CCGB Meeting Agenda, October 28, 2005

1. Approval of Minutes
2. Undergraduate Announcements
3. Majors Information Fair (Engineering Advising)
4. ROTC (Les Trotter)
5. Further Discussion of Curriculum Transformation Committee Report

CCGB Minutes, October 14, 2005

Ex-Officio: R. Evans, D. Maloney Hahn, R. Robbins
Other: C. Pakkala

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the October 7, 2005 CCGB Meeting were approved as written.

Undergraduate Announcements: D. Gries stated that there was an upcoming conference titled New Visions, New Cities, and New Orleans which will be held at the Savannah Conference Center in Savannah, NY October 28-30. It is sponsored by Destiny USA and Syracuse University. The focus will be on designing cities, so it may be of interest to some of our engineering students.

A. Zehnder announced that the CCGB will probably discuss the curriculum transformation issue in another 2 weeks, and he requested that members continue to discuss it within their departments.

ROTC: L. Trotter stated that the ROTC issue has been discussed quite a bit. He was favorably impressed by the course contents for the most part, but he was worried about the context in which things were presented. The CCGB needs to decide if a student gets out of these courses what another might from a liberal studies course taken at another college, i.e. a community college. There are no uniform requirements among the disciplines. He spoke with instructors about two of the courses. Christopher Kline is in charge of the whole Navy program. When asked if ethics were included in the courses, for example the discussion of the ethical implications of political misrepresentation because of the non-existence of WMD, C. Kline said that that type of thing was discussed. L. Trotter questioned C. Kline about the manner in which courses are conducted, i.e. that they are uniquely student presentations. C. Kline indicated that student presentations represent less than ½ of a course. There is a lot of preparation involved with those presentations. It seems a reasonable way to conduct the course. When L. Trotter asked about cross-enrollment, C. Kline said that the courses could be cross-listed. NS402 is a leadership and management course. Students who take the courses don’t get credit for them. The retention rate after 5 years in the military is less than 50%, so the instructors stress management tools as well as assertion and authority skills.

L. Trotter feels better about the four courses after talking to the instructors. Their viewpoints are broader than an indoctrination viewpoint. If we do not allow our students to get credit for the courses, perhaps we should not allow them to take an easy liberal arts class at a community college. He is convinced that we can give our students credit for these courses without doing a disservice to them. D. Gries wondered whether the CCGB should approve all of the ROTC courses for credit or just the 4 listed on the sheet (NS310, NS410, NS201 an NS402). L. Trotter expressed his concern that if all courses were approved, a student could only take 2 years of ROTC and still get all 6 credits and a student who took all 4 years would still only receive 6 credits. He suggested that the other courses remain as advisor-approved electives, because there is an overall cumulative value to these courses. The student should go through the entire experience (all 4 years) and then get credit. A. Center wondered if any engineering student could get credit for these courses, or if just ROTC students could. He suggested that the CCGB should say that these are electives and can fill the liberal arts requirements. One course in ROTC should be able to fill one liberal arts credit for anyone. If we acknowledge that these can be used as electives, we are saying that they are suitable for engineers. One of these could fulfill one of the 6 liberal arts requirements. A. Bojanczyk stated that he is in favor of NS310 being a liberal studies distribution course, and he mentioned that R. Kline also approved this. E. Fisher asked if there are any guidelines in existence for approving
liberal studies courses. D. Maloney Hahn replied that Engineering currently follows the criteria that the Arts & Science College uses. We are using historical context with what we’ve done in the past, we reorganized the liberal studies categories, and we use criteria similar to those in other colleges. Usually approvals are done by petitions for new courses. ROTC courses have been excluded in the past because they are not taught by Cornell faculty. There are already 2 cross-listed ROTC courses that students can use.

A. Zehnder asked if the CCGB should allow up to 6 credits as advisor-approved electives, have 310 and 410 as liberal studies distribution courses, allow a certain number of courses as advisor-approved electives, or continue not to give credit for them. L. Trotter said that the notion of giving credit for the overall experience and looking at individual courses is fine. NS310 is okay for liberal studies. A. Center proposed that credit for NS310 would be available to all engineering students as a distribution equivalent to one of the 6 liberal arts electives.

L. Pollack asked if instructors of the ROTC courses agreed to this. She wondered what would happen if 60 engineering students sign up for the courses. L. Trotter said that the ROTC students would get preference. The CCGB would approve the courses on a case by case basis. R. Robbins said that some of the other courses would not be approved. L. Trotter said that the Liberal Studies Committee could review them first. J. Bartsch asked for details of the process. Currently in BEE a student does a petition and advisors generally sign it. He thinks this would increase the number of petitions. D. Gries suggested that the CCGB not vote on a motion before figuring out what it should be. A. Zehnder suggested that up to 3 credits be assigned in the advisor-approved electives category but that credit not is given until a student graduates. L. Trotter said that the notion of advisor-approved electives grew out of a minor. The goal was to have an area extrinsic to a major educational area. The ROTC satisfies that. He wondered if the CCGB would allow the full 6 credits. A. Zehnder requested that L. Trotter draft up a motion for the next meeting.

Consideration of ENGRI 131/BME 131. Introduction to Biomedical Engineering: D. Gries distributed a syllabus of ENGRI 131/BME 131 and moved that the CCGB approve this course. The vote was unanimous, with 10 members voting in favor of this.

Report on International Studies: D. Gries stated that Cornell is working with IIT Kanpur on an equal exchange of students. IIT Kanpur would work w/Cornell Abroad on this. The IIT Director signed an understanding with Rawlings, so we need to work on this exchange. The IIT Director also wants joint research. Engineering faculty will visit Kanpur in January. We may also look at other IITs. Our strategic plan encourages students to go abroad, and if we have a presence at IIT, we can get more students here. A. Center said that American students are potential targets overseas, so perhaps checking with the State Department would be good to make sure that the students will be in a secure area. A. Zehnder said that we always have students who want to come from India to be interns in the U.S. D. Gries said that all of the issues will be discussed in January by the 5-6 faculty who will be in India. It will be fairly easy to transfer credits back and forth. Students generally do this type of thing in their junior year. A. Center said that if the IIT students take a full academic load, the stress of this plus being overseas might be too much for them. It seems to him that the students are being put in a higher level of stress. L. Pollack asked if there were any special considerations for GPA because grades are not curved overseas.

D. Maloney Hahn said that the grades are put on transcript but not calculated into the GPA. A. Center stated that the transition to an overseas location takes quite a while, and this may not be an easy adaptation for the students. B. Isacks pointed out that Cornell Abroad students have this type of stress also. A. Center countered that there are Cornell staff members to help with reducing the stress in the current Cornell Abroad locations. D. Maloney Hahn said that Engineering generally has 13-15 students who study abroad and they do fine. They usually go for one semester. D. Gries said that Engineering has 1 or 2 students at Ecole Centrale. There is a big Indo-US Initiative on E-Learning. We want to reach hundreds of students in India with e-learning, but the IIT representative is skeptical of this plan.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 a.m.