Agenda, October 29, 1999
CCGB Meeting

1. Approval of Minutes from the October 15, 1999 meeting
2. Undergraduate Announcements
3. Biology Update (J. Jenkins)
4. Electronic Course Evaluations
5. ABET Committee
6. Faculty Access to Student Data

CCGB Minutes
October 15, 1999

Members:  J. Bartsch, R. Cleary, M. Duncan, J. Jenkins, P. Kintner, C. Van Loan, F. Wise

Absent: D. Cox, B. East, F. Gouldin, J. Hopcroft, R. Kay, L. Lion, M. Miller (Ex-officio), M. Thompson, S. Youra

Ex-Officio:  M. Fish, T. Healey, J. Herrera, D. Maloney Hahn, F. Shumway

Other:  R. Klein, C. Pakkala, M. Sansalone, Z. Warhaft, D. Zeligman

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of October 1, 1999 were approved.

Undergraduate Announcements: M. Fish (Women’s Progs.) discussed the problem of violence in the workplace. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) has been addressing this problem, but they feel that field consultants might be in the best position to assist students in distress. This item will be put on a future agenda.

Biology: Jim Jenkins (T&AM) briefly stated that he has been interfacing with people in biology. Both he and the biology reps feel that any 1 semester bio course for engineers should be shared with biology and engineering faculty. The current subcommittee should be adequate to continue with the task of assessing the college’s needs. He will speak with Mike Shuler about this.

Ethical Reasoning: Mary Sansalone (CEE) gave a presentation on “ethical reasoning.” As ethics is a subset of the university accreditation, each college is considering changes to their curriculum to include ethics. Cornell has applied for a $7 million PEW grant for interdisciplinary courses in ethics. There are also a number of interested alumni and corporations who have expressed an interest in donating funds for ethics courses. The interest in ethics stems from ethical lapses in public figures, increasing cultural diversity in the U.S., and the growth of scholarships in practical ethics. Teaching ethics allows students to deal with ethical considerations in their own lives. Future freshmen will likely be required to take a seminar course on ethics and the living environment. A writing seminar on ethics will likely be offered for sophomores. Essentially, all ethics courses need to be taught by people TRAINED in ethics, not by people who have a slight familiarity with the subject. Paul Kintner (EE) pointed out that ethics is a required component for ABET accreditation. There are summer ethics workshops ideal for EC2000 which would enable faculty to become more familiar with ethics. Zellman Warhaft (M&AE) mentioned that students are more likely to take ethics seriously (internalize it) if it is a component of a required course rather than a stand-alone course. All of engineering has an impact on society, and ethics is
important for that reason. Ron Kline (EE) stated that in most current ethics courses a case study component is taught. He supports the movement to bring ethics to design courses and throughout the curriculum. Mike Duncan (ChemEng) suggested that students fill out surveys at the end of each semester to determine (through writing and calculations) whether they are ethical. He also questioned the ability of faculty to take workshops on ethics, given that they are already stressed and short on time. Charlie Van Loan (CS) stated that current courses should be examined to determine what courses might already contain ethics and whether they are sufficient. Paul Kintner (EE) asked the CCGB members to ask for input from within their departments and then report their findings. “Ethical Reasoning” will be a future agenda item.

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 a.m.