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Minutes

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS COMMITTEE (ARC)

Friday, February 15, 2019

PRESENT

Members

Ramesh Subramanian, Chair	Jüri Silmberg
Waguih ElMaraghy, Vice-Chair	Ian Marsland
Leila Notash	Medhat Shehata
Remon Pop-Iliev	Michael Hulley
Shamim Sheikh	Bob Dony
Judith Dimitriu	Meilan Liu
	Joe Lostracco

Staff

Moody Farag
Pauline Lebel
Faris Georgis
Anna Carinci Lio
Esther Kim
Irene Zdan
Marwa Jamshidi
Claire Riley

Regrets

Stelian George-Cosh	George Nakhla
Roydon Fraser	John Yeow
Allen Stewart	Magdi Mohareb
Seimer Tsang	Ross Judd
Amin Rizkalla	Amir Fam
Gosha Zywno	Barna Szabados
Sanjeev Bhole	

Guests

David Kiguel, ERC Chair
Changiz Sadr, ERC Vice-Chair
(Regrets)

1. Call to Order and Chair's Remarks

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, 10:30 AM.

- The Chair called for a minute of silence in recognition of the passing of Mr. Gerry Margaritis, PhD, P.Eng. who passed away on January 20, 2019. Mr. Margaritis was a Professor in Chemical and Biochemical Engineering at Western University. He was a staunch promoter of the engineering profession for over 30 years, including serving PEO at the chapter and committee levels. He was an active member of the London Chapter, serving twice as its chair. In the area of Admissions, Mr. Margaritis served on PEO's Academic Requirements Committee and the Evolution of Engineering Admissions Task Force, as well as set and marked the Environmental and Biochemical Engineering technical examinations for several years. In recognition of his expertise in biochemical engineering, he was invited in 2000 to chair PEO's Bioengineering Task Force, whose 150-page report defined the required core body of knowledge, areas of practice and skills of a bioengineer for licensing purposes. Mr. Margaritis also participated on PEO's Emerging Disciplines Task Force and helped to honour engineers and increase public awareness of their achievements and contributions to society as a member of our Awards Committee. In 1991, he was recognized with the

Ontario Professional Engineers Engineering Medal and was invested in 2005 as an Officer in PEO's Order of Honour.

2. **Approval of the Agenda**

MOTION

It was **moved** by Leila Notash and **seconded** Waguih EIMaraghy that the agenda be approved as distributed.

CARRIED

3. **Approval of the Minutes of January 18, 2019**

The following corrections were noted:

- It was confirmed that the motion for the selection of the recipient for the S.E. Wolfe was seconded by Bob Dony.
- The Experience Requirements Committee (ERC) Report: Page 10, 1st bullet, 3rd sentence from the bottom of the paragraph: The PSC also asked that the ERC provide the **regional** legal review obtained... This word should read "**original**" legal review...
- The ARC Vice-Chair requested a lighter shade of the watermark on the draft minutes.

MOTION

It was **moved by** Jüri Silmberg and **seconded by** Waguih EIMaraghy that the minutes of the January 18, 2019 meeting be approved as amended.

CARRIED

4. **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5. **Chair's Report**

- The Chair introduced a new admissions representative, Marwa Jamshidi, who was attending an ARC meeting for the first time as part of her training and to observe the procedural aspects of the ARC. Marwa joined the Admissions staff in October 2018.
- An external regulatory review of PEO operations was conducted by Harry Cayton, formerly with the UK Professional Standards Authority and interviews with staff and committee chairs were completed in February 2019. The report is expected by May 2019.
- The Chair met with the consultant team on February 7, 2019 and many of the questions during the interview pertained to how the ARC referred applications to the ERC to clear the academics. One question that arose was why the ARC did not have an interview process with the ARC itself.

