

**MINUTES**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**  
**Bourns College of Engineering**  
**November 24, 2008, 1:30 P.M.**  
**A171 Bourns Hall**

**Attending:** Frank Vahid, Chair  
Bahman Anvari  
Gianfranco Ciardo  
Dalia Eldessouky  
Christian Shelton  
Tom Stahovich  
Ertem Tuncel  
Charles Wyman

Dean Reza Abbaschian, *ex officio*  
Associate Dean Mark Matsumoto, *ex officio*  
Associate Dean Chinya Ravishankar, *ex officio*

Rod Smith

**Absent:**

**Guests:** Michele Coyle, Campus Counsel  
Bracken Daily, Registrar  
LaRae Lundgren, AVC Enrollment Management  
John Briggs, Interim Director of University Writing Program

**Approval of the Minutes**

The minutes for the meeting of October 27, 2008 were unanimously approved.

**Announcements**

**A. Dean**

**Reza Abbaschian**

-The Campus is experiencing a second round of budget cuts. There is a \$360,000 soft freeze on staff. There is a \$560,000 cut from the College. Faculty salary adjustments will not be occurring this year.

In regard to faculty hires, the college has received approval to hire only two replacements for vacant faculty positions. The Dean is working to obtain approval to hire for the third vacancy.

It was mentioned that this might not be the end to the budget cuts because next year will be worse than this year. The Campus is moving toward a strategic plan which will be pushing for differential counting of student FTE. Ravi and the other Associate Deans from other colleges have had discussion regarding the recruitment and retention of students from the community colleges. A trip was made to Morgan and Howard Universities. Both Universities were eager to collaborate with the graduate student program regarding the recruitment of their students.

**B. Associate Deans**

**Chinya Ravishankar**

- There is still ongoing discussion regarding Title 5 resource allocation and research activity for community college students. The campus has determined how the resources will be allocated. It was mentioned that it would be much more productive if COE and CNAS had some of the resources.

It was determined that Ravi will draft a letter that The Executive Committee Chair will circulate to the committee members.

**Mark Matsumoto**

-No announcements.

## **C. Chair**

**Frank Vahid**

-No announcements

## **New/Continued Business**

### **A. Access to Teaching Evaluations – Michele Coyle**

- It was discussed that there are two reasons for posting teaching evaluations. One reason is to counter bad information from outside websites such as pickaprof.com with good info directly from the campus. The other reason is to give students a reliable resource when choosing professors to take a course from. The reason Michele Coyle was asked to attend the Executive Committee meeting was to provide insight on what the college is allowed to do regarding the posting of teaching evaluations. The Executive Committee Chair consulted with VP of Undergraduate Education, David Fairris. VP Fairris recommended that EVC Ellen Wartella be consulted. EVC Wartella suggested the VP of Academic Personnel Elizabeth Lord be consulted. VP Lord forwarded it back to VP Fairris. All of the above agreed that there are no rules against it, but that the committee consult with Michele Coyle. The Executive Committee is interested in learning what is or is not private record?

Michele explained that as long as all parties involved is aware and knows what is going on there is no problem. If the professors felt that they were not protected it could lead to problems. There is no prohibition to post, but by providing the professors with written notice could help in avoiding the chance of litigation.

It was asked if faculty could have the option to opt out from having their evaluations posted. Michele explained there is not much of a privacy issue if someone opts out. It is not necessary to provide an opt out. It is more important that the faculty be provided with the notice of posting.

It was also asked if it would be possible to go back and post past evaluations. Michele felt there is fairly solid ground to go forward, but going back could be trickier. The University could be sued to have the policy rescinded. Responsible is the one that implemented the policy and therefore could be the one to pay for litigation costs.

Some of the problems that the Committee might face is push back from other colleges and departments on campus who might not choose to implement this policy. For example, if a student makes the argument that they have access to BCOE teaching evaluations and feel that they should also have access to other college or department evaluations as well.

Michele suggested that the committee make sure that the rationale for this policy is defensible and reasonably related to the legitimate purpose. The evaluations are a part of the personnel file, but the committee has the ability to post the evaluations as a policy matter by deciding to do this as an exception to the PRA. Michele also offered that since this is cutting edge, the committee might want to run this by Academic Senate. The committee can get some idea by putting it in a plan to run by an Academic Senate committee.

The Executive Committee decided to take some time to digest all the information provided by Michele and bring it back up at another time. If it is decided to post teaching evaluations a policy, everyone's written agreement will need to be obtained. The committee needs to balance the risks with the benefits.

