Dear Chris and Jim,

Thank you for coming to the Graduate Council meeting yesterday and providing us with details on the pilots that you are planning with the INTO students interested in graduate studies here at OSU. The Council encourages the concept of an MEng and MBA INTO pathway program pilot program but asks to receive additional information (on the topics listed below) by its next meeting, scheduled for October 27th. If available, the Council members hope that the two of you can attend that meeting.

Here are our questions:

• What is the nature and conditions of the promise made to pathway students interested in graduate school?
• After successful completion of the pathway, is admission to the graduate program guaranteed? And, how is that decision made?
• What happens in the case of an unusually competitive domestic and/or international (non-INTO) applicant pool? The MBA pathway chart indicated that a pathway student still needs to apply to the graduate program, but the MEng pathway chart does not.
• Graduate Council wonders if engineering and business faculty have given enough thought to the design of the INTO graduate pathways and the requirements for admission to their OSU graduate programs. For example, are there enough graduate level courses in the MEng pathway? What are the INTO English courses proposed for the MBA pathway?

Finally, Graduate Council understands that there may be a report from OSU delegation to East Anglia. If so, Council would like to see the report and would like to learn success rates of that school’s graduate business and/or engineering pathways (if they have any).

We look forward to hearing from you and to meeting with you again. Hopefully, this information will enable the Graduate Council to come to a decision quickly,

Sincerely,
Darlene
Darlene,

Thank you for inviting me to the meeting to share our plans within the College. The Leadership Team within the College sees this as a great opportunity to increase our emphasis on internationalization and globalization. This enthusiasm is also shared among the members of our Undergraduate Program Committee and our Graduate Program Committee. They are the primary faculty involved with the design and implementation of the pathway programs.

I will provide my perspective on these questions from the Council. Chris is traveling, but he is the primary source of information. My comments only pertain to the MBA program.

Within the College of Business, we have modeled the pathway program on the same processes and procedures we use for our current domestic and international students (both at the undergraduate and graduate levels). If the prospective graduate students meet OSU and COB requirements, they can be admitted to the MBA program prior to arrival. If they are not admissible, then we make no promises. We offer them the opportunity to become eligible. We have allowed domestic and international students to come to OSU in a Post-Bac status and take undergraduate foundation courses to improve their GPA – either raising the last 90 to above the 3.0 minimum or providing us a basis for a petition for conditional admission status. We are using exactly the same policies for the pathway students – we give them the opportunity to become eligible for our graduate program. There are no promised admissions.

As soon as the students are eligible, they may apply for admission. This may be prior to entering the pathway (for those who need English language and business foundation), during the pathway, or upon completion of the pathway. We intend to use the same entrance requirements as we do now. We are open to modifications in the future if we find that assessment techniques within the pathway provide better success indicators than the TOEFL exam. It will be harder to waive the requirement for the GMAT due to accreditation issues. But we are open to these options as we gather data from the students who complete the prototype pathway.

I do not understand the third question. We plan to restrict entry into the pathway such that all of those who successfully complete the pathway and are eligible are admitted to the program. The competition will be for entry into the pathway. We will factor the number of students in the pathway into our enrollment projections. Note that our plan is to grow the MBA program – we currently do not turn any qualified student away.

I am puzzled by the fourth question. The COB faculty have given considerable thought to the foundation knowledge requirements for entry into our MBA
program. We screen every applicant to ensure they have this knowledge, and provide multiple mechanisms for them to acquire the knowledge (on-line courses, community college courses, OSU courses, etc.). These same requirements are used for both domestic and international students. In meeting with the Graduate Program Committee within the College, there did not seem to be any compelling reasons to change these requirements for the international students completing the pathway program. They are held to the same entrance standards as all students.

I did not include the English language courses in the MBA pathway because, to my knowledge, they have not yet been finalized. I am not an expert in this area. I trust that our ELI faculty are capable of setting appropriate language entrance requirements and developing appropriate curriculum to ensure the graduates of the pathway meet the minimum TOEFL requirements for the MBA program. Please note that the MBA requirements are higher than the university requirements, so the coursework developed for the MEng Pathway may not be the same as the coursework for the MBA pathway. The coursework and entrance requirements may also differ if the students pursue the two-term pathway vs the four-term pathway.

As the pathway programs are currently designed, there are no changes envisioned for our undergraduate or graduate policies and procedures. Because there are no changes, there is no need for “approval” from the faculty. The Dean included our participation in the INTO program in her comments at the faculty retreat, and I gave a 15 minute presentation to the faculty regarding both the undergraduate and graduate programs. The more thorough discussions have occurred within our Undergraduate and Graduate Program Committees. We do plan on keeping the faculty informed on the status of the program, and are working to develop training and brown-bag sessions on how to take advantage of the multi-cultural opportunities in the classroom.

The only issue the COB faces as a graduate faculty is determining the appropriate mix of domestic-to-international graduate students. Right now, our percentage of international students runs between 20 and 30 percent. If we decide to limit the number of international students (for example, not exceed a mix of 50/50), then that will impact the number of students who should be admitted into the Pathway program. The Graduate Program Committee within the College is discussing this issue, and will make a proposal to our faculty sometime this term.

In my opinion, the major issues related to the Graduate MBA Pathway are outside of the purview of the College: Is the university is willing to accept three-year degrees from countries outside of Europe, and what is the status of the students in the Pathway program? I believe these issues affect all prospective graduate students going through a pathway program, not just business and engineering. I have not discussed these questions with our faculty – but would be willing to do so.

I will not be able to attend the Oct 27th meeting. I already have another meeting scheduled during that time. I would welcome the opportunity to return to the Graduate Council at a future date.

Jim