

TO: The Engineering Faculty

FROM: The Faculty of the School of Mechanical Engineering

DATE: February 17, 2003

RE: New Course ME 297 Mechanical Engineering Sophomore Projects

The Faculty of the School of Mechanical Engineering has approved the following new course. This action is now submitted to the Engineering Faculty with a recommendation for approval.

ME 297 Mechanical Engineering Sophomore Projects Sem. 1 and 2. SS. Cr. 1–6. (May be repeated for credit.)

Projects or special topics of contemporary importance can be studied under the Mechanical Engineering Projects course. Interested students should seek a faculty advisor by meeting with individual faculty members who work in their area of special interest. Students submit a summary report.

REASON: The purpose of this course is to provide freshmen and sophomores a research course that they can take as freshmen or sophomores to get research experience. Our current ME Projects course (ME 497) is only open to students with at least junior standing. The reason freshmen or sophomore students are not permitted to take ME 497 is because ME 497 counts towards a technical elective and with so little technical background, it doesn't seem justified to give such credit to freshmen and sophomore students. This is also consistent with what we do with other design courses (e.g., EPICS). For example, ME 283 (the sophomore EPICS course) can count only as a free elective (currently ME has 3 credits of free elective), not a technical elective. Likewise, this proposed ME Projects Course (ME 297) would also only count for free elective credit. Nevertheless, such a course would be helpful to get strong undergraduate students involved in research in the early stages of their careers.

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