

ARKANSAS ACADEMY OF CIVIL ENGINEERING

MINUTES OF THE 2015 ANNUAL MEETING

The meeting was held on April 25, 2015 in Room 209 of John A. White Engineering Hall. The meeting was called to order at 8:27 am by President Luther Boudra.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS – President Boudra welcomed the new members and then asked each member in attendance to briefly announce their name and professional affiliation.

2014 MINUTES – Boudra reminded everyone that the minutes of the 2014 meeting were included in the handouts and had been available for review prior to the meeting. He asked for any corrections or comments. Hearing none he asked for a motion to accept the minutes as written. They were approved by unanimous voice vote.

STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT REPORT – Dr. Kevin Hall, Head of Civil Engineering, made a presentation regarding the status of the Department of Civil Engineering. He began his presentation with a focus changes on faculty and student numbers over the past 10 years.

Faculty Status

	Tenure Track Faculty Numbers				
	2006	Additions	Departures	Change	2015
Environmental	2	2	1	+1	3
Geotechnical	2	4	3	+1	3
Structural	3	2	1	+1	4
Transportation	4	2	2	0	4

Although these numbers indicate an increase of 3 over the period, this number is somewhat misleading. The 2006 faculty numbers for environmental and geotechnical were each down by one due to faculty departures just prior to 2006. Thus the more realistic change over the period is an increase of one.

In addition to tenure track faculty, the department has 4 non-tenure faculty members. Also other civil engineering faculty members not included in the numbers listed are Norm Dennis who recently became Senior Associate Dean of Engineering and Mike Johnson who is Associate Vice Chancellor for facilities.

Student Numbers

Hall reported that undergraduate (sophomore through senior) civil engineering enrollment was around 200 in the 2005-2009 period. For the past 3 years, enrollment has averaged 270. He indicated that for the future a continued enrollment of around 270 would be ideal. At this level teaching facilities, labs, and equipment are being used to max.

Hall reported that total graduate enrollment has been essentially flat at around 50 students. However, the split between MS and PhD students has changed significantly with the number of PhD students increasing from 6 in 2008 to 27 in 2014.

Hall stated his belief that the UA undergraduate civil engineering program is as good as any in the country. He considers the graduate program to be good but that it is not big enough. More graduate students are needed to justify broader course offerings to strengthen the program quality. Currently, graduate students make up 14% of the total civil engineering enrollment. He would like to see the undergraduate enrollment remain around 270 and the graduate enrollment grow to around 20% of the total. He noted that continued growth in PhD enrollment is needed to support the faculty's research mission.

Student Placement & Salaries

Hall reported the results of the survey of the spring 2015 graduates. At the time of the survey, 21% were still "undetermined". Of the other 79%, 27% are going to graduate school, 70% have accepted civilian jobs, and 3% are going to the military.

Starting salaries are reported as averaging \$58k with a low of \$45k and high of \$110k. The median starting salary is \$54k. About 60% of those taking jobs are staying in Arkansas. Someone asked about the starting salary differential for those who continue on for the MS degree. Hall said the MS typically adds about \$5k.

This led to some discussion relative to attrition rates, graduation rates, and Arkansas versus out of state students. Relative to attrition rates, 77% of first year students are remaining in the college of engineering. Another 7% is being lost between year 2 and 3 but almost all students making it through year 2 continue to graduation. The college of engineering graduation rate is 67% which is the best in the university.

Someone asked what percentage of the graduates are from Arkansas. Hall did not have that number for civil engineering but Norm Dennis said that for the college as a whole 40% of the students are from out of state (35% from Texas).

Hall also reported on the students' recent performance on the FE Exam. He noted that the exam was revised significantly beginning in January 2014. It is now computer based and offered multiple times during the year. The content is also changed with a strong discipline specific emphasis (i.e. civil engineering). For example, the CE exam does not contain thermodynamics or electrical circuit problems. Hall reported that in the January – July 2014 test times our students did rather poorly with only 60% passing (national average was 74%). As a result, the faculty has taken a look at how the students are preparing. Also he met with the students who would be taking it in the August – December 2014-time period emphasizing the importance and need for preparation. Of those taking the test in this period 88% passed (national average was 70%).

