I.   Source

Email from Scott Grayson, Associate Managing Director of IEEE USA. Informal Summary of the IEEE Employment and Career Services Committee which sponsored three panels/symposia at Texas A&M on the subject of Industry Needs. Panels consisted of faculty and industry.

II.   Credibility of Source

Information represents direct input from industry hence credible, but the industries represented were narrow. Transcription by IEEE considered reliable.

III. Summary of Content and Conclusions

Some industry reps stated that Universities not teaching students what they need to know. Others agreed but said it is irrelevant since they would teach new hires what they need to know. University reps stated that there is large inertia in the system and that faculty are reluctant to change the curriculum to reflect industry needs.   There seems to be concurrence that a gap exists but no concurrence about what universities should do about it.

IV.   Relevance to the Department of ECE

No relevance wrt technical gaps.   It would be useful for the Department Chair and/or Curriculum Committee to gauge the intensity of resistance to curriculum changes and whether it is due to an objective evaluation of needs or reluctance to move out of a comfort zone.

V.   Recommendations for the Department or the IAB

Identifying gaps is already a function of the IAB. It could be useful to the Department to know whether there is consensus in the Board about what the Department should do about gaps. A consensus is more useful than a wide diversity of opinion. WRT the Department, it is not clear how it guards against excessive insulation in setting curricula. It could be useful to have an articulation of principles or guidelines for curriculum determination in an attempt to make it more objective and needs based.

VI.   Contact Information

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