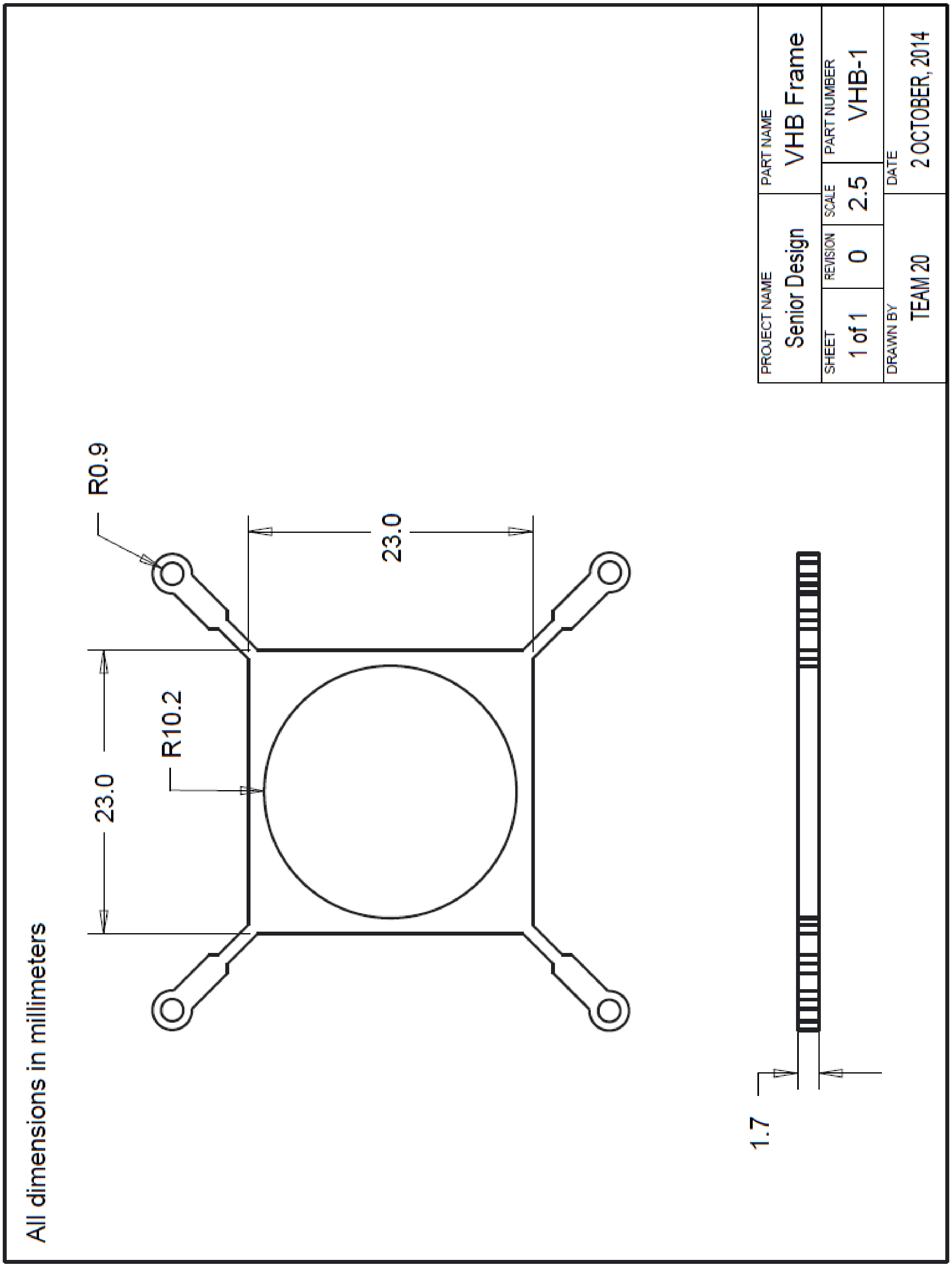


Figure. B-2. VHB frame drawing

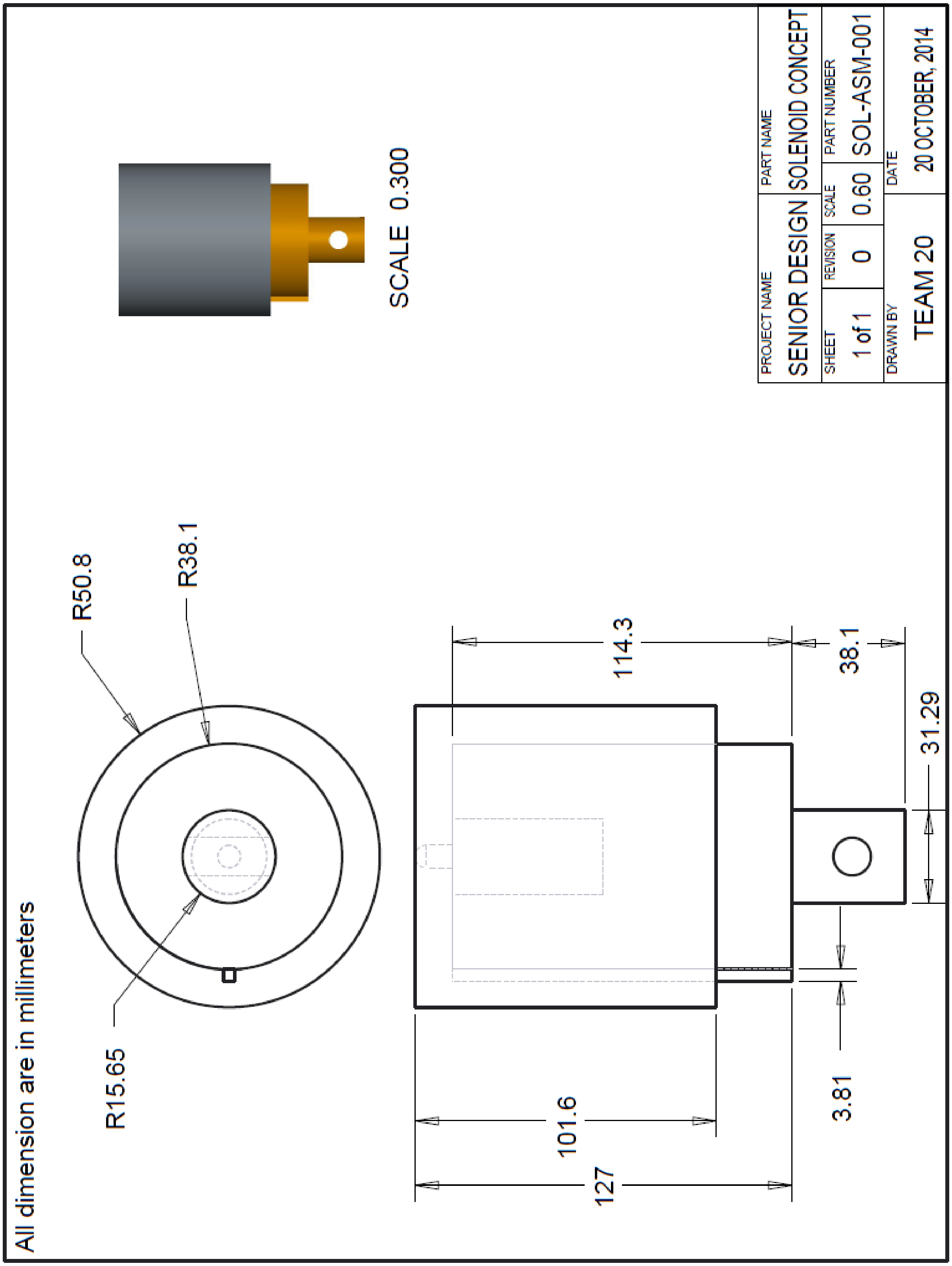


Figure B-3. Solenoid design concept

