
Guests: Bob Cooke, Patty Apgar, Karen Biesecker

Absent: Mike Hayes, Jim Jenkins, Mark Otis,

Summary: DSpace Update and MEC DSpace Subcommittee; Shanghai Visa Inquiry; Early Admit Form Revision Request; M.Eng. Financial Aid Allocation Inquiry; Strategic Plan Update.

Jim called the meeting to order at 8:02am.

Approval of September 10, 2003 Minutes:
The September 10th MEC minutes were approved as submitted.

Electronic Submissions – Bob Cooke
Bob Cooke:
This is part of a larger project on scholarly publishing. Progress report was distributed (not yet publicly released). We have a grant to try to change the culture of higher education publishing. Library community feels that there are a few commercial publishers taking advantage of their position by pulling distribution of faculty scholarship so that they have control of the only copy of it and charge people to access it. It’s causing serious problems for the university. The materials budget for the university is about $14 million a year, total library budget is about $38 million – about $25,000 per faculty member if you want to put it on a per faculty member basis. The problem goes much deeper though. In the past, the library owned the material and used it as often as they wished. In the new world that’s going digital, it’s likely that we won’t own the contents of our library but will lease it. It’s clear that the students and faculty like access to digital material, but there are quite a few faculty who insist on having paper. We have put together a project that will allow us to have the best of both worlds -- on-demand access, print when needed. We require three additional miles of shelf space each year for new storage. We have spent $100 million in the last 10 years for library construction. In the paper world, you need to have a paper copy of the documents locally in order to gain access. The solution to the problem comes if we look at higher education on a national scale, as opposed to a local scale. If it’s digital, you don’t have to have everything on campus all the time, allowing for removal of redundancy in the system. Making things useable by the computer makes them faster and more extensive. The answer to the problem on how we
afford this transition is to have each campus pay for their own scholarly output and give it away.

Mark Eisner:
Why national and not international?

Bob Cooke:
It will be international soon. We are involved with the UK currently. We are working from where we know the situation and will move out from there. Locally, you don’t see a problem with redundancy, but it is clearly reflected when viewing the national system. The body of knowledge doubles every 12-14 years. Savings will also be reflected in cataloging, shuttling the materials back and forth to shelf/user, and libraries could organize so the reference librarian duties are a shared responsibility. Technology for all of this is essentially in place and sufficiently complete. The problem remaining is a political and cultural one, not technological. This system will change the dynamics of how we function. The handout lists 9 books and 3 videos that we have acquired by donation, and they are currently in production and will be available on-line before the end of the semester.

Another project is the thesis, the graduate scholarship that is produced at this university. There are approximately 2,000 graduate degrees awarded by Cornell annually. The predominant culture is that the student’s research is turned into a publication and published. Many of these theses remain on the shelves. The Engineering Library has attempted to get thesis online for at least 20 years, but we’re at the point where it can happen. We’ve approached the Graduate School’s general committee and gotten their endorsement. We also approached the Graduate and Professional Student Association, and they have endorsed it. We have offered one proviso, that it will be entirely at the discretion of the student as to whether it goes on-line or not. In the Humanities, many times the thesis is turned into a novel and they will want to polish it further – a legitimate reason for delaying it. Another reason for delay is that some journals at the moment won’t publish if it has already been made available, and putting it on-line is considered publishing. CU Faculty have the right to dictate when/if their materials are published.

We have a DRAFT Manual for how to prepare the thesis, and we would like to include the Professional Master’s degrees. Some departments put their reports in library and some do not. The students would benefit by having it referenced, if they so choose. The Project has bought a database system called DSpace. MIT had a grant by HP to create the software. The members of the consortium are MIT, Columbia, Cornell, Rochester, Ohio State, Toronto and University of Washington Seattle are members of the initial adopters. The library community has developed a consensus that a digital repository is the wave of the future. It allows them to capture materials so they have more leverage with the publishers. I would like us to capture the material ourselves and let the commercial publishers negotiate with us to get it instead of vice versa.
In the case of books (which are considered too lengthy to be read on-line), we proposed to the Dean of the Arts College on-demand printing. The University Presses of the world (most of which are financially in trouble) initially published what wouldn’t be published elsewhere. They have been forced to behave like a commercial publisher to balance books, meaning that they are forced to make decisions on what they will publish. Faculty will be limited as to what they write about because the market won’t be there, sabotaging one of the virtues of the University Press. I am proposing the Presses begin a line of digital publication that allows them to referee it, copy edit it, and put it in DSpace on-line, and the author agrees to give it away to the world with no royalty. The Print Shop would produce a paper copy at the expense of the reader when desired.

