December 12, 2001 MEC Meeting


Absent: B. Cady, J. Jenkins, B. Kusse

Jim Bartsch called the meeting to order at 8:00am.

November MEC Minutes:
Jim asked the MEC members to review the minutes from the November 2001 MEC Meeting. Claude Cohen mentioned that the name of the Chemical Engineering Department was incorrect in the November 14th minutes – it should have read as Chemical and Biomolecular. The correction was noted, and the November 14, 2001 minutes will be corrected. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Explanation of The M.Eng. Tuition Income and Revenue Distribution Formula:
Jim Bartsch welcomed Assistant Dean Cathy Long to the meeting, and introductions were made. Cathy began her discussion by indicating that the College receives tuition income for M.Eng. students which is different than the process used for undergraduate and Ph.D. students. There is no revenue stream tied to Ph.D. or undergraduate tuition. Cathy included materials explaining the tuition return process and the basic algorithm used to distribute the tuition funds.

Process: The budget process takes place in the spring, and someone within Engineering Administration estimates the M.Eng revenue for the upcoming year. Methods of estimating revenue have included the departments providing enrollment estimates as well as the use of historical trends – both methods are inaccurate. A couple of times each semester Engineering Administration receives actual enrollment information from Institutional Planning and Research in addition to the Early Admit information from the Office of Research, Graduate Studies and Professional Education (ORGSPE). The information from those two offices is combined and distributed to the departments twice a semester for verification. In June we receive revenue funds and the transfers are made to the departments.

Current Allocation Issues: Cathy reviewed the report that was submitted to the Dean by the MEC, and in reference to the formula she noticed that the MEC clearly indicated a need for clarification of the formula to the faculty. Cathy asked the MEC members if they still felt it necessary for a broader communication of this information to all faculty. Graeme Bailey, Claude Cohen and Mark Eisner all indicated that her explanation of the formula had answered their questions and they would be comfortable communicating the information to their colleagues. Mark Eisner added that the main purpose of the discussion is to communicate the existing formula and not to put the formula on the table – to open it up for communication and ideas on how to count it could disrupt it. Cathy agreed to communicate the information to the Directors, Chairs and Administrative Managers and she will leave it up to the MEC to communicate the information to their colleagues.

Addition of Interdisciplinary Programs: With the addition of Systems Engineering, many questions have come up regarding the existing formula. The formula is based on historical trends, department estimates, and the counting of faculty FTEs within the department. A few examples of the types of questions raised are counting FTEs, what kind of revenue stream this formula is going to drive for interdisciplinary programs, what kind of revenue streams are necessary to support them and where does M.Eng revenue fit into that scheme. Mark Eisner asked Cathy if changes to the formula would need the MEC’s approval, and Cathy indicated that the formula wouldn’t change. The change would be in the way the counting takes place.

College of Engineering Budget Procedures: Mark Eisner asked Cathy if the size of the M.Eng. return is taken into account when determining what “the envelope” contains that the Chairs and Directors receive, and Cathy responded that yes, it is looked at as one of the revenue streams for the department. Cathy informed the MEC that “the envelope” had become the term given to this allocation methodology, and then
she briefly outlined the College’s budgetary procedures. The entire College has a budget of $110 million (actually larger now, but the proportions remain the same). The bulk, more than 50%, comes from gifts and grants, $39 million comes from the University, $15 million comes from M.Eng tuition revenue, co-op tuition revenue, unrestricted gifts, restricted gifts, investment income and a little service revenue. Out of the $110 million, M.Eng revenue is $2.1 million. Also included in the $110 million is a subset of $15 million in restricted and unrestricted funds —$7 million is available for the Dean to allocate for College operations. Of that $7 million, $1.5 million goes back to departments for M.Eng return. The remaining $5 1/2 million can be added to the provosts $39 million for the budget that the Dean allocates throughout the entire college. In FY01 the $46 million was allocated as such:

60% of the $46 million goes for faculty salaries and benefits
15% is TA tuition and stipend
Each department receives their allocation from the Dean (as a side note, Cathy reminded the MEC that the departments still need to raise a lot of money to support their programs). The only restriction put on the allocation is that departments can’t split faculty lines into two. The departments are responsible for planning 3-5 years in advance for everything — start-up funds, renovations, the extra costs of running their department, etc. In addition, the Dean commits to helping fund raise for any department priority in the College. One of the benefits of this allocation methodology is that any savings incurred by the departments are kept for future planning.

Cathy was thanked by Jim and the other MEC members for her presentation.

**Explanation of M.Eng. Financial Aid Allocation:**

Joe referred to Appendix A of the By-Laws, Allocation of Undesignated and Designated Funds # 8-11, which explains the process for allocating financial aid resources to the fields. He also distributed a 2001-02 Financial Aid Allocation Explanation. We receive income from endowments/principles that gain revenue. Money also comes from unused/returned allocations from the previous year. In rare cases, there will be balance carry forwards from special M.Eng accounts. Joe reviewed the Allocation Explanation information with the MEC, explaining that the M.Eng. financial aid funds are divided into two areas – Total Funds Distributed to M.Eng. Fields and M.Eng. Awards. The funds allocated to the M.Eng. Awards area does not get allocated directly to the fields. A Financial Aid subcommittee is convened every year to review nominations from each field. Three MEC Fellowships are awarded each year to the top three student applicants. Additionally, students submit Financial Aid Application Forms for the Special M.Eng. Awards (Arps, Knight, CME accounts, etc.). The remaining funds are allocated between the fields. The base allocation for each field for 2001-02 was $6592.50 (1/2 of the Ph.D. stipend) in addition to the field specific accounts that ORGSPE manages. The field specific funds are not part of the allocation. Other possible sources of funds could include carryover from the previous year (limited to 1-full tuition). The Supplementary Allocations are the remaining funds distributed to the fields based on a 2-year average enrollment. Included in Joe’s packet of information was a copy of the 2001-02 M.Eng. Financial Aid Awards Application which outlines the application requirements for the M.Eng. Special Awards. The application form is mailed to all incoming students in addition to being available on the web. The last page of Joe’s packet of information explains how the field allocation is derived. The initial projections are distributed to the fields in late February/early March.