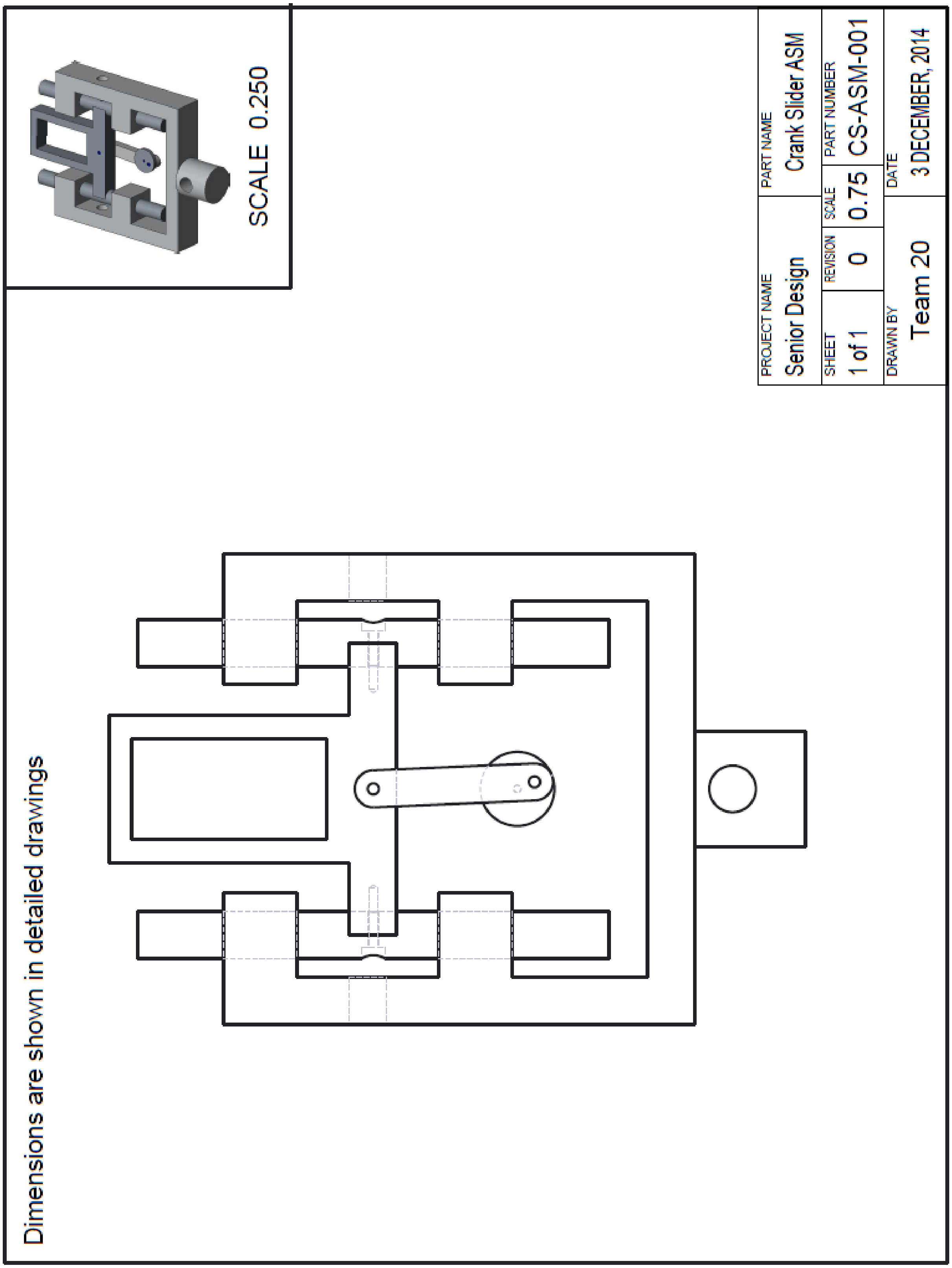


Figure. B-4. Crank slider assembly concept

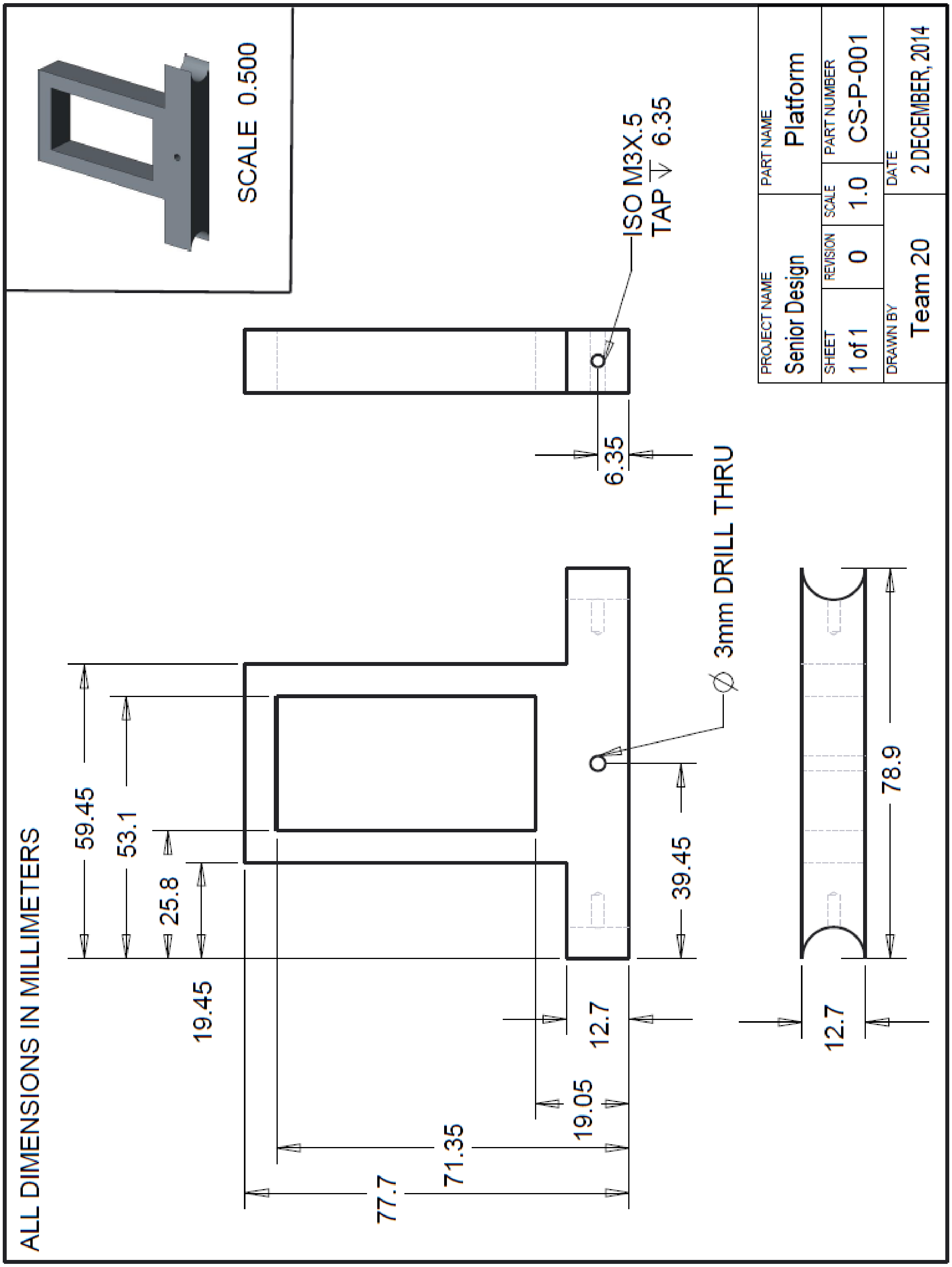


