### CCGB Meeting Agenda, September 26, 2008

1. Approval of minutes
2. Undergraduate announcements
3. Distribution of college rules for majors on substitutions allowed for math and science courses. (Gries)
4. Further discussion of revised proposal for revised requirements on number of credits in math courses, for use in decisions on transfer credit awards (Gries).
5. Discussion of possibility of admitting transfer students prior to affiliation (Gries)
6. Discussion of a proposal to change the criterion for dean’s list from GPA of at least 3.4 to GPA of at least 3.5 (Gries)

### CCGB Minutes, September 19, 2008


**Ex-Officio:** K. Dimiduk, B. Howland, M. Spencer

**Other:** C. Pakkala, N. Peterson

**Introductions:** Introductions were done all around the table.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the 5/9/08 CCGB Meeting were approved as written.

**Undergraduate Announcements:** D. Gries stated that ABET is coming for an onsite visit for the Environmental Major in Early November. Other majors will be reviewed in 2010. He is asking instructors of the core courses for their assessments. We will need them this year because we didn’t get them all last year. If people submitted them last year, we don’t need them this year. He can send a few examples of what was done before and what is needed. We only need them for engineering courses.

D. Gries mentioned that VideoNote (like TakeNote) was started by two students last year. They go into classes and videotape the class and then sell it to students. Students can click on a table of contents in the video; it is very good. About 8-9 faculty members signed up for this, but someone in Arts & Science, and the provost and vice provost got involved. End result: Engineering can do it this semester, with 5-6 courses. No one else until some kind of a study is done.

T. Fine said that a videotape will also be reserved at the library for students to access. R. Bland said that he has had long standing concerns about chronic absenteeism. It would be interesting to have data on the attendance for the courses for which videotaping has been done. D. Gries said that no committee has been set up yet to evaluate the videotaping process; the Associate Provost is supposed to do this. J. Cisne said that watching the videotapes is good for improving teaching. D. Gries said that he knew that he would miss a lecture, so they videotaped him the day before and it was played to the students during his absence. L. Pollock expressed the concern that students might just sleep through classes and then cram right before the prelim by watching all of the videotapes back to back. She is concerned about material not being retained by the students. D. Gries agreed that it may happen, but the videotapes may also help students. S. Marschner stated that Stanford and other schools are also doing videotaping. D. Gries said that with VideoNote the professor owns the material and decides whether a particular video gets distributed.

**Update on committee assignments and outstanding tasks:** E. Fisher said that she needs to prepare a report of CCGB activities for the Dean. There are a couple of review activities going on: The Chem/Bio Liaison Subcommittee had meetings over the summer for instructors of Chem 209. More discussions
about Chem 209 will occur towards the end of this semester or next semester. The goals were (1) to re-
view Chem 209 and (2) explore whether math and quantitative reasoning could be included in Chem
209 or 208. We are having some input into the way the course is arranged. Not much has been done yet
to make it more quantitative. The Math & Science Subcommittee started to review the math, science,
and computing core to offer suggestions to make it in accord with the transformation curriculum report.
One principle of the report is “less is more”. The goal of reviewing syllabi is to see whether material has
crept in and hindering students’ ability to learn material. L. Pollock agreed to talk with D. Williamson
about progress with this.

Other future agenda items: E. Fisher asked if there were any upcoming agenda items. R. Bland re-
sponded that chronic absenteeism remains an issue. Also, in OR last year there were an alarming num-
ber of academic integrity violations. If this is a college-wide trend, this should be discussed. A. Center
said that regarding ABET, it seems that it would be good to have something on paper for everyone to
define success the same way at the university in terms of teaching. E. Fisher said that part of the ABET
process is for each major to develop their own measure of success and then meet it. A. Center said that it
would be better for the CCGB to express an opinion as to what our critical success measures are. We
should have some commonality of vision. T. Fine said that we need to come up with measurable objec-
tives for ABET, with items to be completed by graduation. A. Center asked how instilling an interest in
lifelong learning should be measured. He also asked what our critical success measures are. T. Fine sug-
gested that we talk to alumni to determine lifelong learning.

A. Ruina said that he was on the Curriculum Committee a couple of years ago. He felt that the report
dissipated and things that were discussed and were good deserve to be pushed. This included more com-
puting in courses and understanding which courses come before other courses (to determine what mate-
rial should be used for which course). L. Pollock said that some effort was made to examine math and
physics and pre-requisites were changed in the course catalog. A. Ruina said that he noticed that there
was some resistance to putting computers and math in courses. L. Pollock said that she had a meeting
with the Math D.U.S. and physics instructors and went through the course topics. As a result pre-
requisites were changed and are different in the course catalog. They didn’t tackle the computer and
math interface. It was challenging with math possibly because instructors are a more varied bunch than
those in the physics core courses. She was only able to meet with the Math D.U.S., Lars Wahlbin. She
can make a similar effort with CS in the math courses.

A. Ruina said that he has an issue with the evaluation of teaching. Minor improvements could be made
in course evaluations and how they’re done. D. Gries said that the evaluations are all online now. We
should probably revisit the evaluation questions.

M. Louge said that he has been wondering whether general education in the common curriculum has
changed a bit. E. Fisher said that response to the Baker report indicated that faculty didn’t want to go in
the direction of strengthening the core education at the expense of education in the majors. A. Ruina
said that there shouldn’t be pretense about what is in the common curriculum. A common core is rather
dishonest because no real choices exist for the students. M. Louge said that he was surprised to learn
that the number of credit hours increased in the introductory CS courses.

