Engineering Faculty Advisory Committee  Monthly Meeting

Friday 08 October 2010

Meeting with Dr. Kem Bennett*,

Vice Chancellor–Engineering, Director of TEES, Dean College of Engineering

* Executive Associate Dean Dr. N. K. Anand will substitute for Dean Bennett who will be on business travel.

(1) Topic 1: Budget Cuts and Its Impacts on the Undergraduate Program at Artie McFerrin Department of Chemical Engineering

From: Drs. Lale Yurttas & Mahmoud El-Halwagi

Presented By: Dr. Carl Laird, CHEN

The Artie McFerrin Department of Chemical Engineering will not be able to deliver its traditionally very strong undergraduate program to its full potential if the budget cuts materialize as proposed. Dismissal of the department's three teaching faculty, each with unique and irreplaceable places within the department and among its students, will leave the department with difficult choices of cutting the number of courses, eliminating electives, combining sections thus lecturing to large group of students, restricting course and lab offerings, and sacrificing its human resources, students and faculty. This concern is shared by ABET and the entire constituency of alumni and students of the Department. Chemical engineering Department at Texas A&M has a
long tradition of producing fine engineers that are valued by industry. The program will be significantly reduced, won't be able to meet the demands of the state, the country, and the world where more people are needed in areas of science and engineering.

Damage has been done even if worst-case cuts are not implemented. Furthermore, if worst-case cuts are implemented, we would like to ask the Dean to allow other departmental/college resources (e.g., departmental overheads, unrestricted grants, etc.) to be used to re-hire the senior lecturers.

(2) **Topic 2: Per Diem Rule**

*From: Anonymous Faculty Member, ISEN*

*Presented by: Dr. Sara McComb, ISEN*

Please inquire about the per diem rule pertaining to our business travels. Right now TEES does not allow per diems. Is that a TEES rule or a state rule? If it is a TEES rule, would the Dean consider allowing per diems, which could make the reimburse process easier?

(3) **Topic 3: Two Signatures on Every PO**

*From: Anonymous, CPSC*

*Presented by: Dr. Jennifer Welch, CPSC*

As you may have noticed, we are now required
to provide two signatures on every PO, one approving the purchase and a new one certifying that the charges are allowed under the TEES account.

This seems to create more work for our admin staff, who now have to chase PIs to get that signature. I spoke with Laurie and she said this comes from higher up at TEES. I am not sure this is important enough to be looked at by EFAC, but it seems such a wasteful procedure that I thought I would bring it up just in case.

Appendix  "It seems this new move to make us physically sign things is a major step backward when most modern institutions are moving to fully electronic approvals. What is the reason for this change? Can it be revisited and instead replaced with electronic approvals?"

(4) Topic 4:  Further Comments on “Savings Generated by Retirements”

From: Anonymous, CPSC

Presented by:  Dr. Jennifer Welch, CPSC

I read the report from the previous EFAC meeting and I am concerned about the topic 9, see below. Is the dean office going to present more details about what they want to do with this money?

Topic 9:  Savings Generated by retirements

From: Anonymous, CPSC

Presented by: Dr. Jennifer Welch CPSC

"If a faculty member participates in the voluntary separation program, will the budget savings be given back to their department?
If not, how will it be determined how these savings will be used?"

Anand - Just what we have been doing, it goes back to the Dean's office.

Carl - It may or may not help.

Sara - Will the University be allowed to keep the savings?

Anand - So far yes.

(5) Topic 5: Status of “Acute Family Care”

From: Dr. Nancy Amato, CPSC

Presented by: Dr. Jennifer Welch, CPSC

Status of COE Acute Family Care Guidelines: To my recollection, we were basically done. The Department heads had provided input and the document was revised accordingly and ok'ed by Deena Wallace. As I recall, the next step was for the Dean's office to publicize the guidelines to the faculty, but so far as I know, this has not been done yet.