### **B. Engineering Students – Vital Statistics**

- A summary report of how BCOE students are doing will be presented at the Executive Committee meetings.

-an update was provided regarding mid-quarter grade reporting. One report was received on the deadline and two were received before the deadline. Advising was limited due receiving grade reports after the deadline.

-The summary report provided examined grade distributions by degree program and class level. The statistical information shows that most freshman have below a 3.0 grade point average. The mean is 2.5. This problem is not engineering specific and is a campus problem. It is necessary to look for broader reasons for why this is happening. It will be necessary to look at what courses freshman are taking that are causing such low grades. It is important to find out what is driving this and what is happening during the first year. These are issues that will be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting.

### **C. Calculus and Foundations of Engineering**

-Tabled due to lack of time.

**D. New Course – BIEN 160**

-BIEN 160 was unanimously approved by the Executive Committee. The course will be forwarded to the Committee on Courses for review.

**E. Proposed Meeting Dates for the Winter 2009 Quarter**

- The Executive Committee will meet on the following dates and times during the Winter 2009 Quarter:  
Wednesday, January 7, 2009, from 1:00pm-3:00pm, in Bourns Hall, Room A171  
Wednesday, February 4, 2009, from 1:00pm-3:00pm, in Bourns Hall, Room A171  
Wednesday, March 11, 2009, from 1:00pm-3:00pm, in Bourns Hall, Room A171

**F. Course Approval Process – LaRae Lundgren & Bracken Daily**

- Campus Registrar Bracken Daily and AVC for Enrollment Management LaRae Lundgren attended the meeting to present and discuss the course approval process. Bracken and LaRae mentioned that there needs to be more flexibility in the current process. Bracken and LaRae explained that the lack of flexibility is due to process and culture. The back and forth nature is the reason for the long deadlines. The Committee expressed that the first pass to Cheri Spina in the courses office takes too long to get back to the departments. Bracken explained that it takes a long time to get through a whole proposal. It goes back and forth from Cheri to the departments because it is such a long process. The Executive Committee requested a flow chart of the course approval process. Bracken said she will send it along with a checklist of common errors to preparers.

LaRae and Bracken also mentioned that there is a lack of flexibility due to volume. There were several areas mentioned for overhaul. It was explained that the Registrar's Office role could be to provide more CRAMS resources and training. The Registrar's Office is also working with Computing and Communications to enhance and possibly revamp CRAMS in order to make it more user-friendly. The department role could be for the chair, faculty member, and course preparer to familiarize themselves with the course proposal process and guidelines and also by submitting complete and accurate information.

The Executive Committee expressed their concern for the current course procedures and guidelines. Bracken explained that the course procedures and guidelines are developed and maintained by the Committee on Courses and any concerns should be brought to the attention of Committee on Courses.

The Executive Committee also mentioned that the culture of the course approval process is an issue. Discussion was raised regarding what part of the process could be eliminated to simplify the approval process. It was discussed that with large number of courses that come through, one person in the courses office to review is not enough. Bracken mentioned it is enough if Cheri was receiving complete and accurate course proposals when they are submitted. Cheri's job is to review the courses to be sure that they comply with Committee on Courses procedure and guidelines. It was mentioned that what might be best is for Cheri to review courses at the end of the approval process before it goes to Committee on Courses rather than early in the process after department review. By doing this, ownership will be placed back on the faculty and department preparers rather than on Cheri.

**G. Proposed Changes to the University Writing Requirement – John Briggs**

-The University Writing Committee has submitted a proposal to Tony Norman for review. All committees will review and vote on the proposal as it affects a campus wide requirement (English 1A, 1B, and 1C).

John Briggs mentioned that the University Writing Requirement has not been revised since the early 80's. The University Writing Committee has been working for over a year to develop new options to span across the curriculum. The change responds to the Senate's call to involve and support faculty volunteers. It also provides alternatives to English 1C. If this proposal is approved, some English 1C instruction (a two-unit writing course) will be conducted by faculty participating in creating or reconstructing their current courses to become more writing intensive. It was mentioned that currently BCOE offers ENGR 180, a writing course for engineers. John mentioned that a version of this course could be offered as a possible ENGL 1C replacement course.

Some of the advantages to the proposal are that it expands and allocates TA support and opportunities by developing and teaching writing courses. The proposal also consolidates the number of breadth courses to be taken. It also reduces the cost to satisfy the third quarter writing requirement.

The Faculty Advisory Committee appoints TA's to be a part of the University Writing Program. John encouraged the Executive Committee to let the faculty know to nominate their graduate students to be a part of the University Writing Program.

**The meeting was adjourned at 3:32p.m.**