MEC Meeting Minutes  
October 13, 2004  8:00 – 9:00am  
240 Carpenter Hall

Attendees:  Jim Bartsch, John Belina, Claude Cohen, Mark Eisner, David Grubb,  
            David Muller, Larry Newman, Mary Sansalone, Michael Shuler  
Guests:    Patty Apgar, Scott Coldren, Cathy Long, Michel Louge, Marcia Sawyer  
Absent:   Graeme Bailey, Bing Cady, Larry Cathles, Jim Jenkins, Matt Miller  

Summary:   Ecole Centrale strategic partnership; financial return models; engineering  
            petitions

Approval of Minutes:  
The September 8, 2004 minutes were approved unanimously.

Ecole Centrale – Cornell Strategic Partnership http://www.ecp.fr/index_en.htm:  
Michel Louge:

We currently have a very small number of undergraduates going abroad to study  
engineering, and the College of Engineering (COE) wants to increase those  
numbers in view of the importance of training global engineers. Several of our  
peer research universities are already taking part in international exchange  
programs.

Ecole Centrale initially proposed a partnership with Cornell 4-5 years ago, and we  
are reviewing similar agreements with China and India. A representative from  
Ecole Centrale will visit our campus to brief us on implications for a M.Eng.  
program. We currently have 6 Ecole students on campus this year.

The proposed partnership strategy entails exchanging a small number of Cornell  
undergraduates (5 per year) in addition to swapping one Cornell University and  
one Ecole Centrale professor (this exchange will not count against their  
sabbatical), and recruiting talented French PhDs and research interns to Cornell.  
As the program grows, we will send Cornell undergraduates to the TIME (Top  
Industrial Managers for Europe) network. The TIME network, founded by Ecole  
Centrale, grants dual degrees similar to 2-2-1, networks with industrial companies  
in Europe (mandatory internships), and includes top Engineering schools in 15  
countries. We would be the first university in NA to join the TIME network  
program.

The requirements for Cornell students are a GPA of 3.0 or better, A- or better in  
all Math and Physics, and they must have completed all their Math, Physics,  
Chemistry and French requirements.
Few majors at Cornell have a curricula flexible enough for the Junior Abroad Program -- CEE, MAE, and ORIE majors could participate if they take advantage of the summer Co-Op courses.

Independent Majors could participate in this program as a 2-2-1 Program, based upon the TIME network model. Stanford and MIT are already doing the 2-2-1 Program. Participating Independent Major students would do their Freshman and Sophomore years at Cornell, they would do their Junior and Senior years at Ecole Centrale, and they would return to Cornell for their M.Eng. Program. We have exit strategies in place in the event that the students don’t pan out over there. At the end of the experience, they receive their B.S. and M.Eng. diplomas from Cornell University, and an Ecole Centrale de Paris (ECP) diploma for having gone through the program.

What’s in it for us? We want a flow of students the other way. Students coming from Ecole Centrale will be top-notch students. The French grade conservatively -- their mean grade corresponds to our C- or C making it difficult to compare systems.

More than ½ of the European students go to East Coast schools – weather isn’t a problem. A Ph.D. will be pursued by some of the students, and currently the French are very interested in research. They have ½ the research expenditures that we have.

Ecole Centrale will not award a diploma unless the student receives their M.Eng. degree.

Jim Bartsch:
Personally, I think this Program has promise, particularly getting our students involved in the international arena.

Michael Shuler:
We have our M.Eng. set up with requirements based on prior coursework. It may require more than 2 semesters for students participating in this Program to complete their M.Eng.

Michel Louge:
It’s possible. I’ll look at it field-by-field.

Michael Shuler:
What would be their background in biology? That would be the type of question I would have.

David Muller:
Regarding the Faculty exchange – we send one CU Professor and they send one from Ecole -- who pays?

Michel Louge:
We’re working that out. Ecole has sufficient funding for faculty exchange programs such as this, and we don’t have that.
I hope you will voice your support of this Program at the upcoming College Faculty meeting on 10/19 in WSH.

Financial Return Models:
Cathy Long:
This is a recommendation that Dean Fuchs made for changing the M.Eng. Revenue Return Formula. It’s at the stage of recommendation – this is a discussion, and I’m looking for feedback. Discussions began in 2002, prompted by the MEC, and the MEC passed a motion to change the Return Formula. Numerous events, including the Strategic Planning exercise have occurred since that motion was made. The Dean has reviewed the M.Eng. Program and has articulated his support.

M.Eng. Tuition Revenue:
The M.Eng. tuition revenue consists of full-tuition for the student, minus fees paid to the University for every full-time M.Eng. student on campus and enrolled in the Graduate School (it does not include Early Admit students). The College operating budget last year, not including research, was made up of 16% of the M.Eng. revenue – a significant amount of money that is used to cover on-going expenses in the College. The total distribution of the operating budget shows a majority of the funds going back to the academic departments both as direct return from the M.Eng. revenue and through the annual budget allocation.

Current Challenges:
It’s not clear what behavior the current formula promotes, and it’s not clear that that’s the behavior we want to promote and support with the current formula. The formula isn’t clearly communicated by us or understood by the Departments. The current formula, created many years ago, has made it very difficult to include our interdisciplinary programs – it was based on the traditional academic department. Currently, each department’s revenue stream is impacted by the enrollment in all other departments. Department budgets and the College budget rely on this revenue stream – it has become a real piece of our operating budget.

Current Return Formula:
Six years ago, we were given the benefit of receiving the M.Eng. revenue directly into the College for all our students. In return for that opportunity, the Provost cut our base budget equivalent to 200 tuitions.
Mark Eisner:
What would that number be today?
Cathy Long:
$25,000 (less fees).