(6) Topic 6: Computing Infrastructure

From: Dr. Diego Donzis, AERO

Presented by: Dr. Diego Donzis, AERO

1/ Currently some departments (or even groups) have to get licenses for software which a large population uses (Matlab, etc.). Perhaps at the college level it is more effective to negotiate better deals?

2/ What's the position of the COE regarding supercomputing at the departmental level? Does the COE encourage local developments or is there a vision to unify efforts?

3/ It is my understanding that there were some initial meetings involving IT personnel to evaluate the feasibility of consolidating IT systems at the college level (e.g. email, web servers, etc)? What is the long-term vision?
(7) **Topic 7: Recent Faculty Evaluation Approach**

*From: Dr. J.N. Reddy, CVEN, MEEN*

*Presented by: Scott Socolofsky, CVEN*

Dr. Bennett, do you have a comment on the recent document evaluating the faculty using a restrictive criteria that excludes both lower level undergraduate courses and graduate courses (both are time consuming and require considerable effort to teach and maintain contact hours), not consistent with the mission of a flagship university, and does not include correct data for many people? What is the message that the faculty are expected to infer from the information?. Most faculty members with considerable research funds and national international reputation are in the red. This is very damaging to the university and demoralizing to the faculty when the public think that the faculty are NOT performing consistent with what they are paid.

(8) **Topic 8: Data Used for NRC Doctoral Rankings**

*Brought Forward by: Dr. J. Hahn, CHEN*

*Presented by: Dr. Carl Laird, CHEN*

We have analyzed our data from the NRC doctoral rankings and noticed that the number of allocated faculty members for the CHEN department is stated as 35.6, however, the number of tenure track faculty members at the time was 22. Even when we include lecturers with graduate faculty appointments, emeritus professors, and visiting research
professors, the number in CHEN was only 27. We were told that this has
to do with people from other departments that serve on students
committees being counted as a partial positions, however, the number
of allocated faculty of the other departments seem close to the number
of tenure track faculty there. Since several of the ranking categories
(including the ones with the highest impact) are computed on a per
faculty basis, this does have a direct negative effect on the outcome
in these categories. I would like to know how the number of allocated faculty was
computed and what can be done so that this does not hurt our reputation in
future assessment exercises.
TOPICS FOR REVIEW BY THE COMMITTEE
(time permitting)

(A) Review of EFAC By-Laws (Please see Appendix B)

(B) Election of New Officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

Section 1: The Officers of the Engineering Faculty Advisory Council shall be a chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary. Each shall be elected for a one-year term.

Section 2: A member of the Council must have completed one year on the Council before being eligible to serve as an officer of the council.

Section 3: If for any reason the Office of Chair shall become vacant, the Vice-Chair shall succeed to this office. If a vacancy occurs in any other office a member duly elected by the Council shall fill it.

Adjourn Meeting

APPENDICES
# APPENDIX A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AERO</td>
<td>Diego Donzis</td>
<td><a href="mailto:donzis@tamu.edu">donzis@tamu.edu</a></td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMEN</td>
<td>John Criscione</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jccriscone@tamu.edu">jccriscone@tamu.edu</a></td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAEN</td>
<td>Sandun Fernando</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sfernando@tamu.edu">sfernando@tamu.edu</a></td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEN</td>
<td>Carl Laird</td>
<td><a href="mailto:carl.laird@tamu.edu">carl.laird@tamu.edu</a></td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPSC</td>
<td>Jennifer Welch</td>
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<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVEN</td>
<td>Scott Socolofsky</td>
<td><a href="mailto:socolofs@tamu.edu">socolofs@tamu.edu</a></td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECEN</td>
<td>Laszlo Kish</td>
<td><a href="mailto:akcam@ece.tamu.edu">akcam@ece.tamu.edu</a></td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETID</td>
<td>Malini Natarajarathinam</td>
<td><a href="mailto:malini@tamu.edu">malini@tamu.edu</a></td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
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EFAC meeting schedule

September 10, 2010
October 8, 2010
November 5, 2010
December 10, 2010
January 14, 2011
February 11, 2011
March 4, 2011
April 8, 2011
May 6, 2011

APPENDIX B

--------BYLAWS of the ENGINEERING FACULTY ADVISORY COUNCIL--------

November 1979 (Revised July 1989)

ARTICLE I – PURPOSE

Section 1: To generate and develop broad ideas for the improvement and ultimate development of the College of Engineering and to suggest policies that will enable the College of Engineering to better serve the educational needs of the people of Texas.