Figure. B-5. Crank slider platform drawing

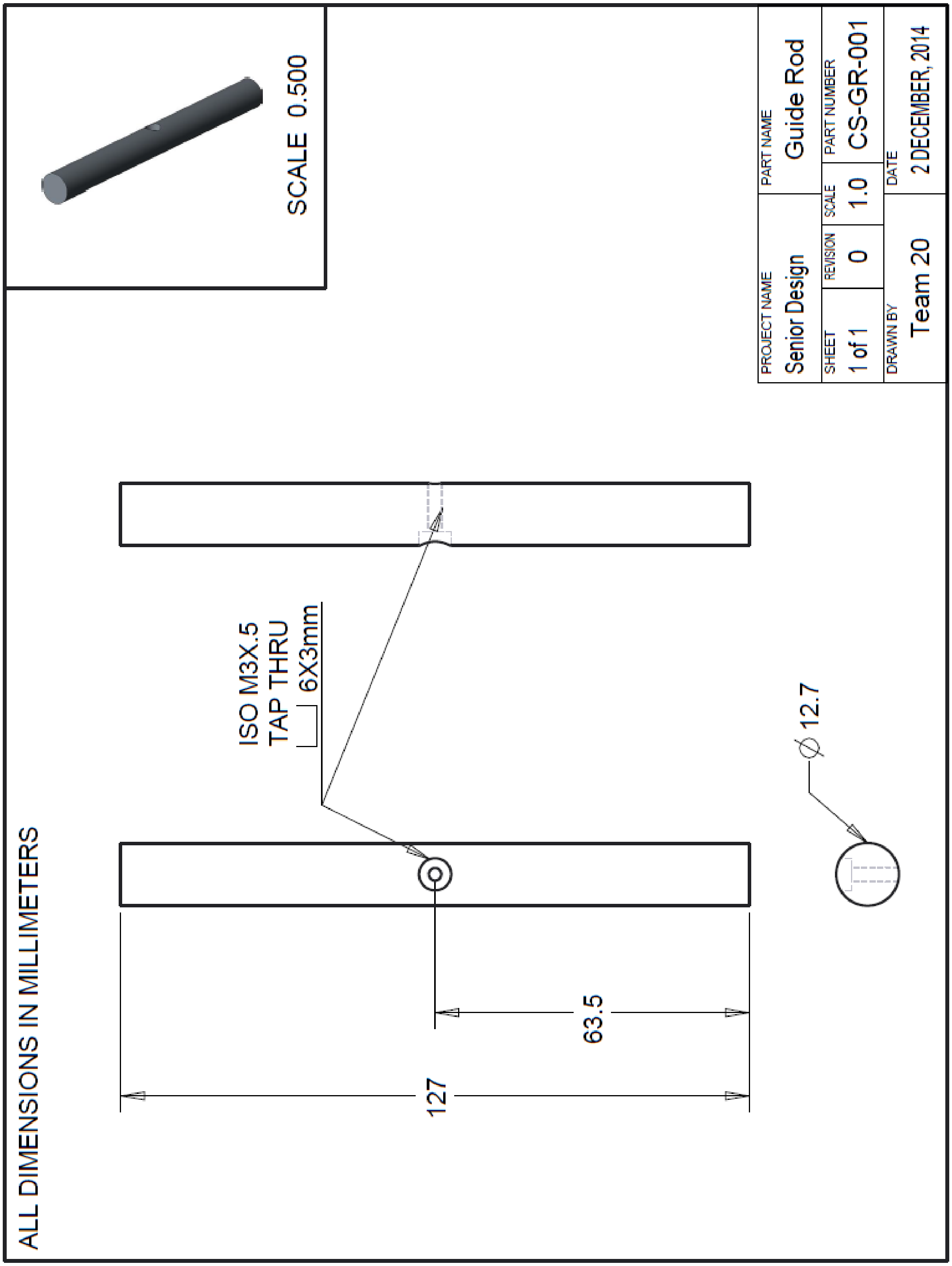


Figure. B-6. Crank slider guide rod drawing

