Engineering Faculty Advisory Committee Monthly Meeting

Friday 05 November 2010

Meeting with Dr. Kem Bennett,

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

Rev. b

WELCOME: New member

Dr. Natarajan Gautam is the new EFAC representative for ISEN. He was nominated and elected by the faculty. He will begin attending the meetings in November. He is replacing Sara McComb who has accepted a position at Purdue.

NOTE: October Minutes Approved

The October Minutes are in Appendix E. I have received approval from Deena Wallace to post these on the EFAC website.

(1) Topic 1: Distance Learning

From: Diego Donzis, Aerospace Eng

Presented By: Diego Donzis, Aerospace Eng.

Distance learning has been receiving a good deal of attention in many departments and across them. It is my understanding that each department who has such a program handles it individually.

1/ Is the COE supporting these initiatives?

2/ What's the long-term vision?

3/ If there is a vision for this and is something wider than departamental efforts, and since this is a new initiative for several departments, will there be a plan to provide support (funds, training, hardware) to start/maintain this programs?
(2) Topic 2: Acute Family Care

From: Nancy Amato, CSCE

Presented By: Nancy Amato, CSCE

Nancy has volunteered to answer any questions from the committee concerning the "Acute Family Care" guidelines that were developed by her and EFAC last year.

(3) Topic 3: Travel

From: Nancy Amato, CSCE

Presented By: Jennifer Welch, CSCE

- TEES is increasingly particular on Travel and other expenses. This is becoming a real burden and detriment to research. Is there something that can be done about this?

From: Laszlo Kish, ECEN

Presented By: Laszlo Kish, ECEN

Why do we have to fill two separate travel forms for TEES and TAMU with 90% of the same information? Can these forms be integrated into a single form to spare loss of work time?
(4) **Topic 4: VSP (Voluntary Separation Program)**

**From:** Nancy Amato, CSCE  
**Presented By:** Jennifer Welch, CSCE

- Can we have a report on the VSP and how it impacts the budget cuts for the college and the departments in the college? When can lecturers who have been given notice be notified that they won't be fired after all?

(5) **Topic 5: NSF Advance Award**

**From:** Nancy Amato, CSCE  
**Presented By:** Jennifer Welch, CSCE

- What does the NSF Advance Award mean for the College? What impact will it have on our faculty?
(6)  Topic 6: Code Maroon Security

From: Anonymous, CVEN

Presented By: Scott Socolofsky, CVEN

I was teaching during the Code Maroon yesterday. My students and I were unable to really "shelter in place" because we could not lock the classroom. The classroom doors have locks, but we didn't have the keys. Those classroom doors are good, thick wood: there are not many personal firearms which could penetrate them. Being able to lock those doors might stand us in good stead.

(7)  Topic 7: Electives

From: Anonymous and Anonymous

Presented by: Dr. Malini Natarajarathinam, ETID

Recently in the ETID Department, 3 sections of ENTC 181 and 3 sections of ENTC 206 were eliminated and the MMET program has decided to restrict the classes to ETID majors.

Also recently, the ID program submitted a curriculum change. The program was asked to redefine the "free electives" in the curriculum as more directed electives such as "business electives", "leadership electives" etc.

What is the college's stand on restricting our student's electives?
TOPICS FOR REVIEW BY THE COMMITTEE

(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.

Discussion of Election By Laws and Election of New Officers

Should we change the by-laws to elect new officers?

Term length of members

Adjourn Meeting
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

3 year term expires May of

AERO  Diego Donzis  donzis@tamu.edu  2013
BMEN  John Criscione  jecriscione@tamu.edu  2011
BAEN  Sandun Fernando  sfernando@tamu.edu  2013
CHEN  Carl Laird  carl.laird@tamu.edu  2012
CPSC  Jennifer Welch  j-welch@tamu.edu  2013
CVEN  Scott Socolofsky  socolofs@tamu.edu  2013
ECEN  Laszlo Kish  akcam@ece.tamu.edu  2012
ETID  Malini Natarajarathinam  malini@tamu.edu  2013
ISEN  Sara McComb  mccomb@tamu.edu  2013

Natarajan Gautam replaces Sara in November 2010.
Sara accepted a position at Purdue  gautam@tamu.edu  2013

MEEN  Alan Palazzolo  a-palazzolo@tamu.edu  2011
NUEN  Lin Shao  lshao@tamu.edu  2013
PETE  Eduardo Gildin  egildin@tamu.edu  2013

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.

