CCGB Meeting Agenda, February 17, 2006

1. Approval of Minutes
2. Undergraduate Announcements
3. Minimum Hours for Good Standing (Robbins)
4. Extramural Study for Students on Voluntary Leave of Absence (Robbins)
5. Change in Credits for a 4 on AP Biology
6. Student Experience Survey (Robbins, Schneider)

CCGB Minutes, February 10, 2006

Ex-Officio:  B. East, D. Maloney Hahn, L. Schneider, F. Shumway, M. Spencer
Other:   J. Belina, C. Pakkala

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the January 27, 2006 CCGB Meeting were approved as written.

Undergraduate Announcements: None

ENGRG 235: D. Gries stated that J. Belina wants to change his ENGRC course to an ENGRG course so that more students would be apt to take it, and the change would need to be approved by the CCGB. The course is a two credit course which is taught with staff members in Career Services. There were 12 students in the class last year, but this year there are 23 or 24 students, from a variety of departments. The course was previously used as an advisor-approved elective. L. Pollack asked if the course will be cross-listed with ECE. J. Belina replied that they were going to cross-list it with ECE, but it is not an ECE course; it is more general. S. Baker asked why the course is listed at the 200 level if it is an introductory course. J. Belina replied that it is really taught for sophomores, and 20 of the students are sophomores now. There are second semester freshmen and sophomores in it, but sophomores seem to do better in it and benefit the most from it. It prompts them to look further at the big picture professionally. E. Fisher asked if the course helps the students to choose a major. J. Belina replied that it helps shift their decision of which major to choose.-motion: To approve ENGRG 235 as ENGR 235. Vote: Unanimously approved.

ENGRD 210: D. Gries stated that he saw no reason for the CCGB not to allow the course to be listed as 4 credits. It is likely that more faculty members will propose that their ENGRD courses become 4 credits. B. East said that it appears that we continue to add credits to what students are taking when we should be doing the opposite. D. Gries said that the ECE students say that they need the extra credit. C. Seyler added that the course will likely be taken off the distribution list at some point in the future. A. Center stated that if we eliminate this from a distribution course, we will be taking one more 4 credit course from the list of distribution courses. He wondered whether this type of course basically leads into a major. He felt that it would be best to drop this from the ENGRD list first. D. Maloney Hahn said that most departments require a number of distribution courses in the sophomore year and student don’t have the time to take an ECE course. The students are pretty much locked into the major by then. S. Baker stated that his ENGRD courses are similar and are 3 credits but they have a 4 credit workload. If they added a lab component, they could add 1 credit for it and keep the course at 3 credits. C. Seyler said that they did it that way in the past, but the course can’t be taught without the lab. S. Baker said that if ENGRD courses are 4 credits and students are locked into their majors, that’s an issue. F. Shumway said that it is apparent to her, when working with 2nd semester sophomores that aren’t affiliated, that it is next to impossible for them to take courses for a backup affiliation plan. B. Isacks said that it appears to him that the ENGRD course concept has failed. D. Maloney Hahn said that a major can only require one distribution course and recommend a second, but most departments require the recommended second course. The ENGRDs have become very structured, and there is not much election of the distributions. A. Zehnder stated that ENGRD 210 was an electrical requirement for MAE, but there are now other options for the MAE students. C. Seyler said that enrollments have gone down since the course is no longer required for MAE students. A. Zehnder wondered why the course could
not be scaled back, the lab kept, and the course remain at 3 credits. C. Seyler responded that it is a very important course, currently with 80 students, and taught both semesters. ECE has tried to change it numerous times. L. Trotter asked what the other requirements are for ECE students as sophomores. C. Seyler responded that they have 3 courses: 210, 220, 230 and a computing course requirement. It is currently a better course and it is unfair to some students to be constrained by distribution requirements. B. East said that we’re not allowing students to explore fields very much, and this issue has gotten worse over time. A. Zehnder responded that this is a curriculum issue which has been fairly constant; the whole curriculum has gotten pushed back a semester or two because the number of credit hours was reduced, and the curriculum has gotten moved forward. D. Gries stated that D. Maloney Hahn looked at the Engineering Handbook from 1995 to 2005, and there is a trend toward requiring more courses at the sophomore level. D. Maloney Hahn reported that MAE has five major-based courses in the sophomore year. ChemE had stacked courses, with 4 in the sophomore year. ECE was more flexible. MSE went from 261 or 262 TO both courses AND 206. This is a worse mess for the students. A. Zehnder stated that this is all within the structure of the curriculum. D. Gries said that 202, 210 and 230 are currently 4 credit distribution courses. A. Center stated that if the course has 4 credits worth of work, it is enough of a concentration that it wouldn’t fit the criteria of a distribution course. If it is withdrawn as a distribution course, it will not be a CCGB issue any longer. He questioned whether we are broadening the curriculum. D. Maloney Hahn stated that when the CCGB previously looked at what would be 4 credit courses, these issues were discussed. We are potentially piling on more credits. There is no problem calling a course 4 credits, but there is an issue with the number of required distributions. C. Seyler said that students not in ECE take the course because they like the content, not because it is a lot of work. But we need to recognize that making the course whole and 4 credits makes it worth taking. S. Baker stated that all of the majors expect the ENGRD courses to be a platform on which other courses are built. This is an intro course for others and platform courses often don’t match for everyone. Some of the MSE (261 and 262) courses should be 4 credits, and the students would say that. L. Pollack stated that the only place she sees flexibility is with approved electives. If restructuring is done, there is 6 credits worth of time in there that is unstructured that could maybe directed toward breadth or something. D. Gries said that the Committee wants the course to be a 4 credit ENGRD 210. He wondered if the students would be affected if the course is taken off the distribution list. C. Seyler replied that they shouldn’t be affected because there are other distribution courses. Motion: To approve ENGRD 210 for 4 credits. Vote: 7 in favor, 1 opposed, 3 abstentions. Motion passed.

