CCGB Meeting Agenda, January 27, 2006

1. Approval of Minutes
2. Undergraduate Announcements
3. Preview of Spring ’06 Agenda and Committee Assignments
4. Math 190/191

CCGB Minutes, November 11, 2005

Ex-Officio: F. Shumway, M. Spencer
Other: C. Pakkala

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the October 28, 2005 CCGB Meeting were approved with minor changes.

Undergraduate Announcements: F. Shumway stated that 260 people had attended the First Family Weekend panel presentation, and about half stayed for lunch. She thanked everyone for their participation in the Majors Fair. Over 100 students attended the fair, which was the best attendance ever. L. Pollack said that there was a lot of positive energy for the fair, and it was a wonderful event. M. Spencer thanked the faculty members for their representation at the open house. Over 450 people showed up, which was an awesome response, and people liked the women’s panel in the morning. D. Gries announced that two ethics sessions have been replaced by a play, to be held December 3rd and 4th. There will be free tickets available to students in the course, and other students will pay $3. General admission is $5. There will be 3 shows of the play, and most of the actors are engineering students.

ROTC: A. Zehnder stated that the CCGB had passed two motions at their last meeting, and then decided that a third motion would be good. L. Trotter drafted the third motion. This captured the essence of what was said last week. Motion: Since NAVS 310: Evolution of Warfare is not cross-listed for credit with another Cornell academic unit, and thus its content is subject only to periodic review by NAVAL ROTC, the CCGB resolves that content of NAVS 310 should be reviewed by the CCGB Subcommittee on Liberal Studies routinely during its consideration of the course list of Liberal Electives which is presented by the College Advising Office on a yearly basis for approval by the Subcommittee. Motion vote: 10 in favor, 0 opposed.

S. Sass stated that he found an article in the New York Times which was relevant to curriculum review. Everything comes down to what is best for the students. Some don’t know what they want to do, and the ENG 150 courses give them a flavor of what is available. He sees no reason to change make changes to the current curriculum. D. Gries said that he is hoping that all of the departments are discussing all of the issues. At the December faculty meeting, the faculty will discuss the proposed curriculum changes, and then Kent will decide what to do. It is likely that a committee will handle it. A. Center said that Kent Fuchs handed out the Engineer for the Future book, and this is the last time faculty did anything about this. He didn’t feel encouraged to look deeply at the curriculum based on this. He wondered what is driving the proposed change. D. Gries responded that it is good to periodically look at the curriculum due to changes occurring in the world. A. Center wondered if the Engineering graduates indicate that what we’re doing is not working. We went through the ABET review, which was fine. The employers don’t seem to feel that things are wrong. D. Gries replied that the curriculum report lists a bunch of places where we feel we’re not doing what we should be doing. The committee can make the report more detailed. There have been lots of discussions throughout the college about the curriculum.
and things that should be changed. J. Bartsch stated that the Engineering Faculty Meeting is scheduled for Monday, Dec. 5th at 4:30 in the Memorial Room of Willard Straight Hall. S. Sass observed that A. Center seems to be wondering if an evaluation was done of the programs. The concern is how we make changes if we don’t know what we’re doing correctly or incorrectly now. D. Gries responded that students are supposed to be getting breadth in engineering, and they are not getting it. Our students have very little flexibility in going abroad. We need to change the curriculum to make that easier. There is a feeling throughout engineering that our majors are too technical and don’t allow the students to take courses in business, entrepreneurship, and other courses that would help them in the working world. There has been a call for some time that the M.eng. degree become the professional degree and the B.S. allow for a broader engineering degree. The Society of Civil Engineers has voted for such a policy.

L. Lion said that the Society of Civil Engineers voted that a 5th year is recommended because civil itself is such a broad field that it is difficult to emerge as a specialist in one of the areas. The bachelors degree is too broad. A. Zehnder stated that Kent had curriculum change on his mind from day 1, and this issue is worth a discussion in departments and college-wide. L. Lion wondered if the engineering intros are still a distributions category. F. Shumway responded that there are 3 distributions, and 1 is an engineering introductory course. L. Lion said that we still have 3 distributions, and we have added other areas. We haven’t lost breadth. D. Gries said that there are 8 areas now, so the amount of breadth now is actually less. Some majors suggest what intro to engineering course the students should take. The committee presented this as one plan that might allow change in a positive way.