L. Pollock said that the CCGB spoke about advisor-approved electives last year and she wondered if the
issue was resolved. E. Fisher said that it will be covered in the CCGB report to the dean. The CCGB
didn’t take any bold steps; we just revised the wording in the student handbook in a way to discourage
advisors from approving some courses. Approval still varies from departments and is up to the advisor’s
discretion.
T. Fine spoke about student evaluations of courses. One study said that looking at 30 seconds worth of an instructor’s non-verbal behavior indicated a correlation between that and how students evaluated the instructor at the end of the semester, which seems problematic. D. Gries agreed to provide copies of that study for people if they wanted it.

**Discussion of revised proposal for revised requirements on number of credits in math courses, for use in decisions on transfer credit awards:**

D. Gries said that the issue is how many credits a student needs to have. The issue arises with a transfer course for 3 credits. Does the student need another math course? The approval system for transferring in math courses is different for current Cornell students vs. students transferring into Cornell. Current students must have courses elsewhere reviewed by the math department. Students transferring here have their math courses reviewed by the director of undergraduate study of their home department, who may consult the math department if desired.

At one time we had 15 credits of math as a requirement, but then we started teaching microcomputers and added 1 credit. Microcomputers were then taken out of the math course, but it remained 4 credits. The proposed motion is to let one of the first three math courses be completed with a 3-credit transfer course, while the other two must be 4-credit courses. The last course in the sequence may already be 3 or 4 credits, so a student could transfer in a 3- or 4-credit course to fulfill it.

D. Gries said that the transfer credit issue usually involves students who fail math here and want to take a summer course elsewhere. We have 3 math courses and departments can choose a 4th. Students could wind up with just 14 credits of math under the new proposal.

A. Center suggested that the credit requirement be entirely removed. E. Fisher said that it is good to have a credit limit for transfer students. She often has doubts about how good transfer students’ math courses are, and it is good for them to take additional math here. A. Ruina said that the key is whether it is knowledge or exposure. Too many students are taking advanced placement to get requirements done quicker. An exposure requirement is better, and he favors a residency requirement for math. A. Ruina said that the issue is about residency and if students take 3 credit math courses elsewhere, that’s fine. A. Center asked if we accept a course if someone takes a summer school course and a faculty member is confident about the course content. D. Gries replied affirmatively. A. Center said that the point system is the problem rather than the content. ABET would say that they don’t care how we teach it as long as the content is appropriate. T. Fine said that math education is currently inadequate and we can’t let it become weakened. Generally something is given up when admitting transfer students. E. Fisher said that it is unlikely that a residency requirement for math will be set up.

W. Philpot said that if a student has completed another course with substantial math content, students can petition to use 1 credit of that course to complete the required 4 credits for a given math course being transferred in. R. Bland said that students who transferred in math courses are weak in those areas compared to students who took the courses here. J. Cisne suggested that we have a supplemental course of some sort to provide whatever is missing in the student’s education; maybe a study group. L. Pollock said that it would have to be an independent study or something, due to different ability levels with the students. A. Ruina asked if there were a correlation between the number of credits and how a course is adequate. E. Fisher said that she has seen 2-credit linear algebra courses out there. A. Ruina pointed out that someone needed to sign off on the equivalency to Math 294, so someone must have approved the 2-credit course.

M. Louge suggested that we give a placement test. L. Pollock replied that it is a good idea but the implementation is challenging—we currently do this for incoming freshmen. The issue is whether they had the material and they can go into the curriculum. A general rule that works for everyone would be hard. A. Center said that asking them to take a 5th course for which they’re unprepared wouldn’t help the stu-
E. Fisher said that D. Gries will come back to the CCGB with both the current motion and a motion that had been introduced in CCGB last year, allowing 3 or 4 credits for any math courses transferred in.

**Report from liberal studies committee:** W. Philpot said that the Liberal Studies Committee met on 8 September 2008. They reiterated the policy established in spring 2008, that students can use liberal studies courses allowable by A&S and CALS to satisfy the liberal studies requirement in Engineering, in the category designated. Allowable courses and categories can be found at [www.cs.cornell.edu/gries/ccgb/](http://www.cs.cornell.edu/gries/ccgb/), and the website will be updated at the beginning of each semester. Courses that have been accepted or denied as liberal studies courses by the liberal studies committee are listed on that website. Students may petition to have a course included as a liberal studies course if it is NOT in A&S or CALS, if it is a foreign language course (not a literature course), or if it is an applied/performing arts course. E. Fisher said that last year advisors felt that simply referring students to the courses of study was a bad system and they wanted a list of allowable liberal studies courses, and that the new website responds to that concern.

D. Gries said that the link is on the engineering webpage and also in the engineering handbook. W. Philpot said that all petitions will be reviewed by the Liberal Studies Committee. They will set up a process to re-review courses in a few years. The liberal studies list will eventually be transferred to the Advising Office for updating. R. Bland said that the course content should be relevant for when the courses were being reviewed, and thus maintaining an archive of allowed courses is important. He has an advisee that took a course in A&S, thought it would be a liberal studies course, but it wasn’t on the list. He asked if we would allow the student to petition the course. D. Gries replied that it is up to A&S to know which of their courses count as liberal studies. There are thousands of courses that students could choose from.

W. Philpot said that students could petition to A&S or CALS.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.