

Engineering Awards Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2007, 10:00 a.m, room 1007 Kemper

Attended: Khaled Abdel-Ghaffar, Craig Benham, Bruce Gates, Tim Ginn, M. Hafez and Atul Parikh.

Absent: Xin Liu, Mark Grismer

Review of dissertations submitted for the Zuhair A. Munir Best Dissertation Award:

Chair Tim Ginn opened the meeting with introductions and a quick overview of how the dissertations were assigned for review to committee members. Committee members were not assigned dissertations from their own departments. Seven dissertations were submitted for review. Committee members were generally assigned three dissertations to review with minor variations to account for member availability. Reviewers were asked to complete these reviews and to assign a numerical score to each dissertation based on: originality, method, impact, recognition and interdisciplinary, prior to the meeting. All attendant members completed reviews as requested and absent member Xin Liu reviewed assigned dissertations and provided input prior to the scheduled meeting.

Committee members first engaged in a discussion regarding relative merits of different dissertation formats; e.g., how to judge a dissertation created under an individual's sole authorship as opposed to one formed as an accumulation of multi-author papers. Divergent opinions were aired but the committee agreed that the latter format should not appear without at least a clear introduction and conclusion for the work submitted. Committee members also agreed that this issue should be submitted to the College Executive Committee for further consideration. Since the office of Graduate Studies accepts both methods of writing for dissertations, the committee did not apply their discussion to the submitted dissertations.

Discussion turned to evaluations of each submission, with treatment of originality, method, impact, recognition, and interdisciplinary. After each dissertation was reviewed and discussed, committee members selected the top three nominees, unanimously.

Committee members continued their deliberations on the top three nominees and each member was asked to prioritize the three in cardinal rank. This way the committee reached consensus. Committee members recommend by a very narrow margin that Gui Ghao receive the Munir Best Dissertation Award.