

## New Joint Degree Program in Electrical Engineering Academic Issues from CEAPCC

Given:

1. Joint program with WCU
2. New program to be based on current UNCC program
3. Joint Administrative Leadership
4. Joint Faculty Leadership
5. Students can enroll from both sites.

Concerns:

1. The Department Faculty charged with conducting this program did not substantially develop the program and their level of support for the program is unclear. A letter of support from the ECE Department would make this more clear and the proposal stronger.
2. If the UNC Charlotte name is to appear on the diploma (degree), all UNC Charlotte Graduation requirements are not planned to be met. The proposal is very inconsistent on whether WCU requirements will be the same or different from UNC Charlotte requirements. WCU should match UNC Charlotte requirements to insure the reputation of the institution and the faculty. The proposal should show the requirements in the following areas to be the same:
  - a. General Education
  - b. Laboratory Experiences
  - c. Admission Requirements
  - d. Progression Requirements
  - e. Transfer of Credit Requirements
    - i. between the institutions and the joint program
    - ii. from other institutions, including consortiums, and the institutions of the joint program
3. The CEAPCC has not seen syllabi or suggested textbook lists. These are particularly important in light of item 4 below. The CEAPCC will not assume that these are the same as those in use at UNC Charlotte.
4. Association with Engineering Technology (ET)

The academic requirements in ET and EE programs, while both rigorous, are significantly different. It is imperative that the students not share common technical courses. Nor may these courses be cross-listed. (including Laboratory courses) The Engineering Faculty at UNC Charlotte has made this point quite strongly in a recent Faculty Meeting.

The proposal suggests that transferring ET students with AAS degrees will somehow be accommodated in this new program. While this is an admirable goal, it is unrealistic and misleading to the AAS degree students since their course work is, for the most part, not college parallel.

The issue is further confused by the two WCU programs planned to be housed in the same department (currently, ET) with ET faculty (not EAC-ABET qualified)
5. The new name of the Engineering Technology Department is proposed to be the "Department of Engineering and Technology" and this may cause difficulties with ABET.
6. Distance Education

It is not clear from the proposal that the necessary consultation with the distance learning staff

has taken place. Further, there are academic standards concerns with any distance learning program. It is imperative that the academic departments have full authority over the program with the distance learning staff playing a requested supporting role. There should be a letter of consultation from Distance Learning.

Attached are governing distance learning documents approved by Faculty Council.

7. The proposal should indicate that professors hired for this program will be hired into a tenure track position. The proposal needs to spell out how new faculty will be evaluated at their institution. A large part of the proposed program involves delivering courses over distance education so the proposal needs to address what this will mean in view of promotion and tenure. Involvement in distance education tends to use time that could otherwise be used for research.
8. There are a number of references to department head in the proposal that need to be changed to "program head."
9. The proposal addresses the need for two program directors, one on each campus. There needs to be only one Program Director, with maybe an associate director on each campus, but someone needs to head the proposed program. There will be difficulties with two directors.
10. The program states that students enrolled in freshman engineering at WCU will be advised by Engineering Technology faculty. Someone such as a faculty associate for freshman engineering would be more appropriate.
11. The last two questions of #4. on page 9 have not been addressed. These are "How many of your programs at this level currently fail to meet Board of Governors' productivity criteria? Is there a danger of proliferation of low-productivity degree programs at the institution?"
12. Someone designated by the ECE Department needs to visit the WCU Electrical Labs and evaluate their appropriateness with regard to the joint program. We need to understand what is there and what is in the joint program course content in order to determine what we need to adjust at UNC Charlotte.
13. The proposal underestimates the number of UNC Charlotte faculty called for by the requirements of the joint program. Note the attached Distance Learning and Faculty Workload document.
14. The proposal is clear about where the joint program is housed at WCU, however it is not clear where the joint program will be housed at UNC Charlotte. The joint program needs to be housed in the ECE Department. The appropriate place to address this is in a paragraph following the last paragraph under VII. Administration.
15. In the second paragraph under VII. Administration, the responsibilities of the Joint Faculty Committee and the Joint WCU and UNC Charlotte faculty are addressed. It should be stipulated in the same paragraph that assessment, the continuous improvement process, program changes and curriculum changes will need to adhere to procedures established within UNC Charlotte which govern these issues for the departments within COE.

## Electronically Mediated Distance Learning

1. When a distance-learning course requires students to have specialized hardware or software, it is recommended that this be noted in the "Schedule of Courses" using the letter "D".
  - D. Electronically Mediated instruction that is intended primarily for remote reception requiring the student to have access via special equipment.
  