ABET Accreditation

Hall announced the results from the ABET accreditation visit. ABET is the organization that accredits engineering programs. The civil engineering program at the University of Arkansas has been continuously accredited since 1936 (the first year engineering program accreditation was available). At least once every 6 years ABET sends an evaluation team to visit every accredited engineering program. 2014 was the year for the UA engineering programs to be visited for evaluation. The ABET team visited this past fall spent 3 days on campus this past fall after reviewing self-study material prepared by the faculty. Final accreditation decisions

will not be made until this summer when the ABET Engineering Accreditation Commission meets. However, the draft exit statement received following the visit provides a good clue as to the result. If the team finds problems with a program, the problems are cited in the exit statement as being deficiencies, weaknesses, or concerns. The draft exit statement received for civil engineering listed only program strengths - no deficiencies, no weaknesses, no concerns. That is as good as it gets!

Vision 2021

Hall stated that he is hoping to receive significant help from the Academy in the way of participation and input in activities to plan for the future of the department. He is reforming and reinvigorating an Industrial Advisory Board (IAB). This board will be composed of external advisors with a majority of the membership being Academy members. The IAB will advise the department faculty in formulating a strategic plan for the department and it will provide periodic review of the undergraduate and graduate programs and their educational objectives.

He is also forming Academy Task Groups (ATG). The undergraduate civil engineering program offers “Senior Design” courses in four areas: environmental, geotechnical, structural, and transportation. Each student must complete two of these. Hall is seeking Academy member volunteers for an ATG in each area. These ATGs will assist the faculty with the “Senior Design” project. The purpose of the design project is to ensure that graduates are well prepared for entry level positions in civil engineering design. Signup sheets were available for members to volunteer.

If interested in being an ATG member, contact Dr. Hall (kdhall@uark.edu or phone 479-575-4954)

CAMPAIGN ARKANSAS – Last year Hall provided an overview of the university’s capital campaign. The Department of Civil Engineering has a goal of at least \$17 million which is to include funds for a Civil Engineering Research and Education Center (CEREC). This year he provided an update on the CEREC planning. With a \$52,500 contribution from the Academy plus funds from the University, an architectural firm was hired to produce a preliminary design. The completed CEREC facilities is planned to house all civil engineering laboratory activities and functions with the exception of environmental. Environmental is excepted because current facilities for that area are fully adequate.

The first phase of CEREC will be to construct a 13,000 sf high bay structural engineering lab. The structural lab is the most pressing facility need because department has no indoor structural testing capability. Lack of this type of facility is a major handicap. Phase two will provide new/expanded lab facilities for the geotechnical and asphalt areas. Phase three will provide a new home for the department’s Center for Training Transportation Professionals.

Grady Harvell, Dan Flowers, Bert Parker and others who are assisting and advising in this effort spoke strongly in support. It was mentioned that the civil engineering programs at major universities in all the surrounding states have (or are constructing) high bay structural labs.

Most, if not all, of the highly recognized civil engineering programs nationally have such facilities.

DEAN OF ENGINEERING

John English, Dean of Engineering, joined the meeting for a few minutes to offer his perspective for the college. He expressed his appreciation for Dr. Hall's leadership of the Department of Civil Engineering over the past 10 years. He noted that the University has experienced significant growth over the past several years but expects the growth to be leveling off. He stated that while the University growth has been significant, the growth in engineering has been even greater. Over the past 5 years, engineering enrollment is up 75%. He also mentioned that the growth is not simply one of numbers. Student quality is also up. The average ACT score for entering engineering students is 28.1.

Dean English discussed what he sees for the college and, in particular for civil engineering. He said that he "sees an engineering building in lot 72." Lot 72 is the parking lot across from Bell Engineering Center and the engineering building he envisions is CEREC.

EVENING WITH THE PROS – Matt Crafton who organized the event this year was not available to give a report. However, Kevin Hall stated that the event was once again well attended by students and continues to be a success. This is an annual affair in which alumni share their career experiences with the students. Each year several academy members are selected by the organizer to share their experiences. In recent years, a more recent graduate is also included in the group. The event was conceived and first organized by Kent Shreeve with the first Evening with the Pros being held in November 1993.