- During the February 2019 Council meeting, the consultants observed ARC members reviewing applicant files and remarked that their review was a substantial time commitment. Mr. Cayton asked whether the ARC could engage an external professional to assess the files and have an ARC oversight committee in place to assure the assessments were conducted without members having to assess files individually.
- The Chair opined that there were many issues with the suggestion to engage an external professional. In addition to budgetary restraints, he explained the difference between what the ARC does in terms of the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA – Engineers Canada) applications and those of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET – USA). In response to whether to exempt all MRA applications, the Chair explained that the ARC still has to exercise due diligence in exempting or assigning exams as there are a number of variations within MRA, and he further clarified that applications still have to conform to PEO board sheets.
- The Chair confirmed that a 20% increase of all PEO fees was recently approved by Council, including written examinations and ERC interviews.
- He reported that Michael Price, a long-time staff advisor to the ARC, was no longer with PEO. Members asked the Chair to send a letter to the former deputy registrar on behalf of the ARC.

MOTION

It was **moved by** Judith Dimitriu and **seconded by** Leila Notash that, on behalf of the committee, the ARC Chair send a letter to Michael Price thanking him for the years of support he provided to the ARC, and to wish him success in his future endeavours.

CARRIED

- In concluding his report, the Chair presented two ARC members with anniversary pins and certificates in recognition of their dedication and commitment as PEO volunteers: Meilan Liu for 15 years of commendable volunteerism; and Joe Lostracco for 5 years of commendable volunteerism. The two members received warm rounds of applause from members in appreciation for their invaluable service to the ARC.

Additional Discourse:

Member discussion about the regulatory review ensued and ARC member (and ERC Chair) David Kiguel shared the following as he also attended an interview with the consultant:

- Their discussions included the 4-year experience requirement for applicants. He was asked what the importance of specifying 4 years of experience and he opined that 4 was an arbitrary number and what really matters is the quality of an applicant's experience. The consultant suggested that, from a qualitative view, if an applicant believes they have obtained the required experience for licensure after only 2 years, they should be able to request an interview at that time to have said experience assessed.
- He noted that the consultant is applying 7 standards with respect to its regulatory review of PEO's licensing and registration, and obligations under the *Professional Engineers Act*.

1. Only those who meet the regulator's requirements are licensed or authorized.
 2. The licensing authorization process, including the management of appeals, is fair based on the regulator's standards, efficient, transparent, secure and continuously improving.
 3. Academic requirements, experience requirements, the Professional Practice Examination (PPE) and Good Character requirements are linked to standards of practice and they prioritize the public interest and service provisions centered on the needs of engineering clients.
 4. Information on academic requirements, experience requirements and other requirements for licensing authorization and designation is publicly available.
 5. Through the regulator's registers, everyone can easily access information about licence holders, Certificate of Authorization (C of A) holders and consulting engineers except in relation to their health, including whether there are restrictions on their practice.
 6. Employers and supervising engineers are aware of checking the status of licence holders and C of A holders and clients and members of the public can find and check the status of licence holders and C of A holders.
 7. Through the regulator's continuing professional development systems, licence holders and C of A holders maintain the standards required for competent practice.
- ARC Vice-Chair Waguih ElMaraghy opined that PEO could improve on the #4 standard on the consultant's list: public access to licensing information. Although, he thinks this an area whereby someone is designated to communicate with the public and applicants through the website. He does not believe it is the ARC's or ERC's responsibility to communicate directly with the public.
 - Moody Farag, Manager, Admissions noted that PEO's Communications Department is currently working on the redesign of the website and its content. Once completed, more information will be made available to the public.
 - David Kiguel recalled that, about two years ago, Council had appointed a task force to assess PEO's public relations and access to information efforts. However, the task force was put on hold since its budget was not approved.
 - In the interim, both ARC and ERC past minutes should be uploaded to the website as there are gaps covering several months of minutes that have not been posted.
 - Member Bob Dony noted that once the regulatory performance review report is received and reviewed, PEO may engage consultants to conduct a governance review in response to recent letters addressed to the Attorney General of Ontario about PEO from the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE) and Consulting Engineers of Ontario (CEO). Council has made it clear with that with the new Registrar hiring there is the expectation that a thorough review of internal operations and processes are expected. The Registrar is mandated to make any internal changes as necessary.
 - Vice-Chair Waguih ElMaraghy pointed out that it is customary to have a representative of the Registrar attend ARC meetings – if not himself or herself. Moody Farag noted that he had invited Registrar Johnny Zuccon to the meeting, however, due to his previous

commitments, he was unable to attend. Moody Farag acknowledged that the three Licensing and Registration managers present at the meeting are indeed representatives of the Registrar: Pauline Lebel, Manager, Licensure; Faris Georgis, Manager, Registration; and himself, Manager, Admissions. And with regard to the format of the ARC agendas, until another deputy registrar for the Licensing and Registration Department is engaged, the Chair clarified that this particular report should remain identified on the agenda as “Staff’s Report.”

