DRAFT Minutes from the CEAS Industry Advisory Board Meeting

Thursday, Feb. 22, 2018 at 11 AM

The Parkview Room, D132 Floyd Hall Parkview Campus, Kalamazoo, MI

Attendees: Mike Preston, Yasir Khogali, Nicole Remily, David Jerovsek, Bob Lynch, James Castellano, Jeff Krusinga, Houssam Toutanji, Andy Kline, Matt Cavalli, Steve Butt, Steve Carr, Brad Bazuin, Osama Abudayyeh

IAB Meeting convened at 11:10 AM by IAB Chair Lynch. Introduction given by each person present.

Agenda topics as shown in Appendix A.

Kline reviewed the proposed four activities for the Industry Outreach Office, shown here as Attachment B.

Over lunch, Dean Toutanji gave a Power Point presentation on the State of the College. Update on student enrollment and credit hours generated, which are holding steady. Faculty award winners for teaching and research, and new faculty and staff. How differential tuition funds are used, and the college’s increasing financial support for Registered Student Organizations. Discussion focused on new staff member who will be working on improving student retention and 6-year graduation rate metrics. This is a one-year term position that will become permanent if goals are met. Discussion on upcoming Pi Day fund raising event.

Compilation of Discussion about Industry Outreach Office (IOO)

Co-op model used by Kettering and Purdue are the Gold Standards, and are the current competition to WMU to establish a more integrated co-op model. Which academic program schedules may work for at least some of the CEAS majors at WMU? Need to chart out potential curriculum for co-op students in the various majors to see where it would work best, or identify course scheduling issues or other topics. Would need to look at students being able to take off the Fall or Spring semester for co-op in combination with a summer, and then return to campus without losing ground in taking their course work. Khogali: Need a pool of students to be available in the pipeline for co-op between September and April, not just in the summer. Explore moving forward on a co-op model now even as work on establishing IOO continues. Cavalli: using distance education courses as part of the co-op model, so students may take a class or two while off-campus at co-op.
placement. Need to get students interested in their first and second year in so they prepare to take a co-op placement.

**How does WMU standout as being uniquely different?** Relates to IOO activities and reason(s) for companies to sponsor, as well as for student placement success, selling companies on recruiting at WMU, etc.

Use co-op program as a recruiting tool to enroll students at WMU.

Castellano: WMU engineering not a preferred or partner university or priority for some companies to recruit at. Leadership involvement in RSO groups and ability to talk about those types of experiences helps students stand out. Near term opportunity for alumni at Ford or its suppliers to mentor some senior design projects or RSO activities that would provide leadership skill development for Ford people, and assist students, and raise the WMU profile within Ford and its supply chain.

**Industry Outreach Office (IOO) is a two-way model.** Industry provides a bulleted list of why students should come to their company for co-op, internship, or full time, and WMU actively provides a list of interested high quality students. WMU as a head hunter serving the students and pitching the perfect match to the company.

Explore other divisions in large companies or their supply chain companies as potential IOO partners, as well as a source for student placements.

**Direct contact between WMU and companies is critical and a huge asset,** especially for smaller or mid-size companies who rely more on personal connections to successfully recruit employees to the Western Michigan region. How to attract or lure them to stay in the area to work?

**WMU may need a branding program** to be seen at the same level as U of M. MSU, and other higher profile schools. Dean Toutanji mentioned that WMU will be adding a new VP of Marketing in summer 2018 to work improving university marketing efforts, and university communications. CEAS is looking forward to partnering with these efforts.

WMU needs to develop a list of benefits to the company, probably a two-tier model.

**WMU needs an elevator speech with a 3 and 5 year plan** to help industry members pitch the IOO program to their internal resources to obtain funding. What will WMU deliver to the sponsors? What are the clear benefits or ROI for being an IOO sponsor or company partner?

One selling point may be improved efficiency of recruiting and coordinating activities with WMU for company visits and interactions.

**Smaller company perspective (Jerovsek):**

Get good people as quickly as possible from recruiting efforts. Have vetted students ready to be recruited.

A lot of exposure to candidates is word of mouth, as companies not as well known. Additional company exposure is needed.
Relationships are very important. Need contacts at WMU to connect to students. Smaller companies want to get in the door before large companies. Different structure to interact with small companies may be needed than that used by large companies. What will be the “lag time” from a company starting to sponsor the IOO, and when they get service? Wants reverse marketing opportunities (WMU markets itself to companies; companies market themselves to WMU students).

Could we draft a Long-term Agreement (3 to 5 years) and offer a 10 or 20% discount as an incentive for getting funding established for IOO?

Need a small company fee structure and a large company fee structure for IOO.

**Other Topics Raised That Were Not Related to IOO**

Companies need to provide greater vision to WMU in a safe and secure way (IP issues, confidentiality considered, etc.) in order to assist in building research activities.

Systems Engineering: future focus area or major for WMU??

**Goals by May 1, 2018**

**WMU and IAB members to put together an initial list of target companies** (with contact information) and approach them for $8,000 to $10,000 each (Haworth College of Business model), and focus on them.

**Castellano can assist** with contact information for smaller companies or Ford suppliers in the Novi, MI area.

**WMU to figure out what the written contract** for a sponsor would look like. What is the needed paper work for donations through the WMU Foundation? WMU needs to give clear directions for how to give to this IOO effort.

