

MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Bourns College of Engineering
April 10, 2009, 10:00 A.M.
A171 Bourns Hall

Attending: Frank Vahid, Chair
Gianfranco Ciardo
Dalia Eldessouky
Christian Shelton
Tom Stahovich
Ertem Tuncel

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

Absent: Bahman Anvari
Charles Wyman

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of the Minutes

After a few suggested changes were made, the minutes for the meeting of March 11, 2009 were unanimously approved.

3. Announcements

A. Dean

Reza Abbaschian

- A senior undergraduate student and a PhD graduate student passed away recently. The College is taking steps to award them posthumous degrees.
- The Chancellor has sent out an email in regard to the budget crisis. The second shoe is falling, but the College will be able to deal with it. There is a state 7 billion dollar shortage which is hit the universities much harder. Permanent cuts will be starting this year.

B. Associate Deans

Mark Matsumoto

- It is hard to know where the graduate enrollment projections for next year will level out at. Currently the numbers this year are down 15% from last year. The SIR target is 130.
- Domestic graduate admission offers are up from last year. International offers are down. There were 350 offers last year compared to 225 this year. 50% of offers made are accepted.

Chinya Ravishankar

- Currently undergraduate applications received are up 22% and SIRs are up 27% from last year. There are currently 175 SIRs for the college. There were 600+ SIRs received last year and it is possible the numbers might be up 30% more than that for this year. The issue with the increase in SIRs is there aren't any resources to handle such a large number of admits. The campus target is 4,000+ students. Admissions has been asked how they will handle the large number of students. Perhaps they should enforce the SIR deadline strictly. The campus admission criteria is 80% academic and 20% non-academic (i.e. first-generation). Campus is admitting anyone that is UC eligible. The Executive Committee decided to further discuss this issue before November. The Student Affairs Office and the Vice Provost's Office for Undergraduate Education will work together to gather some information. This topic will be added to the next Executive Committee's agenda. Ravi will also work on information for a pre-engineering program.

- Transfer admissions are generally low; averaging about 40 undergraduate admits a year. There will be a community college conference on May 1. COE and CNAS are also reaching out to the

community and junior colleges through the Title V grant. If we are strong in this, we should see an increase in undergraduate transfer admission numbers.

- The Academic Senate is creating a general education standing senate committee and has asked for a recommendation of members. George Haggerty will serve as chair. It was suggested that the COE Executive Committee talk with the Committee on Committees and Academic Senate that those that serve on this committee have a broad vision and nationwide understanding of what is happening regarding general education.

C. Chair

Frank Vahid

- The Executive Council is looking into the possibility of using online faculty evaluations only. The incentive is cost savings. Currently it costs \$50,000 to process evaluations whereas online evaluations would only cost \$4,000. An Ad Hoc committee chaired by Frank Vahid has been formed to look into the online evaluation process. The Ad Hoc committee is also responsible for looking into ways to determine how to obtain a higher response rate. Online evaluations have been considered to be a concern due to low response rates. It has been suggested that only those that complete online evaluations are extremists but there is no evidence to support this.

It was mentioned previously that the organization Students Unite was also looking into an online teaching evaluation process for students to access, but no progress has been made. It was suggested that parallel program most likely wouldn't be helpful since students might become overwhelmed with the multiple online evaluations to complete.

4. Engineering Students' Vital Statistics

-Statistical information was provided regarding incoming undergraduate transfer students for the Fall 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008 quarters as well as Winter 2006, 2007, and 2008 quarters. The total number of applications received, applicants admitted, and applicants that accepted along with the Average GPA were examined. Based on the data, there are approximately 40 transfer students admitted each fall. The number of applicants accepting for the Winter 2008 more than doubled compared to the winter quarter acceptance rates in previous years. Reasons for the increase could be attributed to the increase in COE reaching out to the community colleges. The increase can also be attributed to the change in transfer admission criteria that now requires a minimum GPA of 2.8. It is expected that the number of transfer students will be significantly higher this year compared to last year.

5. New/Continued Business

A. Changes to Business Informatics Program Committee

- The Computer Science and Engineering Faculty are proposing to delete a committee in charge for the Business Informatics program since based entirely within BCoE and is not a cross-disciplinary program. The Computer Science and Engineering Department faculty will be responsible for overseeing the Business Informatics program.

The Executive Committee unanimously approved the deletion of the Business Informatics committee in charge. The changes will be made for the 2009-2010 catalog.