Conversations regarding laboratory space and start-up costs are a consideration for new faculty hires in the Engineering College, but Humanities behave differently. Faculty hires in Humanities sometimes hinge on the publishing of a book. I’m proposing that we extend DSpace ($10,000 in an escrow, reserve account) to the Humanities faculty to cover the cost of editing and getting it on-line.

DSpace doesn’t transfer copy write – it lightens the non-exclusive license for it to be given away; No royalty will be given to faculty; No up-front cash grants for faculty. The money would come from Dean’s Office or through gifts/endowments. It offers the right to migrate the format from Word to whatever if they wished. It will refresh the memory, and the library would take that on. Standard formats will be chosen – PDF for the moment. Library would upgrade some things and store the format data structure for future reference.

The Cornell Print Shop and Lightening Source Print on Demand are currently looking at the printing aspect of this project. Lightening Source stores digital copies of books and prints them one at a time. They have worldwide distribution and publishing chains. Their thesis and project report audience is small. They are set up in such that if a report is submitted, they can print one copy without limit requirements (the local print shop requires a run of about 50 to justify uploading it). They offer both hardcover and soft cover, interior content must be black and white, and the exterior cover can be color and black and white. A committee will need to be established to determine margin size, page size, etc. They have a setup fee, and the print charge is .15/page, an annual digital catalog fee of under $50 for hardcover. For $7 I have had 200-page soft cover books printed with perfect binding.

Mark Eisner:
   Our project sponsors pay for publication costs.
John Belina:
   I’d worry about people changing the format.
Bob Cooke:
We are standardizing with PDF. Acrobat can be inexpensively purchased, and it has the signature capability that will determine if the document has been tampered with. PDF will be on-line and will be blocked.

Mark Eisner:
M.Eng. project sponsors sometimes require the report to have limited distribution.

Bob Cooke:
You could choose not to submit it at all, or allow the student to make that decision. We won’t interfere with your relationship with the sponsor. The Research Office offers a delayed time for publication, and I think we will want to offer something analogous for graduates such as opting out for 5 years but then the University will be able to publish it for the public.

Mark Eisner:
I thought there was a requirement that M.Eng. reports be on the open shelves, but I’ve discovered that’s not the case. For instance, if competitive information was involved in a sponsored project, the sponsor may not want the information available for public access.

Bob Cooke:
I think for scholarship reasons, you would want it to go public at some point, and we will give you some grace period, but I’m not imposing what that should be. This committee will need to decide that. DSpace has both full open access as well as password protected. We could put it up so that only Engineering Faculty could read it or whomever we choose as the audience. It is built around communities, and this committee would become the owner of the M.Eng. community, having say over when documents would be put on line.

Richard Lovelace:
Who decides what part of the material in the annex gets into this electronic system?

Bob Cooke:
The part of the grant that I am connected with won’t be used for going backward to any extent.

I need to think through how many books Cornell Faculty have that are out of print that would be worth putting on line. If you have retained a word processor file for the book, have the rights to it, and are willing to give it away (and you feel it still has contemporary value), we are thinking about whether to put those on line in PDF format.

With regard to journals, we are trying to persuade the professional societies to go open access, but they have noticed a significant drop-off in subscription rates when they have gone on-line in the past, so we are trying to find a solution to that problem. Eventually, we hope to create our own on-line journals.

Matt Miller:
If we have faculty who are interested, is there a web site established?

Bob Cooke:
Have your faculty e-mail me at jrc7@cornell.edu. For general information on the project, they can access the site at http://dspace.library.cornell.edu.

Graeme Bailey:
Browsing is possible with paper, but digital doesn’t accommodate browsing. Think of ways to make it browse able.

Richard Lovelace:
This might be a possible answer for the annex, to have on-line abstracts created.

Jim Bartsch:
Are you currently set-up to receive M.Eng. reports?

Bob Cooke:
That’s the next step. I have 6 M.Eng. reports on this 128MB hard drive which are from ORIE and BEE. As soon as this committee can establish some standards, the M.Eng. office will make submission to the system. Students will submit to a buffer, where it stays until the degree list is finished.

Jim Bartsch:
Currently the fields clear all the M.Eng. people, so ORGSPE may need to get in the loop. We will have to talk about this process.

Mark Eisner:
Do you need a motion to form a committee?

Jim Bartsch:
First, I’ve always been concerned regarding the lack of standardization on reports. Maybe we don’t want to be totally standardized…

Mark Eisner:
I recommend a representative subcommittee.

Subcommittee volunteers: Graeme Bailey, Mark Eisner, John Belina, and David Grubb.

