Engineering Research Committee - College of Engineering  
Report for the 2011-2012 Academic Year

Members:  A. Benard (ME, Chair), S. Biswas (ECE), C. Chan (CHEMS), R/ Jin (CSE), A. Paknati (student rep), B. Connolly (student rep.), R. Schmidt (student rep. – Fall), P. Manta (ECE), L. Kempel (ex officio), P. Wade (ex officio).

The committee met eight times during Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 semesters. The following issues related to College research activities were addressed by the committee.

Withrow Awards

Nominations for the Junior and Senior Scholar Awards were reviews and ranked by the committee members. Recommendations by the committee were forwarded to the Dean’s office.

Research and training

Issues related to starting and running a research program and using training seminars were discussed. NIH and DOD training seminars were deemed most valuable and are publicized within the college. Training of postdoctoral researchers in the area of grant writing was also addressed.

College Strategic Planning Document for Research

The committee continued to review the college strategic planning document. It was noted that several of the goals are progressing well and according to schedule, esp. the MSU applied research institute (MSU URO).

University Rankings

The rank of the college in various rankings was discussed and attention was paid to the NRC rankings, the US News ranking, and the PhD.org rankings. Possible strategies to improve the rankings were discussed, it was suggested for example to improve the number of fellowship grants such as IGERT and GANN, and a preliminary document on quantitatively assessing the sensitivity of various measures using in rankings and their impact on the overall rank will be prepared by A. Benard and reviewed with Dr. Kempel.

Research Scholarship

The issue of how to measure and improve the research scholarship in the college was addressed. Various indexes are available for measuring the impact of research and are used. Numerous questions were raised, especially with respect to which ranking to employ and how they impact actions such as promotion.

Respectfully submitted, A. Benard