Section 2: To advise the Dean of Engineering on matters of basic importance to the Engineering Faculty as a body.
ARTICLE II – MEETINGS

Section 1: No business can be conducted without a quorum of 7 members present.

Section 2: New members will be provided with a copy of the current Bylaws at the first meeting that they attend.

Section 3: At the first meeting of each September, Rules of Procedure will be adopted by the council.

Section 4: The Council shall regularly meet monthly on a specified date September through May inclusive.

Section 5: Special meetings will be held at the call of the Chair or upon petition of three members of the Council.

Section 6: Minutes of the Council meeting shall be promptly delivered to all EFAC members.

Section 7: All meetings of the Council shall be open to all faculty members as visitors. A faculty member wishing to present a matter for consideration of the Council shall do so through the Council Chair or their Departmental Representative.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERS

Section 1: The Council shall consist of one member from each academic department in the College of Engineering including one member from the Agricultural Engineering Department. Administrative officers are ineligible for membership on the Council.

Section 2: Members shall serve a term of three years. One third of the members’ term on the Council will expire each year.

Section 3: The current Departmental Representative shall hold the election of each Departmental Representative through a vote of all department faculty and administration. Any one member of the Department in which the election is being held may request oversight of the election by the Council. In the event of such a request, the Council as a whole will determine the procedure for the election.

Section 4: Newly elected members shall take office at the first meeting in May.
Section 5: Council members unable to attend shall send a substitute to act in their place.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

Section 1: The Officers of the Engineering Faculty Advisory Council shall be a chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary. Each shall be elected for a one-year term.

Section 2: A member of the Council must have completed one year on the Council before being eligible to serve as an officer of the council.

Section 3: If for any reason the Office of Chair shall become vacant, the Vice-Chair shall succeed to this office. If a vacancy occurs in any other office a member duly elected by the Council shall fill it.

ARTICLE V – VOTING

Section 1: Determination of the method of voting on matters presented to the Council shall be at the discretion of the Chair, unless a member of the Council requests a secret ballot.

Section 2: A simple majority vote of the members in attendance, provided that a quorum is present, shall be required to approve an ITEM FOR INVESTIGATION by the Council.

Section 3: A TWO-THIRDS majority vote of the members in attendance, provided that a quorum is present, shall be required to establish approval of the FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE COUNCIL on any item.

ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES

Section 1: There shall be no standing committee on the Engineering Faculty Advisory Council.

Section 2: Special committees shall be appointed and instructed by the Chair as needed.

Section 3: With the authorization of the majority of the Council, the chair may appoint faculty members not serving on the Council to special committees with specific charges.

ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS

Section 1: The Rules of Procedure may be suspended by a three-fourths majority vote.
Section 2: These by-laws may be amended or repealed by a two-thirds majority vote of the members in attendance.

Section 3: Proposed alterations, amendments or repeals shall first be read at a regular meeting of the Council and voted upon at the next meeting of the Council.

APPENDIX C

Agenda and Minutes Procedures

From Hope Mireles 01 July 2009

Important Things to Remember

• Call for Agenda Items – Send email out to all EFAC members at least 2 weeks prior to next meeting. Include a deadline in your message for agenda items.

• Send Draft Agenda to Dean – Draft agenda needs to be emailed 1 week prior to meeting. Please send draft agenda to Hope Mireles. Also, copy Karen Barfield & Deena Wallace.
• Minutes – After meeting, minutes will be reviewed by Deena Wallace before posting on the EFAC website. But, until that happens, they are still in draft form and they shouldn’t be distributed outside the EFAC members.

