

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank all committee members for devoting their time for this thesis. Special thanks to my advisor Professor Z. Gürdal for his continuous support during my degree pursuit of last two years. I would also like to thank Dr. S. Missoum for many fruitful discussion, especially transferring to me his experience of Displacement Based Optimization from his pioneering work.

Finally, I am indebted to Virginia Tech Aerospace and Ocean Engineering Department and Ford Motor Co. for the financial support.