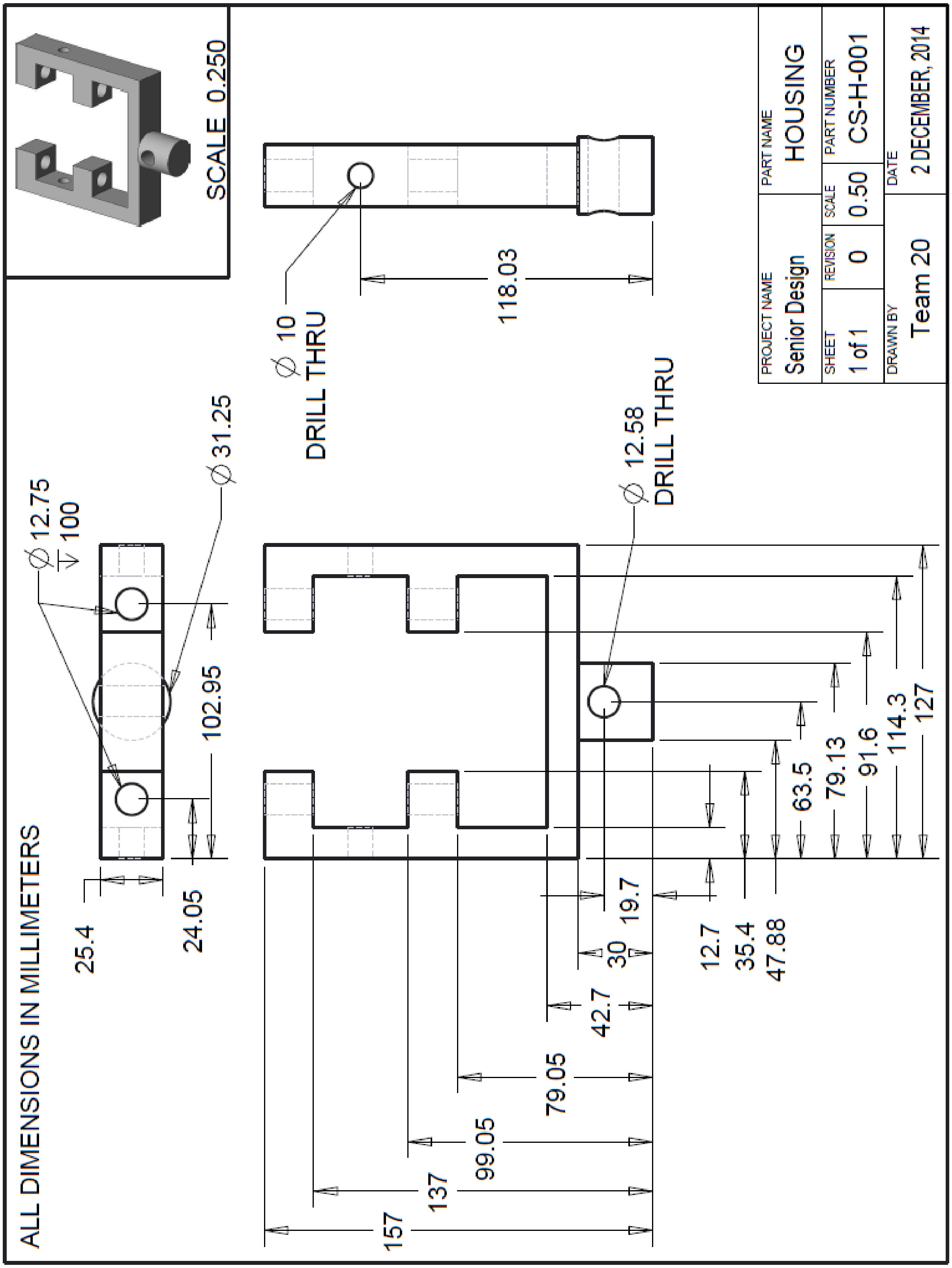


Figure. B-7. Crank slider housing drawing

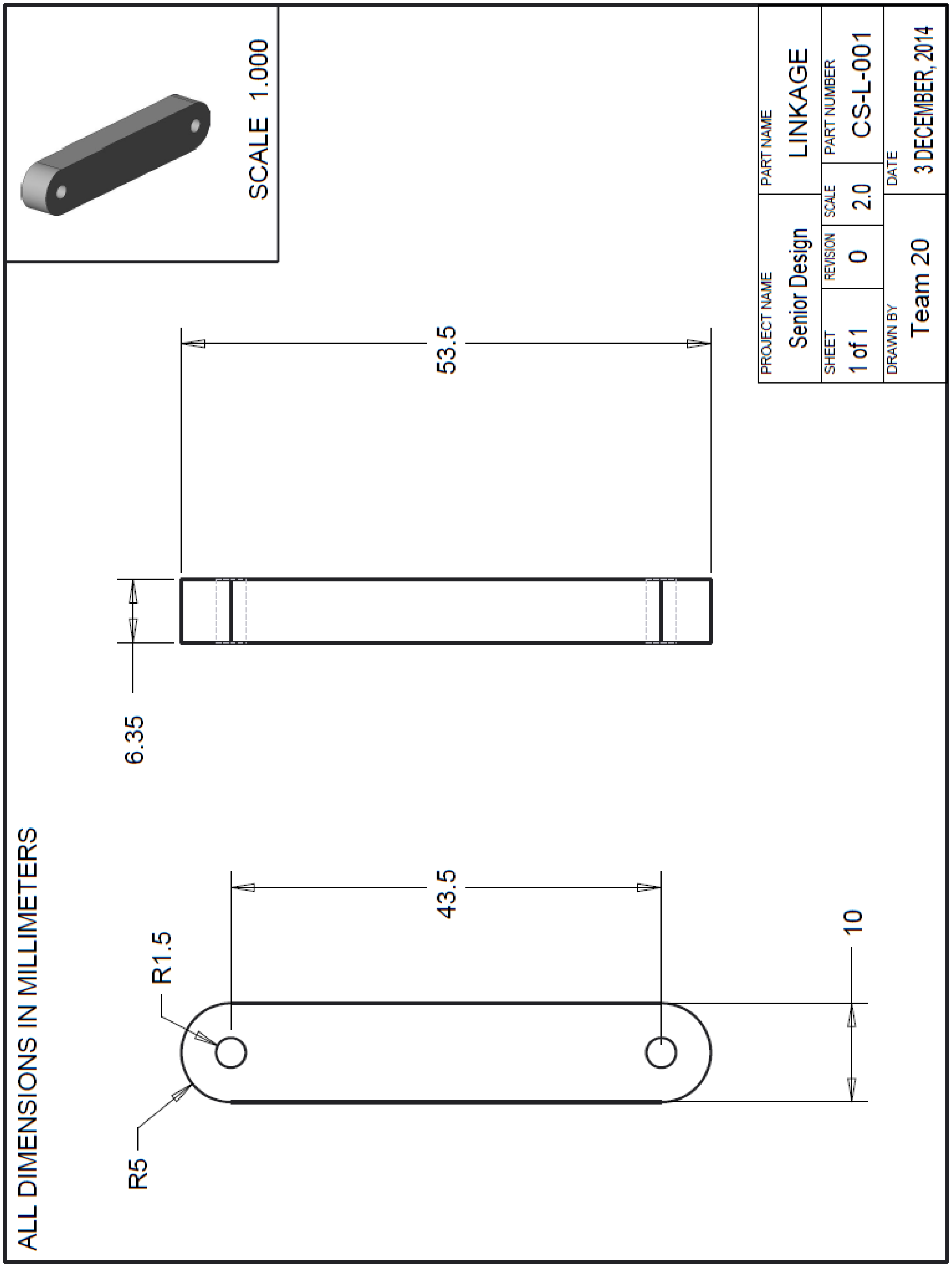