Discussion of Math Department Proposal to Stop Teaching Math 190: A. Zehnder stated that he asked people to take the math issue back to their departments and discuss it. If Math 190 were not taught, the CCGB needs to decide what the college should do. L. Trotter discussed it with their curriculum committee and people. ORIE wants the students to be well trained in math, and a patchwork combination doesn’t work, so a revision should be made. B. Isacks spoke with people in his department. If a student took Math 111, that would be fine. A. Center brought up the issue at a faculty meeting. CBE had 2 students who took Math 190, and neither was a minority. One took the course because they didn’t take AP math, and the other took it because their advisor suggested it. They liked Al Schatz and the course, but they felt that Math 191 would have been okay for them. None of their underrepresented minorities took Math 190. J. Bartsch said the only issue for BEE is catching the student who needs Math 111, and they’re not sure how to do that. The students could become a semester behind. About 40 of the majors come in from the Ag side, and they need to reach out to them 1 by 1. They need to be vigilant about them and screen them early. There is no safety net for them. It is best if the students could be prepared for Math 191 when they get to Cornell. BEE will work with Ag Admissions and Advising about this. L. Lion said that the Math 190 issue had been discussed. There were no advocates for keeping Math 190, but there is a concern that something be done for people who need Math 111. The ripple effects of having an extra math course in a sequence are a concern. This is a concern for math and physics courses that have prerequisites. It is best to bring the students in summer between their freshman and sophomore years to play catch up with math. It would be hard to bring them in the summer before they come. C. Seyler said that he spoke with people in ECE. Nobody believes that Math 190 works well. The real issue deals with affiliation, which requires Math 293 in the third semester. The college would have to allow an extra semester for the students who took Math 111. ECE would allow that, although it would put them a semester behind. A. Zehnder said that a student who was behind could take Math 293 in their fourth semester. S. Baker stated that the MSE faculty is of two minds: Some want to provide additional help for the students, and some want them to come prepared. L. Pollack said that the overall
feeling in AEP is that students who don’t have the appropriate math background shouldn’t be penalized, so some accommodation would be made for them. Maybe a fifth year would be required. The Physics Department has strong feeling of co-requisites; that Physics 214 and Math 294, Physics 213 and Math 293 go together. If Math 191 and 212 were taken together, it would be difficult. It is very important to start Physics 212 while taking Math 192. Students need adequate preparation for physics courses. She agreed to bring the issue to their subcommittee. If a student takes 294 with 321 during a junior year, that would be too challenging for a poorly prepared student.

L. Trotter stated that at the last CCGB meeting people had talked about the students taking math before they come on campus. B. East said that this would require a diagnostic exam and having them take math during the summer. This would put pressure on the Math Department to develop an exam. E. Fisher said that people accepted the argument that Math 190 doesn’t make sense the way it is formulated. She wondered whether it would be possible to give a higher credit version of Math 190. People were eager to keep the possibility alive for people with lesser preparation to do well. MAE will need to think about how students would catch up if they are not identified and take a course during the summer. It is best to have math and physics taken in the summer after the freshman year; then the students would be on track. L. Pollack said that having the students take math and physics during the summer would solve the AEP problem also. F. Shumway said that it is hard to find an equivalent for Math 192 at other institutions. B. East said that it would cost a lot of money for students to take summer courses, and it is better to have them come to Cornell prepared. E. Fisher said that a student could conceivably put off a course for a semester and stay on track. A. Center stated that it would be too difficult to identify students who need more math prior to their arrival. If we identify them after they arrive, they could avoid a different class during their first semester. B. East responded that if the Math Department could develop a test, it wouldn’t be difficult to identify the students. M. Spencer said that it is possible that students who take a test seem okay and then come here and don’t do well. There is math placement exam that is more engineering-based which is better than the general math test. Admissions is working on implementing that for the students. A. Center stated that if Math 192 were taken in the second semester, students wouldn’t be held back. B. East said that we don’t want the students to select majors based on whether they will be behind in one major if they are not as strong in math. J. Bartsch stated that a lot of students take an AEW, which makes a 5 credit course. He wondered if a math course could be structured like that. A. Zehnder stated that the Math Committee and Math Department representatives will come up with some proposals of what to do about this issue. They will then come back and discuss it with the CCGB. Departments should think about how to handle a beefier version of Math 190.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 a.m.