• Confirm meeting dates/changes to Dr. Bennett’s schedule – ex: travel schedules, TAMU holidays or Board of Regents meetings.

• Past chairs – Lessard, Jennings, Maxwell, Schechter

APPENDIX D
Attendance List For EFAC Monthly Meeting on
Friday 08 October 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dept.</th>
<th>Representative</th>
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<tr>
<td>AERO</td>
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<td>Sandn Fernando</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHEN</td>
<td>Carl Laird</td>
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APPENDIX E

Engineering Faculty Advisory Committee Monthly Meeting

Friday, 10 September 2010

Meeting with Dr. Kem Bennett*,
Vice Chancellor–Engineering, Director of TEES, Dean
College of Engineering

Minutes

Meeting began at 12:30 pm

Members Present: Alan Palazzolo (Chair) MEEN; John Criscione (AERO); Carl Laird (CHEN); Jennifer Welch (CPSC); Scott Socolofsky (CVEN); Laszlo Kish (ECEN); Malini Natarajarathinam (ETID); Sara McComb (ISEN); Lin Shao (NUEN); Eduardo Gildin (PETE)
Members Not Present: Diego Donzts (AERO) - Adonios Karpetis substituted

* Executive Associate Dean Dr. N.K. Anand substituted for Dean Bennett, who was on travel.

Topic 1: $1,000 Scholarships and In-State Tuition Fee

From: Dr. Laszlo Kish, ECE
Presented By: Dr. Laszlo Kish, ECE

I would like to bring up the issue of "One-time $1000 scholarship policy" for the attention of EFAC. We have an ongoing discussion how to interpret the attached text.

Even though these scholarships are paid from the research grants of the respective faculty, we were told that the College is currently being audited regarding the procedures followed in the awarding of these scholarships and therefore we will need to follow the following procedures:

Step 1 – You need to advertise the scholarship. Please prepare an announcement that lists who is eligible, how (based on what criteria) the awardee(s) will be selected, how the applicants can apply, and an application deadline. Forward that announcement to ______ who will distribute it to the entire graduate student body. You may advertise through other media as well, but we want to at least send out an email to all graduate students in the department.

Step 2 – Rank the applicants. Please provide the graduate office with a spreadsheet listing all applicants received and scoring each one according to the criteria listed in your announcement from step 1. Please describe the metric used to provide your overall ranking in sufficient detail so that an auditor could clearly see how you arrived at your ranking. Once the graduate office has received the above documentation, they will print out award letters, get the awardee to sign an acceptance letter, and will instruct _____ to post the award to the student’s account. No scholarship will be awarded without the above documentation.

Regarding what criteria is acceptable, there may not be an easy answer to, but use common sense. Would you be embarrassed if your criteria were featured in an article in The Eagle?

These scholarships must be competitive. This means that you cannot use a set of criteria that are so restrictive that only one or two students are eligible. If your goal is to get a fee waiver in the hands of your student and you set up a set of criteria to accomplish that goal, then you are certainly not abiding by the “spirit of the law.”

The last paragraph is the point of concern. Suppose a faculty wants to award a student researching electrical motor control. Can he require that one of the requirements is documented experience with electrical motor measurements and another one is documented experience in robust control theory? Then, at most 1 or 2 students may be eligible, even though, we cannot be sure in advance.

At this time of serious budget cuts and firing staff, it is even more essential to be effective with using the research grants. Thus many faculty may not be interested to risk their money if they
must make the requirements so wide that high-risk students will have reasonable chances to win the application.

**Anand** – There is no way around it, this is a state rule and have to follow the procedures.

**Palazzolo** – Can the donor set the criteria for the scholarship?

**Anand** – Donor may suggest criteria but Department Heads are the ones to implement in consistence with state policies.

**Topic 2: Separation Program**

**From:** Anonymous Faculty Member (eligible for separation)
**Presented by:** Dr. Sara McComb

*What is the present status of program and why (in this person's opinion) has it been "mishandled and mismanaged".*

**Anand** – The window for Voluntary Separation Program will close on September 24. Soon after that Dean will meet with the Provost for next steps. r.