**Petitions:**

**Civil & Environmental Engineering:**

Professor Linda Nozick presented the petition for Jacqueline Bloomingdale, a CEE Early Admit applicant. Jim Bartsch volunteered that Jacqueline is his advisee, and Jim neglected to tell Linda that Jacqueline’s GPA wasn’t above 2.7 which required a petition to be filed with the MEC. CEE is petitioning for Jacqueline to join the Engineering Management Program as of the S’02 semester as an Early Admit student. Linda indicated that Jacqueline’s grades are below normal standards (currently she has a 2.4 GPA, but she received a 3.2 last semester). She has worked for GM every summer, as well as through her Co-Op internship. One of
her jobs at GM was as a line supervisor in a V-8 assembly plant and she was very successful in the blue collar work environment – manufacturing and assembly line management are her goals. Jacqueline received strong letters of recommendation from Jim Bartsch and Professor Timmons. Linda indicated that she is aware that Jacqueline will struggle, but she offers a different personality to the projects. Jacqueline received her undergraduate degree in ABEN she has received a permanent job offer from GM (they are willing to hold her position offer while she completes her M.Eng. degree). Mark Eisner asked why the student wasn’t considering the Manufacturing Option, and Linda indicated that Jacqueline wants a business-oriented program. Jim added that Jacqueline had come to ABEN from Biology – she has had a long pathway at Cornell. Linda concluded by telling the MEC that CEE would require Jacqueline to take a 3-semester program, and she is comfortable with that request. Jim made a motion to approve the petition and it was unanimously approved.

**Materials Science & Engineering:**
At the November MEC meeting, David Grubb presented the Committee with a petition for their former student, Dai-Yin Li. The MEC requested additional information regarding the student, and David has acquired that information. The MEC questioned why Dai-Yin Li didn’t receive a Special Masters degree upon completion of his study in Materials Science, and David discovered that Dai-Yin never had his thesis examined. The thesis was produced in 1999 in Taiwan, but the student didn’t return to submit it. David also discovered that Dai-Yin Li had a 1-year Terminal Masters Program. Dai-Yin is now in Boston at MIT, and the Materials Science Special Committee has agreed to give the student a Masters degree after he has fulfilled all of the requirements, including the submission of his thesis. David asked Dai-Yin why he didn’t complete the requirements, and the student’s response was unclear – possibly he was not properly advised or he thought that since 2 years had lapsed since he submitted the thesis that he would have difficulty on the exam. David indicated to the MEC that he feels that Dai-Yin should submit his thesis and take the exam for his Special Masters degree. Dai-Yin is also being allowed to take a month off from his MIT studies to come to Cornell to take the exam to become eligible for the Special Masters degree. The original petition motion was that Dai-Yin be admitted retroactively into the M.Eng program. Jim made a motion to allow the student to retroactively receive his M.Eng degree in Materials Science. All opposed, no one abstained. The motion was not approved.

**ORGSPE Announcements and Updates**

**December Recognition Reception:**
Jim reminded the MEC members of the December 21st recognition reception for August ’01 and January ’02 graduates. The reception will be held from 3:00pm – 4:00pm in G10 Biotechnology Building, and RSVPs should be made to Dawn Warren at 5-7413.

**Meetings for S’02 semester:**
Jim announced to the MEC that the existing MEC meeting schedule (2nd Wednesday of every month) means that we will meet in February. He asked if anyone needed to meet before February. John Belina indicated that he has 2 petitions for students (regular admission) who are trying to enroll in ECE for the Spring semester, but the department requires the grades for Fall semester before the petitions can be addressed. John suggested that the petitions could be handled via email. Jim agreed to the electronic vote assuming the petitions are straight-forward. ORGSPE will handle the distribution of the petitions through electronic vote.

**M.Eng. By-Laws:**
Joe Shultz announced that the most recent version of the bylaws is included in their packet (approved in May 2001). He continues to work on it to ensure all changes are perfect. The Glossary and Index will be added – it is still a work in progress. Jim asked Joe if ORGSPE would distribute copies to the Graduate Field Assistants so each field has at least two copies.

**2002 Engineering Graduate Research Symposium:**
Joe announced the availability of posters for the March 29th Graduate Research Symposium. He added that
he would like to encourage greater M.Eng. participation.

**Ad Hoc Report Update:**

Joe indicated that the report has been updated with the additions from the last MEC meeting and will distribute it via email for comments before the February meeting. Jim has suggested that the report be reviewed one last time at the February MEC meeting before submitting it to the Dean.

**New Business:**

Michel Louge requested that the Dean of the Graduate School be asked to attend the February MEC meeting to discuss reforms of the International Teaching Assistantship (ITA) Program issues. He indicated that he feels the ITA Program will adversely impact our fields. John Belina asked if ORGSPE would distribute information regarding these changes prior to the February meeting. Graeme Bailey indicated that the funding for ITA was covered by the Provost's Office last year, but the intent was that the funding would not continue. The training expense of $1,000/student would have to be picked up by each department and the students would only have to be paid if they have to take the program. The only way to avoid taking the program is to receive exemption by body (at the last minute). Additionally, the ITA Program is currently optional, but it will become obligatory. The pressure is mounting to review the ITA.

A motion was made to adjourn and was approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:06am.