**In addition to contact information, IAB members need to give WMU an idea of when their budget building is happening**, so pitch can be made to try and get recurring funds committed by a company.

Goal is to get funding locked down for IOO for Year 1 and 2, and get IOO up and running. Use established success stories and assessment of IOO activities and outcomes as demonstration of ROI for expanding to more companies in Years 3, 4, and 5.

**Next IAB meeting in September 2018, date to be determined.**

**IAB meeting adjourned at 1:15 PM.** Draft minutes distributed by Kline, March 10, 2018.
Attachment A. Meeting Agenda

Tentative Agenda: CEAS Industry Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, February 22, 2018

Formal IAB Meeting
The Parkview Room, D132 Floyd Hall Parkview Campus, Kalamazoo, MI

11:00 AM Welcome and Introductions - Bob Lynch, IAB Chair

11:15 AM Update on CEAS Activities - Dean Houssam Toutanji

11:40 AM Discussion Topic: Industry Outreach Office (IOO)
- Bob Lynch, IAB Chair, Mike Preston, IAB Vice-chair, Andy Kline, Associate Dean

Current Mission and Vision of IOO
Identify additional needs of industry
Fundraising needs and mechanisms

Nest steps to move forward

Noon Lunch and Continuing Discussions

Adjournment by 3 PM
Attachment B. February 7, 2018 Industry Outreach Office document

Potential WMU CEAS Industry Outreach Office

As of the Fall 2017 semester, the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences (CEAS) at Western Michigan University (WMU) enrolls 2,400 undergraduate students in 14 accredited bachelor’s degree programs, plus 600 graduate students in 19 degree programs. The college graduates about 360 bachelor’s degree students per academic year.

In order to increase the participation of industry in the college’s educational programs and provide better student access to members of industry, the College’s Industry Advisory Board (IAB) is working to initiate an Industry Outreach Office (IOO), with potential start-up in January 2019. The IOO would be funded by industry partners, and provide support for a full-time staff position. This person would be an “Employer Relations Specialist” which is an existing job category in the WMU Human Resources system, and it is the same title used in Haworth College of Business (HCOB) Zhang Career Center for similar job responsibilities that are proposed for the IOO.

Based on past discussions, the focus of the IOO can be grouped into four activities.

Co-operative Education efforts within CEAS, including working to identify companies to sponsor co-op students and solicit new industry partnerships to increase available co-op opportunities; develop structures and procedures of review to promote quality co-op student placements; and work with University Career Services to fill available co-op positions.

Tracking and academic advising for co-op students would be done by the CEAS Advising Office.

A central point of contact for industry to work with the college on academic activities, and to direct further contacts within the university. Example interactions could be working with industry to provide part-time teachers to WMU; provide a mechanism for initial industry contact with Registered Student Organizations (RSO); and as a clearing house for industry to explore potential senior design project topics that could then be publicized to find interested faculty participants.

Provide space for industry to meet and interview students for internships, co-ops, and full-time employment. This would include a vetting process by the college that involves faculty consultation where students are filtered to best match what industry is seeking. The vetting process would require permission from the students to participate in order to comply with FERPA, and students would designate a “Top 10” list of their areas of interest. The vetting process would be transparent to students and would occur once they agree to participate with the IOO. This activity should work in cooperation with the existing WMU Career Services.

A central point of contact for companies interested in participating in research with students and faculty, either supporting current work, or bringing new research problems to the college. The IOO would work to map student and faculty interests in various topical areas, and seek to involve industry in research and development projects. One area might be for
industry to provide small, shorter term problems or projects that can be used by RSO groups to engage students. The research outreach activity could be a cooperative effort with the college’s Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education.

Funding Level

To provide a competitive salary and benefits for the staff position and have funds for travel to meet with industry partners and develop relationships, a commitment of funding at $150,000 per year for a minimum of five years is needed. Time is needed to establish and build the activities and programs of the Industry Outreach Office, so a five-year commitment is desired to allow time for this to happen.

Support from companies could be structured as a consortium, with each company paying a base fee for access or participation. The fee could have several levels, each with its own tailored level of access, or it could be a single rate fee charged to a company who wishes to participate. The amount of the fee could be tied to some measure of a company’s size (e.g., annual sales, number of employees in Michigan, etc.). In this model, larger companies would pay a larger fee than smaller companies, but everyone would have the same access or rights to participation.

Please refer to the “Premier Partner” pdf file that came with the e-mail attachment which shows the model used by HCOB for delineating two levels of company sponsorship for the Zhang Career Center.

Next Steps for Establishing the Industry Outreach Office (IOO)

February 22 Industry Advisory Board meeting at Floyd Hall

Agreement and buy-in from IAB on proposed activities of the IOO

Brainstorming: How to expand requesting sponsorship beyond the current IAB group. Use Southwest Michigan First connections? Bob Miller here at WMU and his industry links?

Needed outcomes: Each company gives a contact person or “champion” for contact by the college to ask for sponsorship.

Each company needs to let the college know at what point in the calendar year they should be approached for getting the sponsorship request into consideration as part of the sponsor’s budget building process. We would be requesting to have the sponsor write the IOO funding into their budget as a recurring item, not just a one-time appropriation.