**Topic 3: Faculty Affected by Cutbacks**

**From:** Dr. Harry Jones, CVEN
**Presented by:** Dr. Scott Socolofsky, CVEN

*As a COE faculty member, I'm curious to know how many tenure track faculty were impacted by cutbacks. I saw the number 24 in the paper, but I don't know if I trust the Eagle to get it right. What's the story on these 24 - were they really tenure track? Were they retirements/resignations? Persons who failed the tenure cut that's usually announced in early spring?*

**Anand** – There are no tenure track faculty losing their position. Open positions have been surrendered to accommodate budget reduction. .

**Carl** – How many lecturers in the COE were affected?

**Anand** – 9 were affected.

**Scott** – How many faculty positions were frozen?

**Anand** – Approximately 12 positions for which search was underway in FY 10.
Topic 4: New Initiatives

From: Dr. Harry Jones, CVEN
Presented by: Dr. Scott Socolofsky, CVEN

What will the process be for deciding what "new initiatives" are going to be funded out of this pot of money the administration seems determined to create? Dean Bennett perceptions on this topic would be welcome. If it's not primarily faculty driven, I think the president is going to sustain huge damage in his relationship with faculty.

Anand: This is still to be determined

Topic 5: Credit for faculty advising graduate students

From: Dr. Jorge Alvarado, ETID
Presented by: Dr. Malini Natarajarathinam, ETID

During one of the EFAC meetings about 3 years ago, I brought the issue of getting credit (off-loading or some support) for advising and teaching students under MEEN 691 and MEEN 685, respectively. In MMET we have 4 faculty members with joint-appointments in MEEN, but we don't get any credit or support for advising graduate students. This has a direct impact on our overall teaching load since we still have to teach 9 hrs in ETID. We basically need to know what policy should apply in those cases, and if there is a way to compensate ETID professors for incurring an additional teaching load while advising a significant number of graduate students outside the department

Anand – It is up to the Department Head to make that decision.

Malini – Is this the procedure in other departments?

Anand - Yes

Topic 6: Permanent Residency Sponsorship for International Staff and Faculty

From: Dr. Malini Natarajarathinam, ETID
Presented by: Dr. Malini Natarajarathinam, ETID

There are mainly 2 types of permanent residency sponsorships available for international faculty - EB-1 and EB-2. EB-1 is for outstanding professors and researchers and EB-2 is for professional holding an advanced degree. Texas A&M currently sponsors only EB-2 category for majority of the international faculty and staff who have PhDs. The problem with EB-2 category is that the wait is a minimum of 5-6
years to process permanent residency for people from countries such as India and China while it takes only 3 months for the whole process to be completed through EB-1. This hinders a lot of international travel for our faculty and increases visa processing cost for the University. This also reduces the competitiveness of Texas A&M as most schools provide EB-1 sponsorship for the faculty and researchers with PhDs. Can a more effective process be put in place?

**Anand** - Once it shows promise it can be done, this is being looked into.

**Adonios** – EB1 can be done on your own.

**Malini** – EB2 has a list, can this be discussed too?

**Anand** – When you get these superlative letters for EB-1 visa process and results of midterm review is not consistent with the letters then we will have a problem. We will bring up this issue with Mr. Mario Rojo del Busto in ISS.

**Topic 7:**

**From:** Dr. John Junkins, AERO  
**Presented by:** Dr. Diego Donzis AERO

I raise one concern relating to the funding of the COE vs the COS and other non-engineering programs that teach service courses for first and second year engineering students:

In Physics, Math, and Chemistry, there are numerous student credit hours of freshman and sophomore courses that are being generated with engr students, and staffed with non-tenure-track faculty. This situation apparently results in a "cash cow" whereby the department offering the service courses benefits enormously with formula budgeting, $ for GANTS, and also faculty slots, all the while exporting the workload to non-tenure-track faculty. If for example, the non-tenure-track instructors in these courses for our freshmen and sophomore students were ad-locked for the sake of "credit" to engineering, what would the $ impact be on the COE? There is a strong prima facia case that the credit and $ should at least be shared. Since there is negligible reciprocity (virtually no non COE students take service courses from the COE), the present situation is believed to very adversely affect the COE budget.

