Master of Engineering Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
September 9, 1998

Present: Jim Bartsch, Ferdinand Rodriquez, Harry Stewart, John Belina, Wolfgang Sachse, Richard Lovelace, Larry Cathles, Al George, Mark Eisner, John Hopcroft, Michael Hayes, Joe Shultz, Graeme Bailey

Meeting called to order at 8:05 AM.

1. Announcements and Reports

John Hopcroft discussed the importance of the M.Eng Program for the College. He would like to see enrollment numbers increased and believes the college needs to focus on the quality of the program.

John also indicated the college must maintain undergraduate enrollment at approximately 2700 students. The M.Eng. early admit numbers are growing and this is affecting the undergraduate numbers. The existing early admission process was discussed. John indicated that the provost would like this issue resolved as quickly as possible.

Mike Hayes reported changes in Engineering Professional Program’s. Many changes will be in effect as of the middle of October.

1) Tracey Thompson is moving out of the M.Eng role into the Co-op role and will focus solely on the Co-op Program.
2) Joe Shultz has been recently hired as the Assistant Director. He will work with the M.Eng program as well as the Hewlett Packard project.
3) Tracy Pond, the administrative coordinator for the office, will be assisting Joe with the M.Eng program, i.e. Application downloads, Database Management, Financial Aid, etc.
4) Mike will be focusing on both the Co-op and M.Eng programs as well.
5) Paula Long has been hired to assist with the Co-op program.

Harry Stewart updated the attendees on the Ad Hoc Committee. The current members of this committee are: Sam Toueg, Graeme Bailey, John Belina, Mark Eisner, Al George, and Mike Hayes. By the end of this week fields will receive a questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire is to develop a feel for individual department’s impression of the importance of the M.Eng program. Harry stressed the importance to get this returned in a timely manner and encouraged the fields to be as responsive and practical as possible. Mike is currently looking at the information kept in the College Admissions Database. He is focusing on the undergraduate schools from which the students are applying from and whether or not they were admitted and whether or not the students enrolled. It is hoped that this study will tell us where the strongest areas for recruiting are.

Marsha Pickens is working on development and giving information to see if we can identify the scope alumni contributions from Master of Engineering graduates. Is it at the same level or higher than giving by graduates with an undergraduate degree or students with and MS/PhD degree.
We have collected survey information from last year’s M.Eng class. The information is still being reviewed. Also a marketing plan is being developed and is due at the end of September or October. This is an MBA project that is being done by Leanna Caron who is the wife of a faculty member in Mechanical Engineering. Leanna is doing this as part of her MBA thesis.

Harry also announced that this will be his last meeting with the group as he has other things he needs to take care of in his department. John Hopcroft is in the process of appointing a new chair.

Mike Hayes updated the committee on new recruiting initiatives. Most recruiting fairs will begin in October and he is more than willing to help get faculty members there. He will be e-mailing a listing of schools and dates to faculty immediately. The grad school contributes $250 for each graduate recruiting Event which will help to offset recruiting expenses incurred by the M.Eng program. As the task force identifies strategies, we should talk about the concept of enrollment management and how important recruiting efforts are.

The financial implications of attracting students is not yet identified because there has not historically been a tracking device in place. Last year we received ~15-20 cards from the graduate schools from the schools that they covered, however, they are not focusing on M.Eng. while they are there. There are logical places for us to recruit such as Princeton, Yale, Penn State, Bucknell, Berkely, and Purdue. What is the Cornell presence in big-time advertising? We need to address this issue. Who is responsible for keeping our face on the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times? There does not appear to be anyone at this point.

John Belina brought up a point about web-based and/or part-time programs. This seems to be a popular option for students who are choosing to go to other schools to continue their degrees. Should we take a better look at the distance learning program? Mark Eisner suggested making M.Eng projects publicized.

Tracey Thompson discussed financial aid issues. Payout rates increased significantly this year. Last year we were at $850,000 last year, this year we are at $1,100,000. It is expected that the payout rate will decrease back to approximately $850,000 next year.

John Belina discussed a potential petition for a student who has been a graduate student since 1991. The student has taken three times the number of courses as a typical M.Eng. student and has met all the requirements for the M.Eng. program including a the design project. The student has a 3.5 GPA and has taken 12 EE courses any many others at Cornell. The student has not been officially registered as an M.Eng. student, however, is one of the best students the advisor has supervised. John will check on awarding the special MS instead of M.Eng. If this warrants further discussion John will present a petition at a future MEC meeting.

Tracey circulated a new copy of the M.Eng policy to make sure all members were using the same version. He also circulated a revised telephone listing for the committee and asked for notifications of any corrections.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 a.m.