2. The following policy is recommended by FAPSC:
  - The Faculty, at the individual and Department level, assumes responsibility for and oversight of distance learning courses ensuring both the rigor and the quality of the instruction.
  - Academic policies and standards are the same as those that apply to any course, academic program, or degree.
  - Instruction and learning activities are appropriate for the content.
  - Course syllabi are written in the same format as traditional courses and include a clear statement of intended learning outcomes, learning content that is appropriate to those outcomes, clear expectations of learner activities, flexible opportunities for interaction and assessment methods appropriate to the activities and technologies.
  - The selection and application of technologies by the instructor for a specific learning activity are appropriate for the subject matter content, the intended learning outcomes, the characteristics and circumstances of the learners to whom the course is targeted, the technologies used and the learning environment. Among the attributes considered are access to library materials, academic community interaction, timely assessment and feedback of student success.
  - The learning design is evaluated on a regular basis, at the Department level, for effectiveness, with findings utilized as a basis for improvement.
  - Evaluations are obtained from students from every distance education course, as is done for on campus courses by the Department. The Department Faculty is free to tailor the questions to the course within the College Faculty and University Faculty Policies.
  - All University academic resources are available to students taking distance learning courses or on-campus courses.

- The University provides appropriate training opportunities for faculty who are assigned to teach distance-learning courses.
  - The University provides the faculty assigned to teach distance-learning courses with the necessary technical support and assistance.
  - In the case of asynchronous instruction, instructor will be available for direct student interaction on a regular and reliable basis.
  - The Instructor is responsible for the content of the instruction and its suitability and therefore retains ownership of the content consistent with the intellectual property policies of the University.
3. Faculty workload and compensation issues have been addressed in a memo to the Provost from the Deans dated August 7, 1996. These recommendations seem appropriate.



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Philip L. Dubois  
Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

FROM: Deans Lyons, Bishop, Nagle, and Snyder

DATE: August 7, 1996

RE: **Distance Learning and Faculty Workload**

In the initial discussion of the planning group, the close connection between faculty workload issues, faculty development activities and instructional support became immediately evident. The collective opinion of our group was that emphasis should be placed on course and faculty development activities and on instructional support rather than special compensation plans. The planning group made the following assumptions:

- (1) Distance learning should be viewed by the institution and presented to the faculty as an opportunity for faculty development rather than as an activity that directly generates extra compensation. If a faculty member performs well in the distance learning environment, monetary rewards should be realized through the annual salary review process and not through extra pay.
- (2) A faculty member who is selected to teach a distance learning course should be the beneficiary of an "up front" investment by the department, college and/or university. Investments should be in two parts. At least two semesters prior to teaching a distance learning course, a faculty member should be scheduled to participate in the equivalent of a three-credit hour course/seminar/workshop designed to inform them about best practices in teaching distance learning courses. A significant amount of information and "prepackaged" instructional materials currently exists across a broad range of disciplines. The proposed course for potential distance learning teachers should focus on how to access these materials and prepare new and unique teaching materials. Enrollment in the course for new distance learning teachers should count as a one-course load during the semester of enrollment. Faculty members would be expected to participate fully in the class meetings and to complete all assignments in order to receive a one-course workload credit.

During the semester immediately prior to the distance learning course, the instructor should be provided with a one-course reduction to conceptualize and prepare in detail the distance learning course materials that will be used the following semester. During the semester the distance learning course is scheduled, it would be treated as an inload assignment and counted as a routine course in the faculty workload equation. The up-front investment in faculty development and instructional materials for teaching distance learning courses demonstrates institutional commitment and should promote well designed courses and more effective teaching. But once the instructor is prepared to teach a distance learning course, it should be treated the same way as a conventional course as far as faculty workload is concerned. Factors applicable to workload decisions such as class size, level of course, etc. will still apply.

- (3) During the course development and preparation phases, faculty members planning to teach distance learning courses should develop course materials, test student feedback strategies, identify the amount and kinds of technical support required, and consider procedures for tracking student performance.
- (4) During delivery of distance learning courses, the institution should provide faculty with all necessary support services, including technical expertise and instructional support at the off-campus sites.
- (5) The benefits accruing to faculty members who participate in distance learning initiatives should be presented to them as opportunities for developing and staying abreast of new instructional methods, identifying topics that are suitable for scholarly investigation, and engaging in activities that qualify them for merit considerations during annual salary reviews.

SRL:dft

cc: Sue Bishop  
John Nagle  
✓ Robert Snyder