ECE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

TO: Tangul Basar, Pat Chapman, Brian Cunningham, Matthew Frank, Seth Hutchinson, Wen-Mei Hwu, Kanti Jain, Jianming Jin, Doug Jones, Steve Levinson, Chang Liu, Sean Meyn, Narayana Rao, Naresh Shanbhag, Greg Timp, Pramod Viswanath, Bruce Wheeler

FROM: Erhan Kudeki

SUBJECT: Curriculum committee meeting minutes

DATE: April 21, 2006

Minutes of the Curriculum Committee Meeting April 21, 2006

1) Members present: Tangul Basar, Pat Chapman, Brian Cunningham, Matthew Frank, Seth Hutchinson, Doug Jones, Steve Levinson, Naresh Shanbhag, Bruce Wheeler

2) Notes taken by Brian Cunningham of the discussion on biology courses:

i) Fundamental knowledge about biology may be considered as a basic science requirement along with chemistry and physics. MCB 150 would satisfy this requirement in a similar fashion to the basic chemistry and physics courses. Adding this as a requirement to the ECE curriculum would necessitate coordination with the MCB department, because our action would result in a 20% enrollment increase for this class. Also, there is not room in the curriculum currently for an additional 3 hours of course requirement.

ii) Another option would be to purposefully include discussion of biological applications of electrical engineering principles in early-level ECE courses such as ECE210 and ECE329. The goal would be to inform students that such applications exist and to therefore give interested students an early opportunity to make informed choices for additional classes in junior/senior year.

iii) Many (or most) ECE students still find employment and careers without ever considering biology beyond the high school level. The job market for circuit engineers, computer engineers, semiconductor engineers, etc, still outpaces the growth in biology-related fields by a wide margin.

iv) Many good options for biology-oriented applications of ECE exist in the current curriculum, particularly at the senior and graduate student levels. Also, there is no shortage of students to populate the emerging bioengineering major and minors at at the present time.

Based on above discussions it was decided to compose a memo to Prof. Blahut to the effect that the CC feels no need for an urgent action at the present time, but recommends the same issue to be looked at once again within a few years.

3) Discussions of Doug Jones proposal took place. All 3-of-5 course directors seem to be in favor of the proposed changes in their course --- an adjustment of the course content (and number) to suit the needs of juniors avoiding topics of specialization. A question was raised on possible impacts of these on entering graduate students who have been taking some of the same courses to remedy weaknesses in their backgrounds. The issue will be looked at in conjunction with Area Committees and GC.

4) The next meeting will take place on Friday, April 28, 2006, at 10 AM in EL 159.