Volunteers to participate are always welcome.

FINANCIAL REPORT – Kevin Hall gave a brief review of the 2014-2015 financial report, a copy of which was provided in the meeting packets. He noted that the single largest expenditure was \$52,500 for architectural fees for the CEREC preliminary plan. He also pointed out the \$9,860 expenditure listed as student support. Several years ago as a student incentive for passing the FE exam, the Academy voted to reimburse the cost of taking the exam for those students who passed while still in school. Hall stated that this expenditure had increased significantly because of a significant increase in the fee for taking the exam.

The academy has four accounts within the UA Foundation: Quasi Endowment, Traditional, McCauley Scholarship, and Academy Scholarships. The following are the fund balances as of March 31 in 2013 and 2014:

	<u>4/1/14</u>	<u>3/31/15</u>
Quasi Endowment Fund	166,037.07	176,313.15
Spending Fund	90,345.59	44,823.16
Traditional Fund	38,989.43	45,116.01
McCauley Scholarship Endowment	25,936.40	28,370.68
Academy Scholarships	9,776.20	428.02
TOTAL	331,084.69	295,051.02

Boudra stated that the Board had noted that costs for the annual banquet are greater than the revenue collected from the fees being charged. The Board recommended that the fees be increased. Currently the fees are \$75 for members and \$25 for guests. Board recommendation was to increase these to \$85 for members and \$30 for guests. No one spoke in opposition to this increase. The increase was approved.

SCHOLARSHIPS – President Boudra initiated the annual call for scholarship contributions announcing several pledges that had already been made by members who were unable to attend. He noted that pledge cards were included in the meeting packets and asked those wishing to pledge to fill out the cards and pass them to the end of the rows.

Hall had noted earlier that this academy is the by far the greatest supporter of students in the College of Engineering. The Arkansas Academy of Civil Engineering scholarship donations are more than double that by any other engineering academy. Boudra reiterated that and encouraged the members to keep up the tradition. After collecting all the pledge cards, the total pledged by members was \$100,500.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT – Wayne Jones gave the membership report. For the membership election, he had mailed 223 ballots and received 116 completed ballots in return. Of these 112 were verified and valid. For perhaps the first time, no one had voted for more than 10 candidates (maximum number allowed by the bylaws).

This year 16 candidates had been nominated for consideration for Academy membership. As per the bylaws, 10 were elected and inducted. These are: James L. Barr, Michael A. Callahan, Stephen V. Forsgren, Joe H. Hilliard, Jerry Kelso, Michael A. McDonald, William Earl Mott, Jr., Jason R. Myers, Thomas C. Oppenheim, and Stacy G. Williams. Also two persons were elected to honorary membership (for honorary membership the nominee must be approved by 75% of those voting). These are Robert B. Nelson and Robert “Bob” Oates. Mr. Oates was inducted posthumously.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE – Steve Sharp presented the report from the nominating. The committee nominated the following slate of officers:

President	Harold Beaver
President-Elect	Scott Bennett
Vice-President	Dan Williams
Board of Directors	John Burkhalter
(3 yr terms)	Bob Elliott

President Boudra asked for other nominations from the floor. None were made. The slate was then elected by acclamation.

With the new members the Board of Directors for the coming year is:

John Burkhalter	3 years
Bob Elliott	3 years
Randy Hathaway	2 years
Jeff Geurian	2 years

Phil McConnell	1 year
Matt Crafton	1 year

NEW PRESIDENT – Luther Boudra then introduced Harold Beaver as the new president and presented him with the president’s gavel.

NEW BUSINESS

President Beaver then took charge of the meeting. Beaver announced that next year’s banquet and meeting will be held April 8 & 9. Also since most members prefer having the banquet in Fayetteville, arrangements are being made for holding the banquet at the new Hilton Garden Inn. He also brought up the possibility of changing the system for nominating and voting for membership to an on line system. There was some limited positive discussion. Beaver stated that to do this would require changes to the bylaws. After a few additional comments he asked if anyone had any new business. With no new business brought forth, he asked for a motion to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 11:00.