



American Congress on Surveying and Mapping New England Section

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September 1, 2002

Open letter to the New England Section Membership.

Re: Surveying Engineering at UMAINE at Orono.

Dear Members,

On Wednesday August 28th A. Richard Vannozzi (MALSCE), David Cook (MSLS) and myself conferred with Dean Matthews, Dean of Engineering, and Dr. Beard, Chair of the Department of Spatial Information Engineering (SIE) to discuss the proposed changes in the SIE program. It has been proposed that the SIE program be developed into an Information Engineering (IE) program. This change is being considered for several reasons. The foremost reason being the low enrollment in the SIE program. The College of Engineering is currently dealing with less funding than last fiscal year, while enrollments in some programs have increased one hundred percent. Low enrollment combined with the state of the economy dictated that some changes be made. The Spatial Information Engineering (SIE) program will in the future be developed into an Information Engineering (IE) program.

Dean Matthews did offer us an alternative to ending the surveying program. Beginning as early as September 2003 a bachelors of science (BS) in surveying engineering technology (SVT) will be available in the School of Engineering Technology at the University of Maine at Orono. While I understand that this is not the result some of our members were hoping for I feel this is an acceptable outcome given the burdens on the College of Engineering. This offer of a bachelors of science degree in surveying engineering technology did not come without a commitment of financial assistance on our part. In order to develop an ABET accredited program it will be necessary to hire one new faculty member, in addition to Dr. Hintz and Dr. Leick. It will be necessary for the New England surveying community to underwrite this professor's salary for the first three years of the program. This cost is currently \$55,000 per year for the first year with a 3% increase in each of the next two years. This is only the first of many costs that will have to be paid outside of the School of Engineering Technology budget. In addition to the salary and some program overhead, there are many needs to be attended to. Surveying equipment, computer workstations, and software are several of the issues we will be dealing in the future. To this end we will be joining several of the state surveying societies in financially supporting the surveying engineering technology program; in addition we will be seeking contributions from businesses and private surveyors.

So far I have only addressed the financial issues affecting the surveying program. While finances will have to be dealt with, there is another perhaps more important problem we will all have to help with, enrollment. Enrollment in the surveying engineering technology program will have to be maintained at a respectable level to perpetuate itself past the first years. Recruiting and outreach of people into the profession is something that every surveyor in New England can participate in. As this is the only bachelors program in New England every student in New England can attend Orono at a reduced out of

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state tuition rate. Again I believe we will be joining with the state surveying societies to begin an outreach program to high schools in New England.

In the next weeks we will be beginning a fundraising and outreach effort on behalf of the surveying engineering technology program at Orono. I hope you all will take the time to participate.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. McNichols, PLS
Chairman