Master of Engineering Committee Minutes  
May 14, 2003- 8:00am - 9:00am  
201 Hollister Hall

Attendees:  Graeme Bailey, James Bartsch, John Belina, Larry Cathles, Claude Cohen, Mark Eisner, David Grubb, Mike Hayes, Fred Kulhawy, Bruce Kusse, Matt Miller, Larry Newman, Mark Otis, Dawn Warren

Guests: Patty Apgar, Karen Biesecker

Absent: Bing Cady, Jim Jenkins

Meeting Summation: Efforts will be made to make students aware of hard petition deadlines. D-Space project participation. SARS visa process and no-show update. Application database project.

Jim called the meeting to order at 8:04am with a request to review the April 9, 2003 minutes. Minutes approved as submitted.

Course Enrollment Petition Deadline Information:

Mike Hayes:
Encourage faculty teaching M.Eng. classes to post grades early next week (before Wednesday). The deadline for grades is the same as the graduation list deadline (Thursday noon). Our office will pick up the Grade Sheets from the Graduate Registrar’s Office on Wednesday and we’ll distribute them to the GFAs so they can begin tracking down grades.

Karen Biesecker:
Awards based on academic achievement are held up due to late grade posting.

Mike Hayes:
This is an ongoing Grad school problem. We will have a conversation about this to resolve it in the future.

Patty Apgar:
Is there a way to get the University Registrar to send out a notice to the entire university including non-engineering colleges?

Mike Hayes:
More than needing a new system for recording grades, it’s about getting the grades in. Also, I had a conversation with Ron Watkins about the numbers of manual grade forms and petitions that are being submitted to the Graduate School, particularly for M.Eng students. Many students are attempting to remove records with W’s after the deadline, students not knowing that they had a requirement and attempting to add credit courses near end of semester. Please let students know the Graduate School requirements and deadlines. Ron mentioned problems
related to adding courses for credit and removing cancelled classes. I have copy of graduation school policy if anyone wants to see it.

Mark Eisner:
We should put this on the agenda a month into the start of the Fall semester.

Larry Newman:
A summary sheet with dates students need to be aware of will be helpful.

Mike Hayes:
Over the summer, ORGSPE will look at the policy manuals and get some dates down for a summary sheet to hand out to students during Orientation.

Through the Strategic Planning Process, we are discovering that graduate students and faculty have a lack of awareness of the services available to the students centrally. ORGSPE would like to make a 5-10 minute appearance at the field orientations to present Graduate School policy information for all students -- not exclusive to M.Eng.

**D-Space Update:**
Mike Hayes:
The M.Eng. program is the only program participating in this voluntary online theses project. Bob Cooke, Dean of Faculty, is spearheading this from the University side, and he is requesting that we capture information electronically -- there is no specific deadline.

**MEC Student Petitions:**
Graeme Bailey:
Petition for Jason G., a student here about 8 years ago, would like to complete his M.Eng. He has done very well in his classes since he returned to campus, and he has 4 people interested in working with him on projects. I would like to propose a provisional admission into the CS M.Eng. program. The provisions are for a strong performance rather than letter grade – translates into B+ or A-. Motion to approve, unanimously approved.

John Belina:
Petition for Tatiana L. who has done very well since S’01. She’s taking some M.Eng. classes this semester, and she has strong support from the department. We are proposing a provisional admit (B or better in all courses for F’03).

Graeme Bailey volunteered his support of Tatiana, and a motion was made to approve the petition. Unanimously approved.

**SARS, visa processing and no-shows:**
Mark Otis:
I had a conversation with Brendan O’Brien from ISSO (International Students & Scholars Office). They are following the lead of Gannett, and Gannet is following the lead of the federal govt. The official visitors and summer guest policy is that if the borders are open, they can attend. The School has no policy as far as restrictions. If new students get here, we will admit them. If they can’t get here because of travel restrictions, they are working on a policy to deal with that situation.

Mark distributed an e-mail he received from ISSO regarding SARS.

SEVIS documentation deadline – all students must have SEVIS documents in hand by August 1st. ISSO has contacted all int’l students to make them aware of this document need. (Documents: updated and accurate information, copies of passports, home country/permanent resident information etc.) This applies to visitors as well.

Mark Eisner:
Please send us something electronically that we can distribute to our students

Mike Hayes:
Late applicants will not be likely to receive their visa appointments in time.

Mark Otis:
The I-20 processing is grave. The Graduate Admissions Office hopes to have the forms returned to us by the second week of June for mailing.

Several of the MEC members voiced concern over the Graduate School’s I-20 turnaround time, and Mike Hayes was asked to bring this to the attention of Dean Fuchs and Cathy Long.

**Application Database Project:**

Mark Otis:
We are exploring the possibility of developing an application database project. Each field currently maintains their own separate database for application process, and a committee exists to review the process. Applications processed through CollegeNet (software service the Graduate School uses now) can be accessed online. This is an on-going project, and I can provide you with specific information and a list of the people involved.

Mark Eisner:
Continuity of data is very important to us, and we would hate to lose the abilities we currently have to review past data.

Mark Otis:
We hope it will be a seamless process. When we looked into it, we discovered
that data from a paper application was manually being entered up to three separate
times in the whole process.

Mark Eisner:
It is an admirable effort.

Mike Hayes:
The Graduate School eventually wants to go with online application only, and
their goal is 80%.

Mark Otis:
Currently there is 60% processing through CollegeNet. I don’t know the validity
of that, but they would like to go to 90% with a realistic expectation of 85% of the
applications being processed via CollegeNet. CollegeNet takes a 5-10% cut of
the application fee, and for that they process all the billing and transmit to the
college all the data from the applications with a pdf file of the application.

John Belina:
Do you have someone from the University Admissions Office who has been
through the process on the committee? I recommend Lonnie Franklin.

Mark Otis:
This is exploratory at this point. We anticipate running this in parallel with the
existing system to see the validity of it. Working with Karen Biesecker, we ran a
test run -- a manual way of doing this. CollegeNet passed us the data and the pdf
files and that was a great improvement right there. We are going to explore
beyond that.

Mark Eisner:
Commercial software is the way to go.

Mark Otis:
We are also aware that there are solutions, and people are proposing solutions.
This wouldn’t be inhibited by any of those eventual solutions. This is really about
avoiding having to retype the data off of paper. So we are taking into account that
the school might move to some larger system at some point. We are just trying to
make that data available.

Mark Eisner:
I went to the Registrar on an issue about degree audit software, and they promised
Peoplesoft we wouldn’t install any new systems.

Mark Otis:
I don’t think this project, even if we were to take it forward, would interfere with
any sort of larger choices. What we are really talking about is gathering all of the
data, electronically, in one place and having it be a touchstone for all of the different data sources that are out there. One reliable, fixed source so we aren’t constantly chain-updating everyone else’s database.

Jim Bartsch:  
Will it be in Filemaker?

Mark Otis:  
Not necessarily. There is a myriad of tool options available. I will provide information to those who are interested. Over the summer we will be in the exploratory phase and we hope to have something to look at by fall. It will not replace any system that exists now but may possibly run in parallel to what exists now.

Jim Bartsch:  
The field assistants will be aware of this?

Mark Otis:  
Yes, I met with them recently to discuss this.

**Other Business:**  
Mark Eisner:  
I wondered if people are seeing an unusually high level of stress this spring.

The MEC members made various affirmative comments.

A motion was made to adjourn at 8:50. Approved.