Jim Bartsch:
The Subcommittee will meet and begin deliberations on guidelines for standardization.

**Early Admit and Visa Problems:**

Mark Eisner:
ORIE had 4 students turned down in Shanghai. I contacted Brendan O’Brien in ISSO to ask if there is something specific about obtaining a visa in Shanghai compared to elsewhere, and he wasn’t aware of a problem. I’d like to ask each of you to review your records to see if there have been any problems with Shanghai students in particular.

Regarding the Early Admit issue, apparently the Engineering Registrar has been allowing students to determine when they will graduate. Although the student may have completed all their course requirements, they are being allowed to take as few as one undergraduate course to stay around for another semester. These students are causing us a problem in Early Admit because they are not generating any revenue for the M.Eng. Program.
Graeme Bailey:
That is in harmony with the Arts College. In fact, they have actually prevented students from graduating early on the premise that they haven’t been sufficiently rounded.

Mark Eisner:
The Undergraduate Field Coordinators are feeling pressured by our Early Admission Petition and Course Record Form (that they must sign), which states, “I certify that the above named student will have between 1-8 credits remaining to satisfy requirements for an undergraduate degree as specified above.” My question is, do others feel a need as we do to change the wording so they only get that certification if the student must take those courses rather than can take those courses. Students are holding back 1 credit to qualify for Early Admit, and they are using undergraduate financial aid for the M.Eng. program.

Matt Miller:
Mike Hayes and I had a discussion at the end of the last MEC meeting, and Mike was going to ascertain what our policy is. My specific question was, “does a student have to graduate when all their requirements have been met.”

Mark Eisner:
They no longer have to graduate when they complete all their requirements – that’s the COE rule.

Jim Bartsch:
All undergraduate engineering programs are certified in the department. The departments send a list to the Engineering Registrar notifying them that the students have met the department’s requirements. If the field can be convinced not to send the student’s name forward, that’s the field’s choice. More likely, the students are holding back one required course.

Matt Miller:
Now you don’t need to hold back.

Mark Eisner:
Our Undergraduate Field Coordinator is asking if we can “put some teeth” into our form to disallow students from starting their M.Eng. in situations like this.

Larry Cathles:
It would be my preference for the undergraduates to have a broader undergraduate experience and then move to the M.Eng. Program. I’m not sure we want to put as much “teeth” into having them graduate after satisfying a set of requirements.

Mark Eisner:
This isn’t saying anything about having to graduate. This is saying the Undergraduate Field Coordinator will sign-off to a statement that reads something like, “I certify that the above named student must take the above listed courses to satisfy the undergraduate requirement.” Students will still be able to hold back a course if they are so inclined, but our form won’t appear to endorse that process.

Graeme Bailey:
I worry that we will find ourselves in a legal battle. Some student will observe that this costs them money, the university has no policy requiring that student to
graduate upon completion of their minimum requirements, and the student will announce that the university has no policy. This could become a discriminatory issue. This will become the difference between the Engineering College and the Arts College. The Arts College will be adamant about not forcing the student to do that.

Mark Eisner:
I think we should continue this discussion at either the next MEC meeting or at the December meeting.

I also wanted to mention that the financial aid allocation is based on the counting only for the spring semesters. I’d like to open that up for discussion. Our spring semester runs into the Early Admit question, and our Early Admit students don’t count any longer – they don’t get counted in the base.

Graeme Bailey:
I was under the impression that Early Admit students were still being counted for the purpose of counting the number of people independent of the amount of money that was coming in from that.

Mark Eisner:
Yes, but not for financial aid. The formula for financial aid is based on the spring count of actual graduate students.

Other Business:
Jim Bartsch:
Deborah Cox phoned me regarding the Strategic Plan and the Dean’s attendance at the November 12th meeting. The Strategic Plan will include a statement that all Engineering programs are being proposed to have a status in the top 5 nationally, including M.Eng. Each program will be broken out and discussed separately. They will post whatever draft version on the COE Intranet. Our Intranet site will have a copy within 2 weeks for all to view. We will have Dawn send an e-mail when it gets posted.

The second issue involved the allocation of resources. The formula, linearization vs. non-linearization, is back to square one and is also included in the Strategic Plan. Deborah mentioned that they are discussing the use of endowments to help support the M.Eng. instead of playing games with numbers. They want our input.

Larry Newman:
I would like to give a Systems update at the December MEC meeting.

Jim Bartsch:
I haven’t heard if the Biomedical Engineering Program (BMEP) has been approved or not. We’ll update everyone at the December meeting. I’ve had a fair number of Early Admit students asking about admission to BMEP.

Motion to adjourn at 9:07am