CCGB Meeting Agenda, January 26, 2007

1. Approval of Minutes
2. Undergraduate Announcements
3. ENGRI 113
4. Assessments for Fall 2006 Courses
5. EAS Name Change

CCGB Minutes, December 15, 2006

Ex-Officio: B. East, R. Evans, R. Robbins, L. Schneider, F. Shumway, M. Spencer
Other: M. Duncan, M. Lewis, C. Pakkala

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the 12/1/06 CCGB Meeting were approved.

Undergraduate Announcements: D. Gries stated that course evaluations have been completed and undergraduate staff members can pick up a CD from the Registrar’s Office. He requested that the evaluations not be shown to faculty until after grades have been submitted.

Course assessments for core courses are due, and if they are not submitted in a timely fashion, D. Gries will be hounding people in January. They are needed for ABET.

There is now a website for faculty to put in comments for about 15 proposals regarding curriculum changes. Faculty are requested to fill them out; 1/8/07 is the suggested deadline for comments. The committee needs to look at them and decide what to do for each issue. A vote can be scheduled for the February faculty meeting. The committee can meet in January if necessary. Some contentious items could be put on hold and voted on later in the year. There are some things we should do by the fall 2007 semester. If some departments want to give input, they can email the curriculum committee with their comments. Initially only faculty were given the proposed curriculum changes; then lecturers and professors emeriti were given the information. S. Baker said that the survey has a comment field. Some people feel the curriculum issue is proceeding too fast. E. Fisher said that a discussion is needed instead of just a presentation. D. Gries suggested that people think about the survey as part of the discussion. S. Baker stated that if people need more information, they should ask for it.

R. Robbins announced that a new advisor, Melissa Hudson, would be starting on Monday, 12/18. She has done academic and career advising and counseling, and comes to us from Wells College.

A. Zehnder stated that the CCBG members should have discussions about advisor approved electives within their departments. We need to get a sense of what people think we should do.

Liberal Studies Issues: R. Robbins stated that the liberal studies issue has become a thorn in Advising’s side. Engineering currently approves courses that have already been approved as liberal studies courses by Arts & Sciences. Some Human Ecology and CALS courses have been approved along the way by CCGB. The liberal studies list is on the engineering website and in the Advising Office.

Advising currently makes the decision as college representatives to determine whether a course meets liberal studies guidelines. More and more often students are taking hotel and business courses and want them included as liberal studies.
A. Zehnder asked how our policy differs from that of CALS. R. Robbins responded that CALS took the categories of A&S and then fit their courses into the categories. B. East added that CALS just added their courses under the A&S heading for their students. We could say that some courses are approved for CALS students so that the students aren’t confused.

A. Zehnder asked what the BEE students regarding the liberal studies requirement. R. Robbins replied that they follow the Engineering guidelines. S. Baker stated that the Engineering Council felt that the liberal studies requirements should be expanded to include to all courses that aren’t engineering courses. The issue is being discussed. D. Gries said that we should be able to handle the CALS list because they put their courses into the A&S categories. A. Zehnder wondered what courses CALS allow that we don’t. F. Shumway responded that they allow the American Indian Studies course. This is a cultural analysis course and is in that category. R. Robbins added that there are some AAP classes in the ARTS category. E. Fisher asked if courses that had already been approved by petition could be simply added to the list. R. Robbins replied that we could do that. There are lots of repeat petitions for courses, but there are also lots that keep coming in and are denied; i.e. hotel.

B. East stated that the Subcommittee on Liberal Studies should determine what the objective is of the liberal studies courses. There are a lot of business courses in CALS.

D. Gries said that there are two separate issues: Should we be liberalizing liberal studies, and how do we deal with CALS courses that fit their current mold? B. East responded that if CALS has categorized a lot of their business categories in the liberal studies categories, then we’re liberalizing the courses. The more you allow engineering students to take other technical courses as liberal studies, the fewer liberal studies courses our students will take.

L. Schneider stated that the data from exit surveys show that engineering students are least likely to say they understand cultural diversity or that ethical implications are important. We need to decide what knowledge we want our students to have.

E. Fisher said that if the CCGB as a whole is happy with the current liberal studies definitions, the committee could look at how CALS handles liberal studies. A. Zehnder said that it would be good to look at the CALS list to see if the courses are acceptable for engineering also. Looking at the CALS list doesn’t seem too controversial.

D. Gries said that we shouldn’t arbitrarily refuse to allow students to take hotel courses as liberal studies if they are comparable to courses that have been approved as liberal studies courses. Some courses in education are marked HA; none in AEM fit the categorizations of Arts & Sciences. B. East said that it is hard to judge whether a course is suitable unless the syllabus is reviewed.

R. Robbins said that some students say they’ve already fulfilled their advisor approved electives and want to petition so they don’t have to take other courses. He wondered how much flexibility Advising has with regard to approving petitions for liberal studies. L. Pollack stated that a couple of years ago the liberal studies categories changed. She wondered what happened to that list. D. Gries replied that A&S changed categories, and Engineering adopted their list. F.

Shumway said that the depth requirement is easier now. We used to have 2 courses in the same category. There are now two, 200-level courses required; not necessarily in the same category. R. Robbins
said that we have had some Human Ecology and CALS courses added to the list, including some AAP and A&S courses.

