Michigan State University
Engineering College Advisory Council
Minutes, Meeting of November 30, 2017

Present: V. Alocilja (BE), S. Balasubramanian (CMSE), M. Crimp (ChEMS, Council Chairperson), J. Deller (ECE), A. Ross (CSE), T. Voice (ex officio),

Excused: K. Chatti (CEE)

1. Meeting called to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. Agenda approved.

3. Minutes of previous meeting were not available.

4. Dean Kempel has requested that ECAC elect a permanent Council Secretary instead of rotating the responsibility per meeting. J. Deller volunteered to serve and was elected by a unanimous voice vote.

5. The Council thanked Prof. Balasubramanium for taking minutes of the Fall Semester meeting of the College of Engineering (CoE) Faculty.

6. The main item of business was the continued discussion of the updated policy document on “Outside Work for Pay by Engineering Faculty.”

   • The ad hoc subcommittee (Balasubramanium, Ross, Voice) presented an updated draft document for review. The document, entitled “Conflict of Interest Addendum, DRAFT September 28, 2017,” briefly outlines the basic definition of a conflict of interest (COI), the reasons why they occur in faculty life, and the importance of reporting and managing such conflict. A seven-step process for reporting and review is included.

   • Dean Voice began the discussion for the subcommittee by saying the document suggests two questions: (1) Does the College need specific legal polices in place to govern COIs? and (2) Should faculty training in some form be offered / mandated? With regard to question (1), he noted that any CoE policy must be at least as “strict” as University policy.

   • A wide-ranging discussion converged to several themes / principles:

     – The policy document should focus on three broad areas of potential COI: (1) Monetary / equity positions in any entity outside of MSU; (2) Visa / international collaboration / visiting scholar issues; (3) Intellectual property and export control issues. Perhaps a “flowchart” to detect potential COIs in these three areas could be useful.

     – The document should contain a “blanket statement” stressing that COIs take many forms, not all of which necessarily fall clearly into one of the three major areas above.

     – The document should contain a statement of the basic principle that the primary employment commitment of a CoE faculty member is to the College and that no obligation of an external activity may supersede responsibilities to MSU.
The document should stress that there are potentially serious consequences for not adhering to COI policies and that failure to comply can affect a faculty member, and also the College and University.

Training sessions should be established with possible venues being annual department retreats and new faculty orientations.

7. Associate Dean’s remarks for the College:
   - Brief update on proposed “STEM Study Center.”
   - Management of fringe-benefit budgets and accounting is to be moved to department units in the near future.
   - Discussions are ongoing concerning tuition for “on-line” courses.

8. No new business.

9. No future meetings are planned for the current semester.

7. Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

John R. Deller, Jr.
ECAC Secretary