**Substitutions for Required Courses:** D. Gries stated that sometimes students come in and don’t want to take a requirement because they feel they know the material. We allow them to substitute another course. We allowed a student to substitute a later course for CS 100. He took CS 280, which he didn’t need, so that was the substitute. F. Shumway said that the student assumed he had credit for some courses, but the exam he took didn’t give him credit for either course. We’re helping the student graduate. He took the physics placement exam, so that’s okay, but we’re being creative for Chemistry 207. The student reported incorrect information and didn’t follow up on paperwork to get credits posted, so nobody caught it.

D. Gries said that if a student can’t take a course, they try to find a substitute for it. A student is taking Math 192 and wants to test out of Math 294 because he feels he knows the material. The student is taking an online course from MIT on the same material, but he can’t get credit for the course because he shouldn’t take courses elsewhere while at Cornell. D. Gries feels that if the student is bright enough, more power to him, and we should help him out. He will still need to take another math course. F. Shumway said that courses taken elsewhere which have the same content can’t be accepted as credit here (if taken during the semester). Students can place out of courses with AP credit or CASE exams. Exams are not offered for higher-level courses, just freshman courses. One thing that can discourage people from doing the substitution is having them take a higher level course in its place. A. Zehnder said that his first reaction was to wonder why the student had come to Cornell if the student doesn’t want to take our courses. The exam in a course is 1/3 of a grade. It is hard to capture all of the class material in an exam. T. Healey thinks that this makes a dangerous precedent and he doesn’t agree with it. If the student wanted to take a course elsewhere and transfer the credit, that would be okay. J. Bartsch said that if the student had taken the course in the summer, they could have transferred it and gotten the credit. He sees no problem with this, at least not within the major. A. Zehnder said that the student could sign up for the course and just take the exams and negotiate about the homeworks. If the student and instructor of Math 294 want to go along with it, fine. L. Pollack stated that it would have to be a careful substitution; a follow-up math course. S. Sass said that he is worried about opening this up to students. D. Gries said that this type of thing shouldn’t happen often. The system here isn’t condu-
A. Zehnder stated that two issues remain for the academic year: 1) The ENGRD 210 request for 4 credits, and 2) clarifying minors outside the college. The CCGB will have 1 more meeting this semester.

E. Fisher said that she had announced the ROTC motions in MAE and there was a lot of unhappiness with the decision of the CCGB. Her colleagues felt that it would be a burden on advisors to allow the ROTC courses as advisor-approved electives. It would be useful to have a CCGB statement about why this is felt worthwhile. A. Zehnder said that a letter of explanation could be sent to departments. Advisor approved electives are always an issue. People have different views about what courses could be taken as advisor-approved electives. He will send the letter to the department chairs.

D. Gries said that ECE 210 was 3 credits, and they added an optional 1-credit lab for students, except for majors, who had to take the lab. This year they made the course a 4-credit engineering distribution course and made the lab mandatory for everyone. He asked if the CCGB should approve this or have ECE make the lab optional again and make the course 3 credits. A. Zehnder said that the CCGB needs a formal request from the department to approve this. There are currently 3 exceptions to the 4 credit rule for engineering distribution course. A. Center said that it sounds as though the course is moving away from a distribution course to one that serves ECE. If we are saying that these aren’t distribution courses anymore, lets call them what they are—field courses. A. Bojanczyk said that the students love the labs and we should give them credit for them. J. Bartsch stated that T. Healey said that TAM 202 needed a lab, but the course was going to have the same content regardless of whether it was 3 or 4 credits. That course was approved as 4 credits by the CCG B. A. Center said that the faculty should think about teaching truly introductory courses and making them real distribution courses. The ENGRD courses are becoming more a course taken to a stepping stone to a major. A. Zehnder said that an alternate structure might be appropriate; perhaps having a stepping-stone course and a broader course. L. Lion stated that there are two issues: The number of credits and whether the CCGB should retain control over the credit hour content of engineering distribution courses. A. Zehnder said that the CCGB will revisit this issue and he suggested that the Engineering Courses Committee could address this and come back with a summary and suggestions. C. Pollock will be asked to give some course information to the CCGB.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.