Figure. B-8. Crank slider linkage drawing

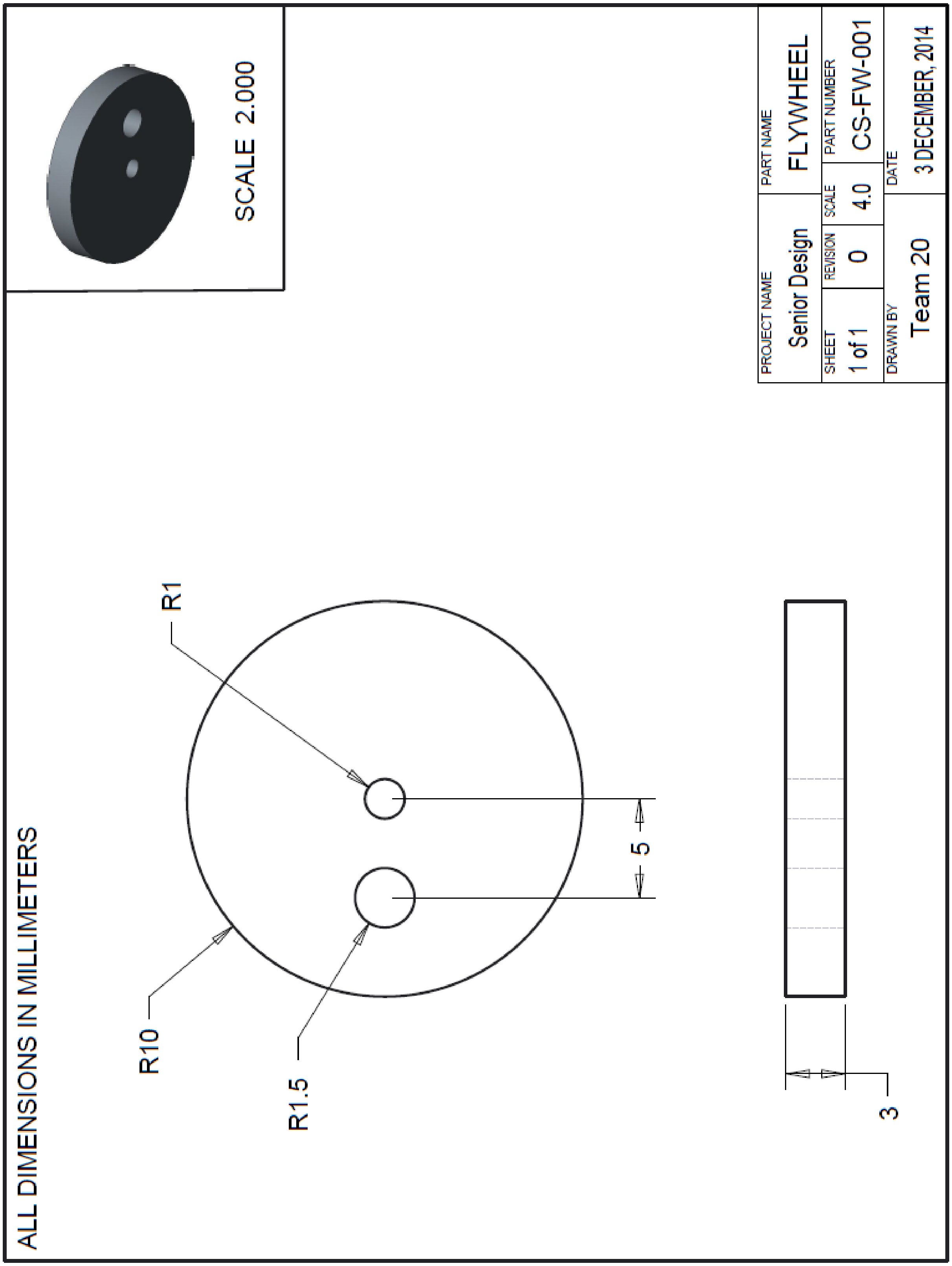


Figure. B-9. Crank slider flywheel drawing

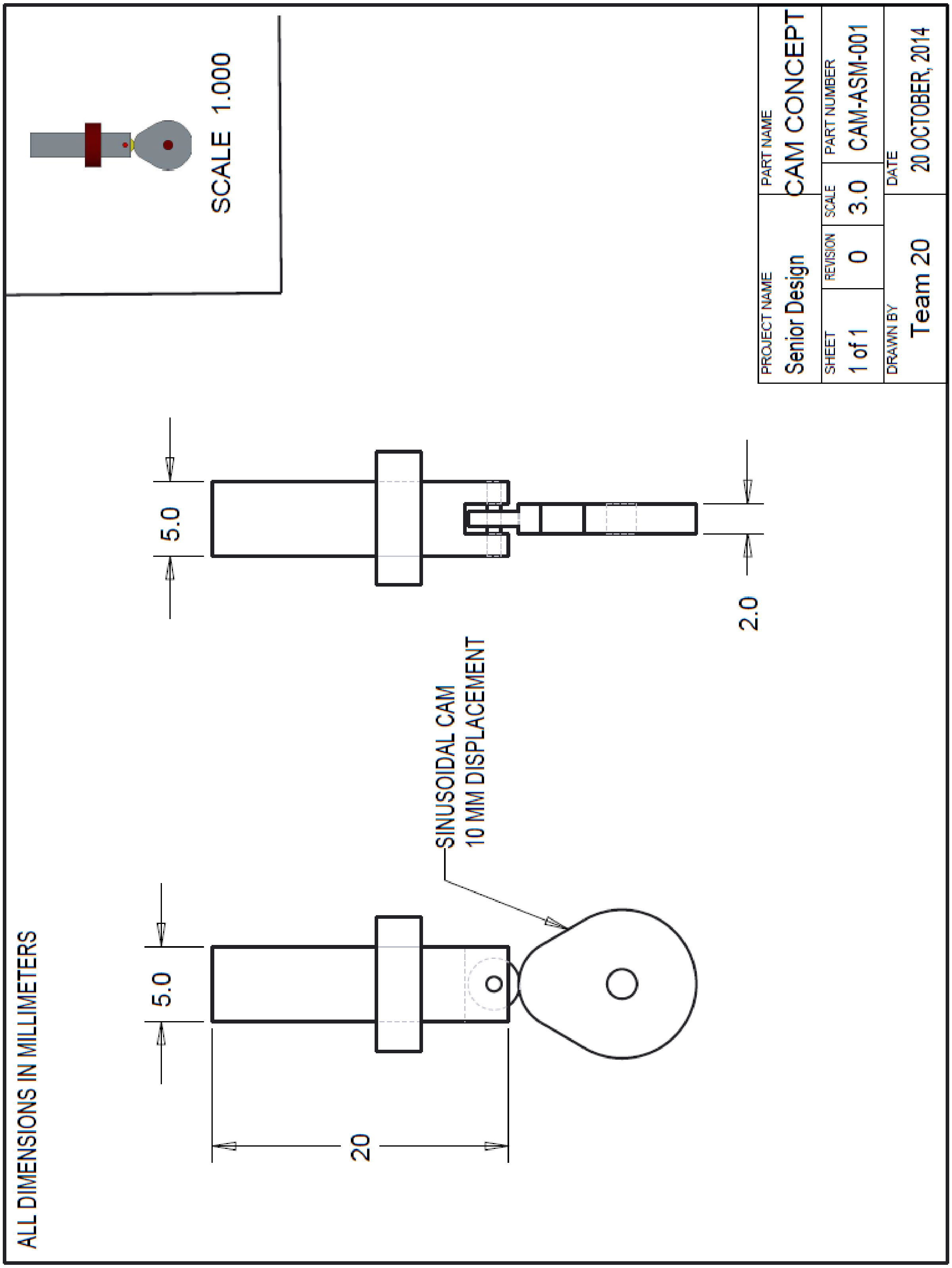