6. **Staff Report**

Moody Farag, Manager, Admissions reported the following:

- Recent technical examination results were mailed on February 15, 2019. More than 500 applicants wrote the exams in December 2018. The Professional Practice Examination (PPE) results were also mailed the week of February 4, 2019. The performance statistics of these December technical exams will be compiled and analyzed, and he will present a report at the March 2019 ARC meeting.
- The Canadian Engineering Qualifications Board (CEQB) revised and approved the Software Engineering Syllabus which he will further address under Item 8.6 of the agenda.
- The CEQB has also approved a draft of the *Regulators Guideline on the Use of Syllabi*. This document provides regulators with a model on the use of syllabi. Included in the CEQB package is a Paper on Entrepreneurship.” He will send both of these “consultation” documents to committee members for their review and feedback in time for the next ARC meeting.
- In addition, there is a CEQB *Guideline on Continuing Professional Development* which has been sent to the Engineers Canada Board for approval and once the guideline is available, he will forward it to the committee. To expand on why this particular guideline is being presented by the CEQB, it was pointed out that the mandate of the CEQB is much broader than just developing syllabi.

7. **Endorsements**

7.1 **Reading Assignment of Technical Reports/Synopses**

There was one synopsis in Mechanical Engineering titled: Effects of Temperature to the Demagnetization of Magnets: submitted by applicant with File Number: 100145333. It will be submitted to Roydon Fraser for review.

7.2 **Issues Arising from ARC/Deputy Registrar Recommendations**

There was one file given to an ARC member for a second review.

7.3 **Issues Arising from ERC Recommendations for Applicants Referred by ARC**

There were no issues to report.

7.4 **December 1, 2018 Professional Practice Examination (PPE) Results**

Anna Carinci Lio, Supervisor, Examinations reported the following:

- There was an 80% passing rate for the December 1, 2018 sitting which is in keeping with previous PPE results. This is slightly higher than the 78% passing rate in August 2018.
- There was one applicant who failed for the 4th time and will have to reapply to pursue licensure.
- Nine applicants failed for the 3rd time and will be eligible to rewrite the PPE in December 2019 for a final chance to obtain a passing mark. However, before getting permission to write the PPE for the 4th time, they are required to send responses for review first to verify whether they are on target to pass the exam.
- There were 3 applicants who attempted the exam for a 3rd time and they were successful. Out of the 4 applicants who registered, only one failed.
- The Vice-Chair requested a breakdown of failing rates by CEAB and non-CEAB applicants. As the process to compile this information is manual and extensively time-consuming, these statistics will be a one-time presentation to the committee.

8. **Procedural and Related Matters**

8.1 **Licensing Committee (LIC) Update**

There was no update to report.

8.2 **Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB) Update**

Both the Chair and Bob Dony attended the February 2-3, 2019 CEAB meetings in Ottawa which focused mainly on policies and procedures. For the 3rd consecutive year, the chairs and, in some cases, the vice-chairs met with each of the institutions to discuss what the institutions can expect from the chairs.

Discussions centered on major policy issues, one of which are the changes the CEAB is trying to focus on related to graduate attributes and improvement on the process itself. The CEAB is allowing universities to figure out the data needed to verify whether graduates are meeting expectations and, if not, universities must improve the curriculum and focus more on the graduate attributes for continuous improvement.

8.3 **Canadian Engineering Qualifications Board (CEQB) Update**

There was no update to report.

8.4 **ARC Distance Education (DE) Subcommittee**

In view of the evolution of Distance Education and the increasing number of engineering programs, worldwide and in Canada, that offer at least some of the curriculum via online methods, the ARC decided to review the existing policies and, for that purpose, formed a Distance Education (DE) Subcommittee (December 8, 2017 ARC Meeting).