D. Gries said that none of the AEM courses are liberal studies courses, but many in Development Sociology are.

F. Shumway stated that some students want to take liberal studies courses at other institutions and want to transfer the credit to Cornell. We have approved a course such as geography before.

R. Robbins added that when we deny a course, we need to justify why. E. Fisher suggested that possibly once a semester a review of denials could be conducted. We could tell students that all decisions could be reviewed by the committee at the end of a semester. We should decide where the best time during a semester the review should be. S. Baker said that the process would make sense if we were comparing test courses against well defined categories. We should never decide on a course more than once; we should deny or accept a course only once. L. Lee suggested that we publish a list of courses that are denied. Students could look at the list of courses approved and denied and decide on which type of list their course would be located.

A. Zehnder stated that the Liberal Studies Distribution Committee should look at this issue and come back to the CCGB with their suggestions early next semester.

**Continued Discussion of the Curriculum Report:** A. Zehnder asked if the committee had received any negative or positive feedback thus far. S. Baker replied that the range of reactions was mixed. Some people feel that the vision of the committee is exactly what is needed, some people say no, and some wonder how much work it will be to implement the changes. The committee was unprepared for the defensive response by people who will be most impacted. They don’t want to change. People pick out things from the report to object to, without first reading through the entire report.

The Curriculum Committee wants to do a minimum amount of change with a maximum benefit. We need to think how the changes would impact both departments AND students. Some people feel they are too busy working on things now, they don’t feel changes are necessary, and they refuse to consider the changes in the report. Some folks feel threatened because they feel they are being impacted more than others, i.e. CBE and CS. Lot of issues are needed for discussion. Breadth and depth need to be addressed. The point of the report was to stimulate discussion.

M. Duncan said that one of the motivations was to prepare students in coming years; this largely done in the junior and senior years. Adding credits might negatively impact students.

M. Lewis stated that in ORIE people were hoping there would be some flexibility in what was proposed. Some students want to do more discrete math, and some want to do other things, so they want the students to be able to choose. D. Gries said that discrete math also affects CS; the committee was not unanimous in accepting the change. This is an issue that faculty should discuss. There was also an issue with Chemistry 207 and 208. M. Duncan said that CBE would become a 5 year program.

S. Baker stated that there are 15 different proposals and faculty can say yes or no to any of them. The current core curriculum consists of 36 credits; only 16 are really common. The committee attempted to make the core broader. At the end of doing that, one detail that remained was the discrete math question. This was left to spark discussion. The issue is whether to keep it in the common core versus specific or
more directed preparation for certain majors. CS and ORIE should be allowed to replace discrete math with something else. A. Zehnder said that it is his impression that all majors require Math 294, and substitutions are allowed for Math 293. L. Lee stated that CS has been discussing the math issue a lot. The notion of uniformity makes them wonder if this is an effort to create a one-size-fits-all mentality. They aren’t certain that CS students wouldn’t be better off with a variety of courses. They like the idea of team-based and project-orientated courses, but instructors would like to do their own thing.

D. Gries said that many people don’t know about intro to engineering courses. S. Baker stated that the only place in the report with a template is the math/science/computing core. ENGRE is not like that. Engineering students need team experience instead of lectures. There is a need for experiential learning. The idea of having everyone in one course means that everyone has the same experience, but different departments have different goals. All team experiences could be experiential. The goal is not to have a lecture course as an alternative.

R. Evans stated that he has been involved in getting the communications component into engineering courses. Diversity will emerge over time across the courses and different departments will take hold of the courses and do different things. To start out with a simple and somewhat prescriptive template gives people a sense of what is going on, but diversity will emerge and things will change. This isn’t something to worry about.

M. Lewis suggested that we have both ENGRE and ENGRI courses and choose two, one of which should be a new ENGRE course, and have a mix. A lot of work has been done with ENGRI courses. Maybe some students would better learn in lecture courses, but we could require some to take team-based courses.

L. Schneider said that a concern is that the students have team-based experience early on. It would be okay to have both. S. Baker said that one of the reasons for ENGREs is to help students with non-traditional backgrounds—those who haven’t experienced engineering. This is most students. If a team isn’t managed or structured, the team dynamic will be what students know from their prior experience in high school. This type of limited experience forces people into predictable roles; i.e. women doing secretarial type stuff. We need to teach students about team dynamics and learning styles and construct projects and teams so they gain experience with different skills and jobs. Most of us haven’t done team dynamics and have not incorporated the skills into the classes. Students with a positive team experience stick with engineering; those who had negative experiences tend to leave. The sociological aspect is the reason why this experience works well.

E. Fisher said that it may be hard to do ENGREs here because there isn’t a good match between what we select faculty for and why we want them to teach this type of thing. There are only a few people in MAE who would be good at this. It would be good to poll people and find out if they want to teach this way. Another approach would be to give literature to people and try to win them over to this teaching approach. At this point people are thinking this type of teaching would be hard to do.

A. Zehnder said that the CCGB would come back to this issue next semester. We will have the results of the web survey by then. We will also look at liberal studies and advisor approved electives. Any other issues can be emailed to him or D. Gries. S. Baker requested that people contact him via email if they have questions or comments regarding the curriculum report. He will be happy to provide information.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 a.m.