

UOAC Minutes 9/20/10

The Undergraduate Outcomes Assessment Committee held its third meeting of the year at 2:05 pm Monday, September 20, 2010 in the Peterson Room of the Campus Center.

Present: Lance Schachterle, Chrys Demetry, Mustapha Fofana, Art Heinricher, Peter Christopher, Emanuel Jimenez

1. The Committee approved minutes of the meeting of September 13.
2. Dean Heinricher pointed out a correction to the minutes of August 29 by specifying that the exact dates of the NEASC visit are October 2-5, 2011.
3. The Committee continued to discuss the results of the EBI survey, particularly those that may be of concern to NEASC representatives, i.e., those responses given by graduating engineering students that may reflect negatively on aspects of WPI's undergraduate education. (It should be pointed out that in general the EBI survey results for WPI are very positive.) For example, on a question dealing with the extent to which engineering education enhances understanding of ethical responsibilities, our seniors' responses have not been as positive as those of some of our peer institutions. Dean Heinricher distributed a detailed analysis of responses to questions pertaining to ethics from the 2010 EBI survey that indicated very positive responses from our students. The reasons for the improvement are not clear, but merit further study.
4. Professor Christopher summarized steps being taken by the Mathematical Sciences Department which may have an impact on the perceptions of future WPI seniors and on future EBI survey results. Aiming to improve the quality of teaching in calculus and differential equations, the Department has introduced a Course Coordinator for Calculus 1 and 2, with weekly meetings of instructors, and is re-examining the syllabus of Calculus 1 and 2 to provide better preparation for differential equations. Also, the Department will continue its outreach to engineering departments.
5. The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Christopher, Secretary