DE Subcommittee Chair Waguih ElMaraghy presented *Report #4 from the Distance Education (DE) Subcommittee* which was distributed to members in the meeting materials. For clarity, suggestions, additions and revisions are shown in bold characters and underlined. This text is to be added to the *Procedures Manual of the Academic Requirements Committee* (aka the Red Book).

Members engaged in discussion and provided feedback. Based on their comments, the Subcommittee Chair made the relevant amendments and immediately after the meeting was adjourned, he provided Appendix A (attached), an updated version of the report based on the commentary received.

MOTION

It was **moved by** Judith Dimitriu and **seconded by** Remon Pop-Iliev to accept *Report #4 from the Distance Education (DE) Subcommittee* as amended and that the DE Subcommittee Chair Waguih ElMaraghy submit the amended copy following the meeting.

CARRIED

The DE Subcommittee will now focus on the on the next phases in the process, including:

- Develop and detail the addendum for the current Licensing Application;
- Consider the impact of DE at the Graduate level (Masters and PhD) on the related Red Book articles;
- DE Portals for credentials identification / verification.

8.5 **Experience Requirements Committee (ERC) Report**

The ERC Chair David Kiguel reported the following:

- The ERC Subcommittee met on February 11, 2019, continuing its work on a process it intends to implement to conduct a quality review of the of the ERC interviews which includes randomly selecting and looking at the interview recordings. The review will assess both positive and negative aspects of the interview process.
- Members discussed the form applicants are required to complete and submit a week prior to their interview that references one or two projects they wish to briefly discuss with the interview panel indicating the engineering fundamentals and principles applied. The Subcommittee is working on improving this particular form.
- Discourse also centered on the proposed changes to the Guide to Required Experience for Licensing to remove the required 30 hours monthly of physical presence of the monitor at the engineer-in-training (EIT)'s workplace. The ERC was requested to seek peer review from the Professional Standards Committee (PSC) and the committee received a reply from the PSC in response to its letter. He opined that the PSC did not

address the specific issues as raised in the ERC's letter. Rather, the PSC recommended that the ERC request funds from the Registrar's budget to have a legal review conducted to assess the "concept" of the monitor.

- The consensus was to modify the briefing note that was submitted in 2018 indicating that the ERC did obtain peer review and that the PSC has concerns with respect to the legalities of the proposed monitor changes. He reiterated that the ERC is only seeking to resolve the issue of the 30 hours. The Subcommittee will amend the briefing note and resubmit it to Council.
- The ERC is working with Pauline Lebel, Manager, Licensure to submit the 2019 ERC Annual Report which is due in February. The ERC conducted a total of 898 interviews in 2018 of which:
 - 71% were Confirmatory interviews referred by the ARC;
 - 5% related to Specific Technical exams referred by the ARC;
 - 19% were staff experience referrals;
 - 5% were interviews for provisional and limited licences; and
 - 1% were interviews for reinstatement.
- At the next ERC business meeting, 29 ERC members will receive their PEO anniversary pins and certificates for their years of dedicated volunteerism to the ERC.
- In response to whether there were standard questions asked during the interviews and what were the expectations with regard to the answers, he stated that the ERC provides training to the interviewers and, most recently, the ERC introduced competency-based questions. He also informed members of pending changes to the panel reporting forms to record applicants' results and recommendations. The process is continuously improving, and he believes, to date, the interviews and their formats are conducted consistently.
- Members discussed and shared various aspects of the interview process and, in conclusion, the ARC Vice-Chair was invited by the ERC Chair to attend an ERC interview as an observer.

8.6 **Revised: Software Engineering Syllabus**

Moody Farag, Manager, Admissions reported the following:

The Software Engineering Examinations Program Syllabus, recently revised by the CEQB, was distributed in the meeting materials. The syllabus was sent to the Software and Electrical Engineering ARC members and there were no objections and only positive feedback as to the evolution of the syllabus.

MOTION

It was **moved by** Bob Dony and **seconded by** Ian Marsland that the Software Engineering Syllabus be approved as revised by the Canadian Engineering Qualifications Board.

CARRIED

9. **New Procedural Matter(s) for Discussion**

There were no items to discuss.

10. **Other Business**

There was no other business to discuss.

11. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 PM

The next ARC meeting is schedule for **March 15, 2019**