

Texas Tech CECE Academy Business Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: October 22, 2021

1. Call to Order – Steve Dean, President

Steve called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

- The first hour of the CECE meeting overlapped with the last hour of the Advisory Council to allow for Dr. Shankar's presentation.

2. Dr. Shankar Department Presentation

Dr. Shankar provided a handout of slides summarizing the state of the CECE Department. A copy of the slides is attached. Dr. Shankar presented the current enrollment statistics and his goals for the department. He would like to see female enrollment and the underrepresented enrollment increase. CECE is now offering an online master's degree program.

Faculty are pursuing an increased number of grants in excess of \$1 million. Penn State has contacted Dr. Shankar about partnering on an arctic region grant.

Faculty are publishing research in professional journals.

Dr. Shankar's New Initiatives

- The new organizational framework includes six pillars for the Department. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the direction of engineering future. The six-pillar approach is built around AI to produce technology adaptive graduates. The undergrads will be exposed to AI concepts while the graduate students will delve deeper in the subject.
- Fundraising is needed for developing a virtual lab program. The cost is anticipated to be \$1.2 million and is called Civil Infrastructure Systems Visualization Lab (CISVL). He suggested moving this direction instead of updating the existing labs and lab equipment.
- Improving the Department's standing among aspirational peers is important to the Department. The Department is currently seeking two tenure track faculty positions.
- Dr. Shankar has a new initiative to balance teaching and research. Some faculty enjoy/excel in teaching while others prefer research. This subject is being discussed with the Dean.
- Updating curriculum to incorporate AI, computational thinking, bio-inspired designs and sociotechnical systems. Faculty are working to incorporate these concepts into the curriculum.
- Online MS Degree is available. Two students have completed the program.

Discussion about the lab renovations:

- Nothing has been done at the Dean's office or the College of Engineering regarding the previous Lab Initiative effort. Dr. Shankar anticipates the virtual lab providing the model for the other labs.
- Does the College or Department have a donor? Not at this time. However, the Dean's Council is excited about the virtual lab for the CECE Department.

- CECE needs more than \$1.2 million for all of the labs. We need to communicate the total labs needs and associated costs to the Dean's Council.

The FE prep class is now voluntary.

The last ABET review and accreditation was in 2017. The next one will be in 2023.

Can the career fair be held prior to UT and A&M? TTU career fair should avoid the week of midterms when the students are less stressed. How can TTU career fair be moved ahead of these other schools?

Dr. Shankar left after his presentation.

3. Introductions

Steve welcomed everyone to the meeting.

a. New Academy Inductees

The following new inductees introduced themselves: Don Allen, Mike Christopher, Leigh Hollis, Jacob Kirkland, Chase Luft, Jill Rankin, and Dan Warfield.

b. Academy Members

We have over 200 Academy members. Present today: Steve Dean, Stephanie Griffin, Victoria Harkins, Joel Robinette, Lonnie Satsky, Rusty Thoma, Dudley McFarquhar, Joe Gamble, Greg Soules, David Harkins, Mike Christopher, Andrew Ickert, Jacob Kirkland, Frank Griffin, Gary Law, and Erin Atkinson.

We have 10 inductees this year! Please take note of the letter of expectations – participating in annual meetings and supporting the department.

4. Review and Approve 2019 Academy Minutes – Victoria Harkins

Stephanie motioned approval of the minutes. Greg seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Presentation and acceptance of the 2019 Treasurer's Report – Stephanie Griffin

Greg motioned acceptance of the Treasurer's Report. Dudley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Dean Al Sacco Matching Funds Summary – Victoria Harkins

In 2019-2020, Dr. Sacco offered to match lab initiative funds. Victoria sent a letter to the Academy but response was low. The \$20,000 jump was primarily due to a transfer that the Academy made between its own accounts.

The lab initiative has been an ongoing effort for a number of years. The Dean has committed to match funding for the lab initiative, but he has not committed which lab would receive the funding.

The ~\$100,000 that we have in the account was given for the purpose of improving the existing equipment and labs.

The students have a vision to revamp the student breakroom to make it look similar to Room 101, primarily with new tables, chairs, and whiteboards.

Stephanie has a copy of the equipment lists that were developed for the Lab Initiative several years ago. Mike Christopher and David Harkins will go through the 2012 list to see what has been done and what needs to be done still. They will visit with Shannon, Facilities Manager for the Department. Environmental Labs need to be included as well. Then, Mike and David will visit with Shankar about the Academy's desire to fix the first few items on the list of lab equipment that needs to be repaired/replaced.

Greg Soules and Victoria Harkins will visit with Dr. Sacco about matching funds being dedicated for other lab needs.

Stephanie will email the 2012 list of items to Mike, David, Greg, and Victoria.

7. Academy Business

a. LinkedIn Group

Mike Christopher will be added as an administrator to the LinkedIn account to add the members.

b. Distinguished Engineer Award Recipients CECE 2019 and 2020

i. 2019 Dr. David Harkins, 1992 – BS in Petroleum Engineering; 1995 – MS in Civil Engineering; 1998 – Ph.D. in Civil Engineering

ii. 2020 DEs have not been announced.

c. By Laws Revisions

Steve presented the proposed revisions to the bylaws to update the language/text. The updates include the ability of the Academy leadership to assist in the nominee reviews. Faculty are encouraged to submit nominations. Another revision provides the opportunity to meet virtually.

Additional edits:

3.2.b add "Academy Officers" to the nomination review.

In Article VI – Meetings, add "Special Academy meetings may be called by the by the President of the Academy with adequate notice." Delete "annual" in following sentence.

7.3 "...representatives of the members present during the meeting of the Academy..." (end of first sentence)

Discrepancy between "college" and "department". We will make these consistent throughout.

Greg motioned approval of the bylaws as modified today. Gary seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. New Business

a. Election of New Officers

Victoria Harkins will become the new President. Stephanie Griffin will become the new Vice President. Don Allen nominated Jacob Kirkland to serve as Secretary/Treasurer. David Harkins seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

b. Other

i. How is the best way to communicate?

Email seems to be preferred, but spam filters can be an issue> Bounce back emails are a problem.

Don Allen suggested dividing up the membership and making personal phone calls. The roster needs to be updated. Don, Jill, Chase, Victoria, and Steve volunteered to help with the roster updates.

- ii. Stephanie informed the Academy about having nominated Mike Dellies for a posthumous Academy award, but Dr. Shankar did not know what to do with the application. Victoria responded that Mike will be included in the 2022 Class of nominees since we already had ten inductees for 2021. Dr. Shankar had not informed Stephanie of the decision. No action was needed by the Academy.

9. Next Meeting – October 2022, Discussion of move to the Fall

We will meet in early October 2022 around a home football game.

10. Adjourn

Dudley motioned for the meeting to adjourn. Greg seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:26 PM.