B. Changes to Mechanical Engineering Major Requirements

- As discussed at the last meeting, the Mechanical Engineering Department would like to replace the newly approved ME 002 courses with the ME 1A, 1B, 1C series. ME 1C is no longer needed since ME 18 has also been changed from a two to three unit course.

After much discussion, the Mechanical Engineering Department would like to continue to move forward with replacing the ME 1A, 1B, 1C series with ME 2. At the last meeting, there was concern among some of the Executive Committee members that with the deletion of the ME 1 series, students will not have any contact with the department during their first quarter. It was mentioned that the Mechanical Engineering Department faculty will be meeting with students during the first quarter small groups for a two hour mentor session. It was also mentioned that there will be four hours of contact time during the winter and spring quarters which other departments do not have.

It was mentioned that first quarter contact with students is helpful to learn about the major, networks, field of study, and the overall ability for a student to feel like a part of the major, department, and college. However, the Mechanical Engineering Department sees that there is no evidence to confirm that a ten week delay will not have any serious ramifications.

The proposed changes to the Mechanical Engineering major requirements were approved by the BCoE Executive Committee (8 in favor, 1 abstain, 0 opposed). The proposed changes will be forwarded to the Committee on Educational Policy for review.

C. Writing Across the Curriculum

- The University Writing Program has finalized the Writing Across the Curriculum proposal. The proposal raised many concerns among BCoE Executive Committee members. One concern was that the University Writing Program will monitor and evaluate English 1C alternative courses for renewal on an annual basis. It was mentioned that service courses should be reviewed by the College. Another concern was that the program stipulates that students should enroll in an English composition course until the sequence is completed with a satisfactory GPA. This is inconsistent with the discipline specific communication. Other concerns were that the proposal was largely created without input from BCoE. What input was provided by BCoE was ignored.

The Writing Across the Curriculum proposal was unanimously denied by the BCoE Executive Committee. The BCoE Executive Committee Chair will draft bullet points of the BCoE Executive Committee's concerns regarding the proposal to be sent to Academic Senate.

D. General Education Pilot Programs

- The General Education Advisory Committee submitted two pilot concentrations (Climate Change/Sustainability and California) to be offered as options to the current General Education Requirements. The BCoE proposed concentration option will be submitted once the proposed courses listed in the concentration have been approved.

The BCoE Executive Committee was unanimously in favor of the two pilot concentrations (Climate Change/Sustainability and California).

E. Faculty Voting Practices on Merit and Promotion Cases

- Discussion was raised regarding department voting practices when voting on merit and promotion cases. A few concerns were raised. One concern was that faculty names are listed on the official ballots. Another concern was that faculty have two days after the meeting to submit their ballot, but it is assumed that if the ballot is not submitted at the meeting, it is going to be a negative vote. Finally, it was mentioned that on ballots where there is more than one step to be voted on, it does not seem necessary to have to vote on a lesser step when a higher step has been proposed.

It was mentioned that this is not a function of the Executive Committee to review, but Dean Reza Abbaschian will bring this issue up at the Chairs and Directors meeting.

F. FERPA Rules and Writing Letters of Recommendations for Students

- FERPA has been in effect since 1974 and requires that no person can divulge any information regarding a student's educational records. This is a concern that faculty should be aware of since the letter writer can be made liable for something such as mentioning a grade in a recommendation letter without receiving student's written permission. It was mentioned that before a faculty member writes a letter of recommendation, a waiver should be signed by the student waiving access to their records. It was suggested that a waiver be drafted and forwarded to campus counsel for review.

G. Proposed Mid-Quarter Grades

- The Committee on Educational Policy and the Committee on Academic Freedom did not feel that the Mid-Quarter Grades Policy was a good idea for the campus, but encouraged the BCoE Executive Committee to work with the Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education to find ways to notify students who are in danger of failing early on in the quarter.

The Executive Committee discussed what action, if any, should be taken from here. It was mentioned that data should be collected possibly from a random sampling of BCoE students. It was also mentioned that faculty should also be educated on learn grade reporting capabilities.

H. Bylaws Regarding CoE EC Membership Nomination and Election (presently any CoE Prof can nominate/vote on any EC position; should it be limited to the profs in the particular department of that position?)

- Due to lack of time, this agenda item was tabled. It will be added to the May 15th Executive Committee agenda for discussion.

6. The meeting was adjourned at 12:02p.m.