We receive the revenue for our enrolled Graduate Students in the M.Eng. Program and we take the equivalent of 200 tuitions off the top. We use that to fund the base budget. We take 50 tuitions and set them aside in reserve so when revenue is returned to the departments, we can give you money for your Early Admit (EA)
students. In FY00, when the Provost eliminated the return for our EA students, the Dean didn’t want to have the EA student’s impact negatively, so we continued to return that revenue stream on those students. The balance of that money is distributed 70% to departments and 30% to the College of Engineering (COE) operating budget. The 70% distributed to the departments is based on a formula that is in relation to faculty FTE in your department. The exponential return formula creates a return per student that is unequal across departments. Each department receives a different amount of cash per student – varying significantly.

We looked at 7-8 models, and Kent narrowed the options down. He presented information to the Directors and Chairs for feedback, of which he received a little. He promised them he would take their feedback and would return to them with a proposal for what the revenue return model should be.

**Minimum Enrollment Formula Option:**
Under the Minimum Enrollment Formula, departments will receive 35% of tuition per M.Eng. student, as long as they meet their minimum enrollment -- it’s a flat amount. If you fall below your minimum, the total return per student is reduced by 30% for every student below your minimum. Example: If your minimum enrollment is 10 and you enroll 8, you will receive 35% of the tuition for 10 students, but you will give back 30% of 2 student tuitions. The College’s return is 65% of every enrolled M.Eng. student. There would be no returns for EA students, your enrollment determines your revenue stream, it does not increase the risk for the College’s base budget, and there are potentially net-negative returns in departments. The minimum enrollment number is not the department’s optimal enrollment target.

**Calculating Minimum Enrollments:**
I reviewed M.Eng. enrollments from FY’00, a low point, through FY’03 (FY’04 was an exceptionally high enrollment year), and the minimum enrollment for each department is based on that range (ranged from fairly low to somewhat high). I tried to pick a number that wouldn’t push the limit compared to what departments have been doing in the recent past, but would also ensure that the base budget in the COE would be restored.

I presented this information to the Dean, and he presented it to the Directors and Chairs with a request for comments by October 6th. I’ve received comments from most departments, and I anticipate ongoing discussions to refine the model, adopt it, or start over. The recommendation is not to implement a change for this year, but to make the decision in time for departments to make their admission decisions for next year.

**Handouts:**
The gray handout shows enrollment history from FY’00 – FY’05; the yellow, purple, and salmon handouts are comparisons of FY’03, FY’04 and FY’05 of actual returns to the Budget Base Model and to the Minimum Enrollment Model.
The graph for individual departments has a line for revenue return, actual return, and the model with minimum enrollments. You can see how your enrollment fluctuates, how it affects your revenue stream, and how it compares to what you would have received under the current model.

Mark Eisner:
The COE gets the benefit of an increase, but if there’s a decrease the departments bear it.

Cathy Long:
Not totally. I presented models to Kent that wouldn’t provide the COE with more money than we currently receive (the goal was not to increase the College’s budget), and in the worst-case scenario, we will retain our core base budget in tact.

I would appreciate your comments.

Jim Bartsch:
Do you have any questions or comments for Cathy?

Mark Eisner:
Not all Directors and Chairs were able to follow this -- we can be helpful in working with them.

Claude Cohen:
Was there another formula that didn’t depend on a minimum?

Cathy Long:
Yes, the Base Budget Formula.

Claude Cohen:
Did Kent prefer the Minimum Enrollment Formula?

Cathy Long:
Yes, his recommendation was the Minimum Enrollment Formula. The incentive for the Minimum Enrollment Formula is that each department makes their own decision and their revenue stream is dependent on their decisions only and not on decisions of other departments.

Please provide feedback within the next week.

Jim Bartsch:
Do we feel the need to convene next week to discuss these options?

Mike Shuler:
I can work with any of the models the COE wants to implement. The Minimum Model is better than the current model.

Mary Sansalone:
The Minimum Model is preferred by CEE.

Mark Eisner:
Admissions for the fall aren’t done until December and January – why do we have to hold a special meeting?

Cathy Long:
The Dean has received feedback from the Directors and Chairs and will meet with them within the next couple of weeks. Our goal is to finish this by December.
Larry Newman:
   It would seem that we should meet with our Directors and Chairs and have this conversation with them and let them provide the ultimate feedback to the Dean.

Cathy:
   The message from the MEC and the MEC Subcommittee didn’t reflect the message from the Directors and Chairs. It would be helpful to talk with your Directors and Chairs.

Jim Bartsch:
   How does the Committee propose to do this? Is it sufficient within fields to talk with your Directors and Chairs, or do you need a special meeting between us?

General:
   No need for a special meeting.

Jim Bartsch:
   Meet with your Directors and Chairs, and they will take it up with Dean Fuchs.

**Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering Petition:**

Claude Cohen:
   This student was admitted last spring as an MS/PhD student. Several factors lead this student to the conclusion that he wanted to switch to the M.Eng. Program. Last spring he took 9 credit hours of courses plus research. Mike Shuler has accepted him as a F’04 M.Eng. student, but he needs 21 credit hours to complete his M.Eng. degree this semester.

Mike Shuler:
   The workload will not be equivalent because he’s already done much of the work through his research.

Jim Bartsch:
   The petition is for the one additional credit hour.

A motion was made to approve the petition, seconded, and was unanimously approved.

**GAPS Update:**

Dawn Warren:
   The Graduate Application Processing System (GAPS) is scheduled to go live on October 20th, and all fields will be able to review their F’05 applications at that time. If you have additional questions, please contact Mark Otis.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05am