Figure. B-10. Cam design concept

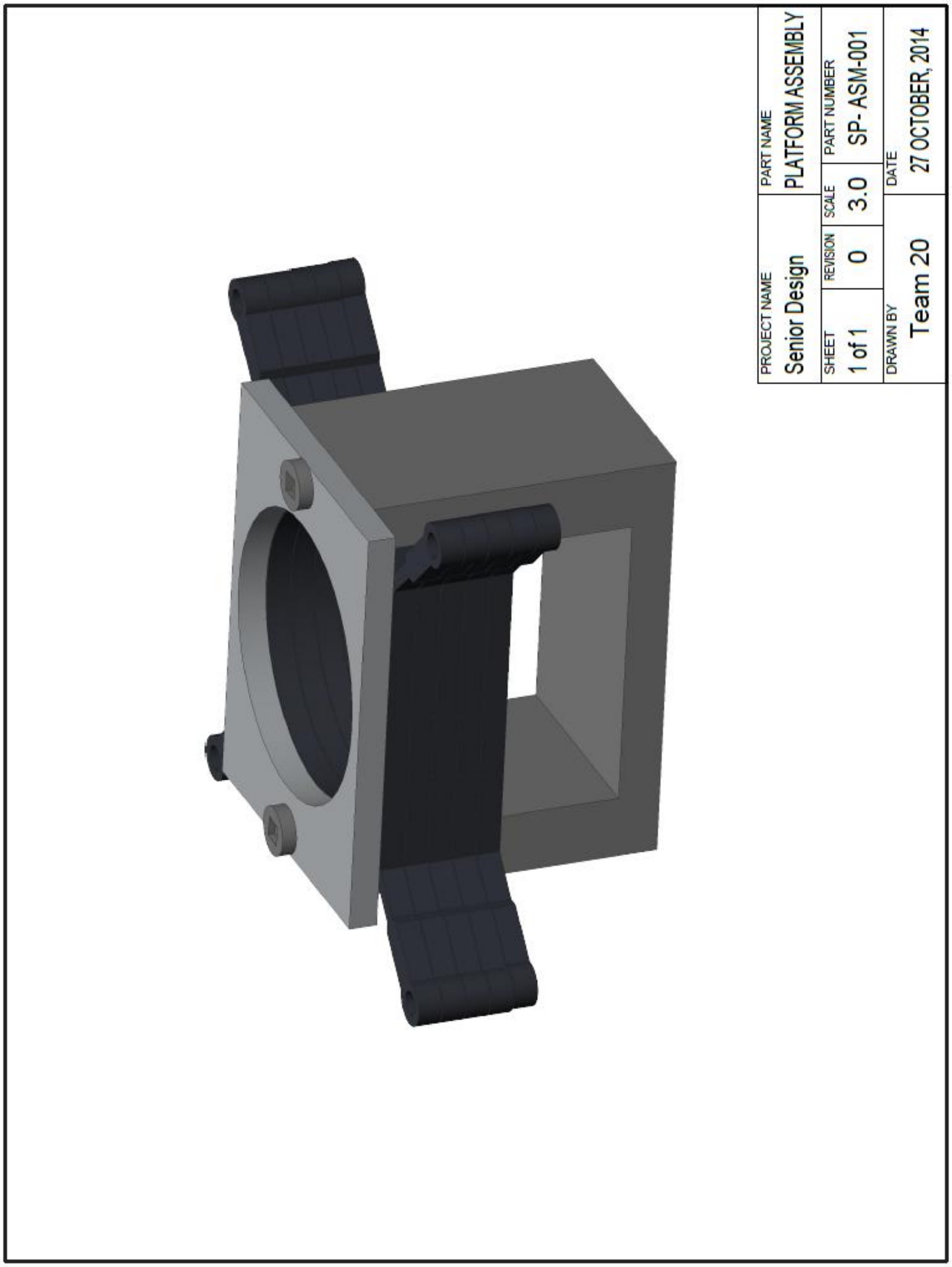


Figure. B-11. VHB frame holder assembly.

