Department Council  
Monday, October 20, 2014

Agenda item #1: Funds for undergraduates to academic conference:

UG Students going to graduate schools – would sending students to conference be a plus or minus?

More contact with professor to talk about graduate school to give them an accurate impression of graduate school.

Workshop every year – Froehlich – email to ask when workshop is scheduled. Has to be in the fall.
Recommend workshop to the undergraduate students. To encourage them to go to the workshop.
Make faculty aware of workshop and have them encourage their UG to go to workshop.

Is there any data to track where UG go after graduation? How many go to Grad School? No data available, Brandi has some information.

Have students fill out form – where working, grad school, salaries?

Maybe time investment and money could be a factor on why students aren’t going to graduate school.

BS/MS – less than 10 students in the program.

Some students may need to work awhile before they go to graduate school. Remind them they can always come back.

Google docs to capture data and keep in the department.

How many student do research in the summer with faculty? Encourage students to work on research.

Survey student on what they think graduate school is about? Is it the cost? Inform them of assistantships.

Student being pursued heavily by industry, student offered high salary, they don’t want to think about graduate school. Or they start their own companies.

If students worked for 3 years, will it be easy for them to get reference letters? Some students have done it and haven’t had an issue with getting letters.

Agenda item #2: Grad TA’s vs UG TA’s: Cost or quality?

UG TA’s – should we use more? What is the trade off? Will quality be better or worse?

Students seem to connect with UG TA’s. Some UG TA’s hold discussions.

Jeff F. – When he was in graduate school, there were two different titles for UG TA’s. Consultants and TA’s. Alan stated the department kind of has that now, without the titles: UG TA’s that teach and some that only do grading.
Mike Hicks – has had 4 UG TA’s all were great. Hasn’t noticed a difference. They know material better than some Grad TA’s.

Some recommendations are to email professors asking for recommendations of UG students that did well in their classes. Then contact those student asking if they are interested in being a UG TA, interview them and pick from those interviews.

Cody said that some UG TA’s would be better teaching lower level UG courses

Having two UG TA’s would be more complicated as they only work 10 hours per week each. Whereas a grad student works 20 hours a week.

Final exams – UG TA’s can’t grade final exams? It was noted by Alan that there is not a department policy on this.

Talk with UG TA’s about graduate school – this goes back to agenda item #1.

Possibly would be able to offer more UG TA’s for classes than Grad TA’s for classes, if more UG TA’s are hired.

Some instructors may need help to find the right UG TA’s.

Most of the UG TA’s are needed for lower level classes.

**Not an agenda item, but Samir brought up needing students on the Space Committee**

Need one Undergraduate Student and two Graduate Students (for grad maybe one newer student and one senior student) for the space committee. Do we want to nominate, vote, or assign? Both Graduate Students on department council (Cody Buntain and Varun Nagaraja) volunteered to be on the space committee. Stephanie will ask the undergraduate student if she is interested, if not then we will ask Brandi for suggestion.

Another meeting will be scheduled as the committee ran out of time due to lengthy discussion of the other topics.