

MEETING MINUTES

Engineering Faculty Council

Date: March 25th, 2025

Time: 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Location: Zoom

Attendees: See Teams for official Attendance Record

Stephanie Velegol, Tracey Carbonetto, Cibir Raj, Lucas Passmore, Sachin Gore, Amanda Johnsen, Robert Rabb, Ivan Esparragoza, Amy Corbett, Brad Sottile, Richard Mistrick, Gary Gray, Gregory Huff, Susan Stewart, Thomas Skibinski, Nathaniel Bohna, Shelley Stoffels, Yun Jing, Christian Roach, Stephanie Cutler, Jared Butler, Eric Donnell, Enrique Gomez

Chair Thomas Skibinski called the meeting to order and asked for approval to record – Approved.

- Tom asked for approval of the meeting minutes from February 25th, 2025. A motion was made by Brad to approve and seconded by Tracey.

Chair's Report – Tom Skibinski

- Tom summarized the outcome from the expression of lack of confidence brought about by some faculty towards President Neeli Bendapudi. Some faculty called for a motion to move towards a VONC; that motion was defeated, 66-33. Since the last meeting, seven campuses have been identified as “safe”. Twelve campuses are being evaluated.
- Lucas announced the new Faculty Senators: Elizabeth Starkey, Spencer Szczesny, and Margalit Goldschmidt; see Teams folder for other Faculty Senators (CoE).
- Call for ombudsperson; Dean Stoffels will hold information session on the expectations of the role. Seeking both TL and NTL for this 3-year commitments.

Dean's Report – Eric Donnell

- Information was provided on the OST efforts with the finance group. Sixteen staff members were impacted. A reminder that the Value, Compliance, and Ethics training is posted and is due April 24th. This must be completed prior to ASIs being awarded. A report was provided on (national) graduate students' efforts for unionization. A new initiative on P&T modernization is underway. The university is investigating an ombuds role (outside of COE ombudsperson) to broaden the impact for and beyond faculty.

Associate Deans' Report

- **Shelley Stoffels** mentioned training for the ombudsperson role. Shelley also discussed AC40 with regards to peer review and review guidelines. She is requesting faculty feedback by April 14th. Extended Review guidelines of Tenured Faculty are posted in Teams, comments can be added directly. Feedback from academic heads being collected separately. See link in Teams. Shelley also mentioned P&T modernization effort. This is undertaken every 3 years.

- **Rob Rabb** discussed the financial loss when an engineering student leaves after the first year. He shared data on loss of first-year students between fall 2024 and spring 2025, approximately 108 students, with 20 of these students being retained at Penn State and the other 88 not. There was some discussion on addressing the retention issue by early intervention with contact from discipline faculty. The reason for the disenrollment was not available. Also discussed was the GWS and WAC Review Committee findings; moratorium on GWS course until Committee review is complete. Some recommendations were discussed. Link to these is posted in Teams along with mention of Associate Dean for Academic Support and Global Programs search, Spring 2025 graduation, and APPR activities.
- **Enrique Gomez-** discussed an upcoming LGBTQ+ in STEM event on April 16th. A link to Enrique's discussion is posted in Teams including Penn State's response and contextualization on executive orders, and the status on the engineering faculty search.
- Report from VJ Nrayanan, Associate Dean for Innovation, can be found in Teams.

Assistant Deans' Report

- **Ivan Esparragoza** was asked how potential campus closures would affect ABET accreditation. Ivan identified the campuses with CoE accredited programs including engineering, engineering technology, and computer science. Posted slide provides details.
- **Matt Zerphy** no report
- **Stephanie Cutler** provided some important dates out of the Leonhard Center including an early-career NSF workshop. See Teams slide for details.

Other Business Report

- **Chrisian Roach-student representative**, spoke about a dinner she and others had with Dean Peebles.
- **Undergraduate Proposals – Sachin Gore**
All of the below course add/changes and program changes were 100% approved:
AIE_UMNR Program add
BE 306 Course change
EE 443 Course add
ENGR 407, 411, 415 Course change (language)
- **Graduate Proposals – Richard Mistrick**
All of the below course add/changes and program changes were 100% approved:
AC509, 549, Audio Devices and Signal Processing, CS505_Writing in Computer Science, Noise Control and Building Acoustics, Physical Acoustics
- **FEIB Committee- Constantino Lagoa**
Discussions for this committee are on pause.
- **Faculty Senate- Yun Jing-** report is posted in Teams.
- **Grad Council- Susan Stewart**
Susan provided a slide. See Teams for details.

- **New Business -none**

Meeting adjourned at 12:45 PM

Meeting Minutes prepared by: **Tracey A Carbonetto**

Tracey Carbonetto, Secretary

Links referenced on report out slide:

Dean's Report: See link for update on Finance OST and information on potential ombuds position (not to replace CoE role). [Dean's Report](#)

Faculty Senate Report: See link for report from the Senate Plenary session, 2/25/2025.

[Faculty Senate Report](#)

See link for LGBTQ+ in STEM event, April 16th; PSU response and updates to Executive Actions, and notice of four candidates' interviews for open faculty positions in engineering. [DEI](#) Please see this link for list of campuses with ABET-accredited CoE programs; meeting to discuss these campuses' potentially closure on accreditation. [ABET Accreditation and Campus Closures](#)

See this link for updates on APPR, Spring CoE UG Graduation (no walkers), UG retention data [loss of \$38K for every student who leaves engineering after first year, fall 2024 to spring 2025, 108 students] Seeking guidance on how departments can help. Assistant Dean for Academic Support and Global Programs (first round of interviews coming up) Moratorium on new GWS courses, information on differences between GWS and WAC.

[Associate Dean of Education Report](#)

Ombudsperson nomination and elections upcoming. Please see link for information on Zoom session about role. Also see link for information on feedback process for AC40: Extended Reviews of Tenured Faculty. [AC40: Extended Reviews of Tenured Faculty; Ombuds Role](#)

Grad Council updates: academic standards policies which were voted on are contained in this link: [Grad Council Update](#)

Space event- April 14th, AI Week April 14th to 17th. See link for additional information.

[Assoc. Deam of Innovation Report](#)

Leonard Center: See link for upcoming events. [Leonard Center](#)

Course/program approvals: Undergraduate: AIE Minor Program; BE 306 course change, EE443 course add; ENGR 407, 411, 415 course change. Graduate: ACS 50, 549, Audio Devices and Signal Processing, CSE 505, Noise Control and Building Acoustics, Physical Graduate Credit.