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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 05 November 2010**

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<tr>
<th>Dept.</th>
<th>Representative</th>
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<tr>
<td>AERO</td>
<td>Diego Donzis</td>
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<td>BMEN</td>
<td>John Criscione</td>
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<td>BAEN</td>
<td>Sandn Fernando</td>
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<td>CHEN</td>
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<td>ETID</td>
<td>Malini Natarajarathinam</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISEN</td>
<td>Sara McComb Natarajan Guatam (replaces Sara in November 2010)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEEN</td>
<td>Alan Palazzolo</td>
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<tr>
<td>NUEN</td>
<td>Lin Shao</td>
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<td>PETE</td>
<td>Eduardo Gildin</td>
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**Alternates**

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APPENDIX E

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.

Meeting began at 12:35 pm

Members Present: Alan Palazzolo (Chair) MEEN; Diego Donzts (AERO); Sandn Fernando (BAEN); 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: John Criscione (BMEN)

(3) 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 it's 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.

Anand College was asked to show a budget reduction of $2.4M in FY10 and FY11 ($1.2M each year). Dean used open faculty and staff positions at the college to show these reductions and departments were not exposed any reductions for this round. In consideration of the unsure nature of the budget picture, Dean made a decision not to allow funding changes for current positions from academic to TEES sources. Later in the summer, for FY12 the university asked college to come up with a budget reduction of $5.5M in Educational and General Revenue (E&G) funds. These are fringe bearing funds on which salaries are charged. Dean spread this $5.5M reduction across all 11 academic units, ESSAP, and the dean’s office in proportion to their E&G allocations. Dean has allocated $1.9M in TEES funds to all 11 academic units to help with budget reductions. A portion of salaries of research active faculty can be charged to TEES allocations thus freeing up academic E&G funds for teaching activity. Note that the allocation of TEES funds was made strategically considering several factors.

Scott Socolofsky – Is the 1.9 million a loan?

Anand - No

Palazzolo – Can the department use that money to hire?

Anand – It will be up to the department head.

(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?

Anand – This is not a rule that can be changed, it is a State rule, not made by TEES.

(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?"

Anand – This was a miscommunication and has been corrected already.

(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.

Anand – See response to next question.

Palazzolo – Approximately how much will that be?

Anand – Approximately $4.15 million which is 10% of the tenured faculty salary as calculated by the university. This amount will be used to give 18 months of salary for faculty members who qualified for the VSP. The dollars recovered for new allocations will be half of this amount. Dean will distribute the recovered funds strategically among academic units for which departments can immediately begin searches.

(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.

Anand – (passed out a handout) The holdup was where would the final authority rest? It will rest with the department head not with the Dean’s office. Unless there is a dispute, the Dean’s office would not be involved.

(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?

Anand – Check with the Shared Services Committee.

Carl Laird – Number 2 of the above was brought up at the Shared Services Committee meeting and is under consideration.

(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.

Anand – The Dean has no intention of using this for faculty evaluations; he has told the Department Heads this as well.
Scott Socolofsky – Does the Dean have to ask anyone about it?

Anand – No he does not.

(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 position, 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.

Anand – Dr. Karen Butler-Purry is working with Dr. Mike Pishko to resolve this. I was the interim department head when this surfaced, we were asked to submitted resumes on line to OGS.

Carl Laird – These come out every 15 years and would like to make sure it is submitted correctly next time so we do not show such poor percentages.

Anand – They are in the process of trying to correct this.

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

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Adjourn Meeting: 1:27 pm