All this is evidenced in a number of ways, for example:

- Excluding the COE, I recently learned that all DP faculty in other colleges are on 10 or 12 month appointments, how can these depts afford this luxury (not to mention, how do they justify it even if they can afford it?!)? (this alone amounts to > $1M/year).
The fraction of graduate students supported as GANTs in Physics, Chemistry, and Math are vastly higher than in any COE department, presumably justified as a consequence of the need to support 1st and 2nd yr service teaching?

An institutional study is needed to provide the data that would permit a detailed evaluation of the above issues - they are especially important in view of

- the budget squeeze that is presently under way, and
- the possibility that the freshman engineering program could be revised in ways that would in part rectify this situation.

Anand – The resources go from the state to the Math, Physics,...depts. Where will the COE get the resources? There is no money reallocated between the departments for this.

A study has been performed by Howze's office.

John – How much freedom can be changed at the department level, quality control?

Anand – It depends on who the instructor is.

**Topic 8: Faculty Profitability Rating**

*From:* Anonymous, CPSC  
*Presented by:* Dr. Jennifer Welch  CPSC

*The System's faculty profitability rating of: (teaching + research revenue generated) - salary*

"What is the college's position on this? Also, it seems this cannot be accurately computed with current information since they do not have a proper way to attribute research funding credit. Rumor has it the first analysis give 100% credit to PI and none to co-PIs; is this true?"

Anand – No one has told the college to change the evaluation criteria. How (research funding) it is pro-rated (expenditures) in EPIK is the way it is.

**Topic 9: Savings Generated by retirements**

*From:* Anonymous, CPSC  
*Presented by:* Dr. Jennifer Welch  CPSC

"If a faculty member participates in the voluntary separation program, will the budget savings be given back to their department? If not, how will it be determined how these savings will be used?"
Anand – Just what we have been doing, it goes back to the Dean’s office.

Carl – It may or may not help.

Sara – Will the University be allowed to keep the savings?

Anand – So far yes.

**Topic 10: The Reallocation Process**

*From: Anonymous, CPSC*  
*Presented by: Dr. Jennifer Welch CPSC*

"Could the Dean provide an update on what he feels are the areas in the college that would be candidates for further investment as part of the budget reallocation?"

Anand – We have some idea where the resources need to go but have to wait on the reallocation.

**Topic 11: RASS report**

*From: Anonymous, CPSC*  
*Presented by: Dr. Jennifer Welch CPSC*

The RASS report by the consultant hired by the Regents to analyze research administration. "Could the Dean provide an update on this and what it means for TEES?"

Anand – The report is not out yet.

**Topic 12: COE Electronics Design and Fabrication Shop**

*From: Dr. Steve Liu, CPSC*  
*Presented by: Dr. Jennifer Welch CPSC*

I saw the discussion of this topic. At this current difficult budget situation, this may not be considered a top concern for COE, but I do see its high values. I worked with ENTC faculty and they have very good facility (equipment and space) to build mechanical and even electronic prototypes in their lab. I think it will not be that expensive (400k) to let ENTC run such a facility, and enable interdisciplinary research and education projects. As far as I know, EE, CS, Aero and ME will all benefit from such a facility. So, if the agenda permits, I would suggest that we revisit this issue to see if it is doable at the current time. If not, definitely at later time when the time is not as difficult."

Anand – One topic discussed was about shared resources and there will be 4 or 5 committees which this topic will fall to one of these committees for discussion. This is
to produce efficiency and help cut costs by combining the machine shops. Electronic shop may be considered also.

Any Additional Items from the Floor??

Adjourn Meeting - 1:35 pm