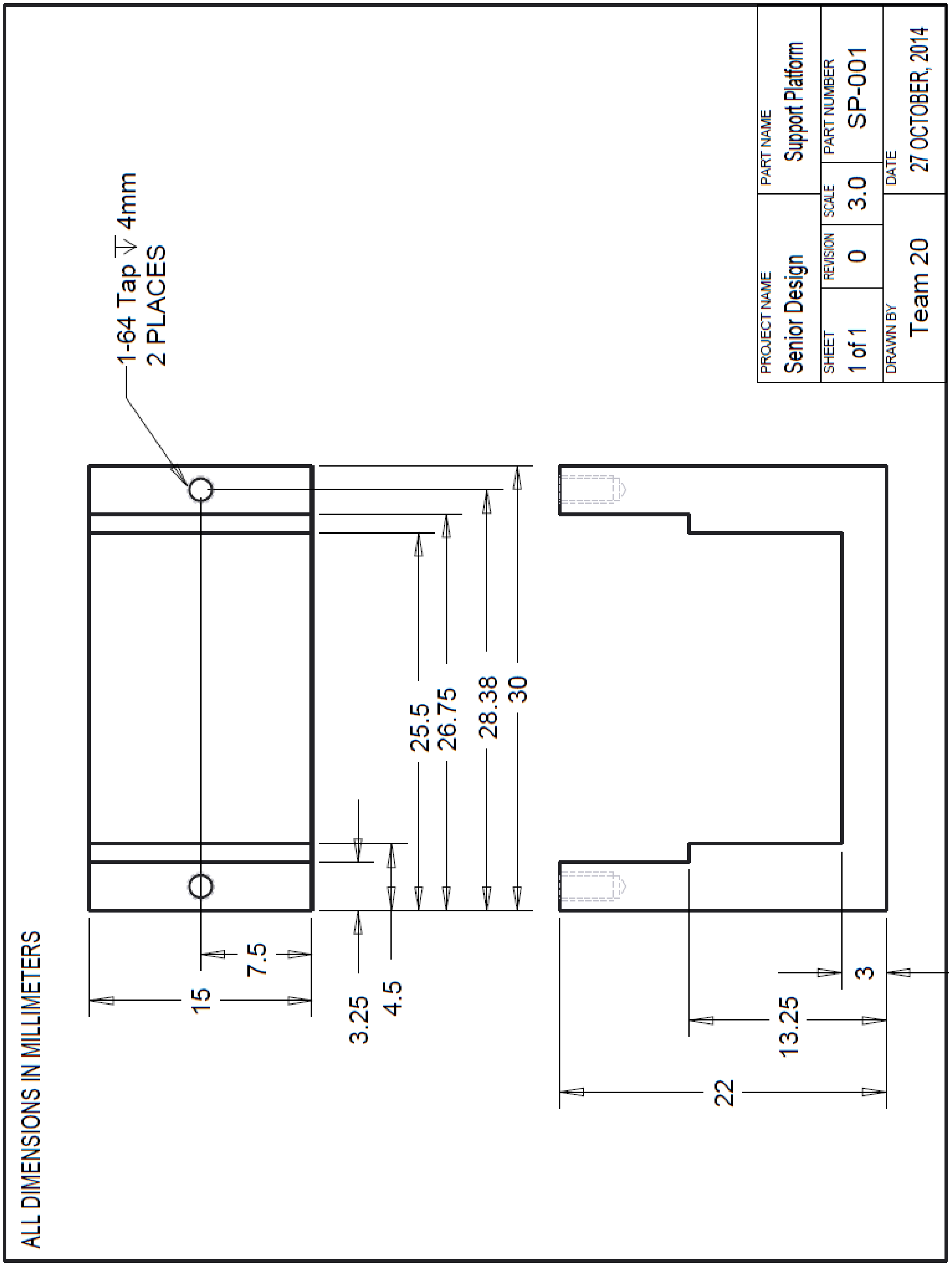


Figure. B-12. VHB frame holder drawing

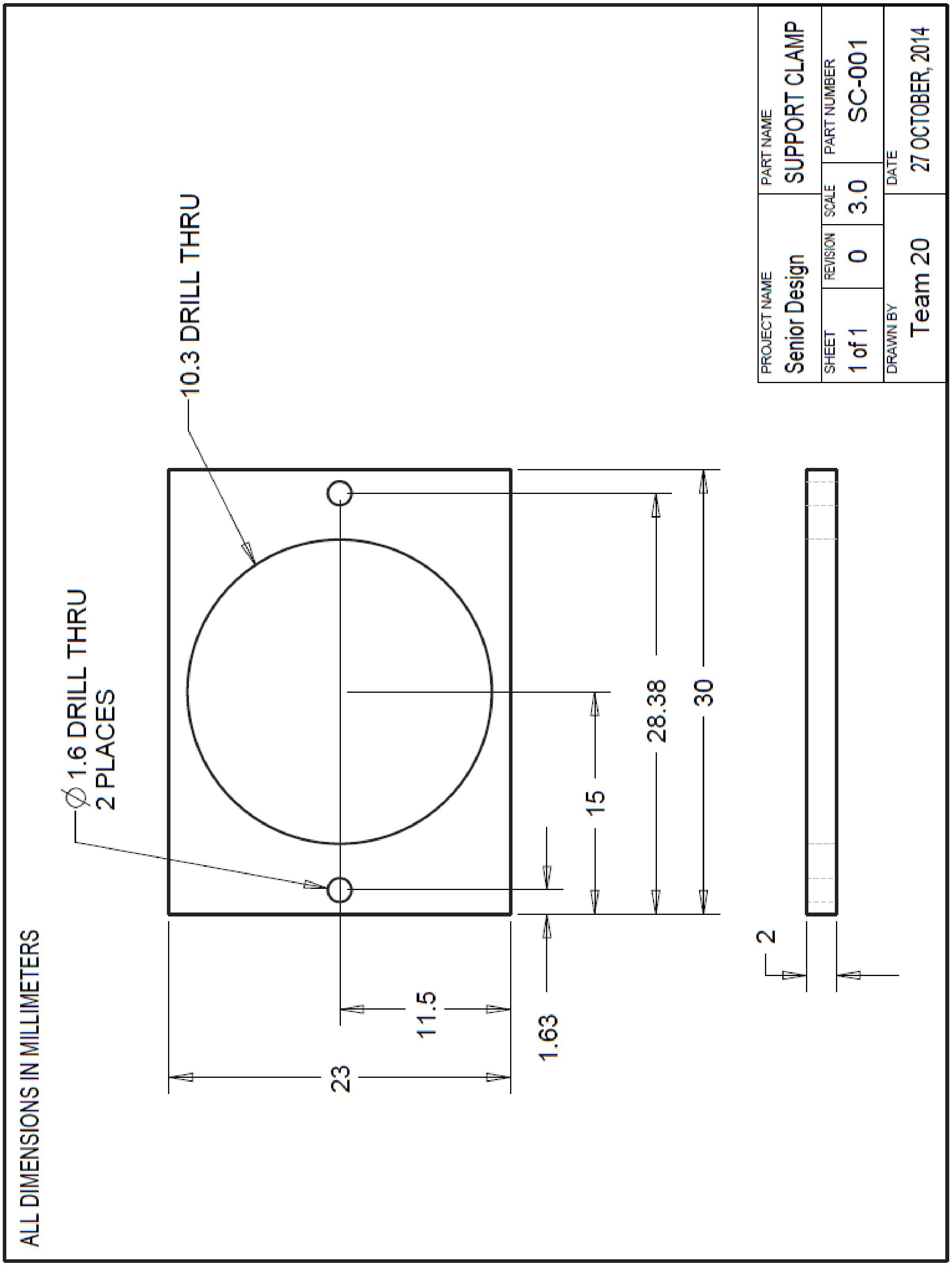


Figure. B-13. Support clamp drawing

APPENDIX C

**Calculations**

## Dynamic Loading

| | |
|---|---|
| $m := 1kg$ | estimated mass for device |
| $x := 10mm$ | maximum displacement |
| $w := 25Hz$ | maximum frequency |
| $x = x \cdot \sin(w \cdot t)$ | sinusoidal displacment |
| $a = x \cdot w^2 \cdot \sin(w \cdot t)$ | acceleration |
| $F = m \cdot a$ | Dyanmic force |
| $\boxed{F := m \cdot x \cdot (w \cdot 2 \cdot \pi)^2 = 246.74\,N}$ | Maximum force experienced during motion |

## Motor Calculations

| | |
|---|---|
| $w = 2 \cdot \pi \cdot f$ | Angular Velocity of the Motor |
| $f := 25Hz$ | Maximum Frequency |
| $\boxed{w := 2 \cdot \pi \cdot f = 1.5 \times 10^3 \cdot rpm}$ | Needed angular velocity of motor |

| | |
|---|---|
| $ForceMembrane = 5N$ | Expected force from displacement of membrane |
| $PlatformWeight = mass \cdot g$ | Weight of platform |
| $TotalForce = ForceMembrane + PlatformWiight$ | Total Force |
| $radius = 5mm$ | Largest displacement |
| $Torque = TotalForce \cdot \cos(\theta) \cdot radius$ | Where θ is measured from the motor shaft center of axis |
| $\boxed{Torque = (5N + m \cdot g) \cdot \cos(\theta) \cdot radius}$ | |