Department Council Meeting
4 pm, Tuesday, October 21, 2015

Samir Khuller began the meeting started at 4 pm.

Introductions of everyone as this was a new committee for the academic year.

Discussion about photo history page on CS Website:
Samir and Stephanie explained a little about the page and what was discussed this summer pertaining to the page not being updated since 2007. The discussion was with the communication team, Todd had indicated earlier that to get it updated would be a major undertaking as it’s not in a format he knows so the whole thing should be redesigned.

Update it or take it down – M. Hicks

Minker’s project, may want to talk with him – J. Foster

Communications should work on the project – Hal
What is the best way to display the information? Website design takes time. Someone really needs to be in charge to maintain it - Samir

Discussion moved over to the Wiki page for CS:

CMNS and UMD should be linked to our wiki pages. Discussion of CS wiki page. It’s done very well, and Brandi and her team did a great job.

PULSAR program (presented by Hal Daume)
Not advertised well last year. Wants to make it more widely known, talking to the UG office about the program.

Long term research program, for anything related to language science. Push on tech side, would get better to have more CS involved.

Flyers will be posted around the building.

Program is going well so far but would like to advertise more to UG. The program provides research training and practical experience, individual and group mentoring and supportive peer network. What is valuable is to consider other such focused programs for undergrads.

How to make community better in CS:
As a dept what can we do to make a better community in CS?

Jeff Foster brought up that we have some Northrop Grumman money that wasn’t fully used. How could we use the left over funds for this?
Should we purchase art work for CSIC to make classroom more appealing - Foster
Can the space in CSIC more comfortable, most students sit on the floor. - Mount

Stools have been ordered for the counter area to add more seating (only 6-8 however).

Lounges – are either full, empty or dirty and smelly. Could we somehow use the funds to make these area’s better?

If we can make space a littler pretty it could help everyone feel better in the area. – Hicks

Pitch idea to the graduate students as what to do with the extra funds. – Foster

Grad students have lots of idea but they just don’t want to volunteer to take on a task– Ioana

We should make more of a connection to the students when giving them something. Could the students get the opportunity to choose the art for the rooms?

Holiday Event – should the students and faculty work together on this? We can give money to organize a food event around the holiday event. Bill Gasarch may want to help organize as well since he has done the Holiday Party the last two years.

Grad students don’t interact or want to do anything, but would like to have something. No incentive for a grad student to take time from research to do something. What about service work? Students should do some volunteering work, i.e. organize something, or work at an event, etc. for the department.

Staff usually ends up cleaning up or helping as students got tired of doing the events. Students got to the point where they would come to the event get food and leave, not really interact with others.

What about real espresso machine? Takes a while to make, people would stand around and talk.

Happy Hour on Friday’s? Grad Student and Faculty event

Microsoft - Monthly wine and cheese events on Thursday, 4:30/5:30 people come for a little bit of time (Hal)

Samir and Jeff will talk about dates.

Student body volunteering is the hardest part.

Graduate panels – 5 scheduled so far, but had some different volunteers

Create more opportunity for the students, they may help. The culture has to be changed in order for more participations.
Maybe have something in the welcome packets, best practices. Clean up about their selves, don’t make everyone sick, etc....

Samir next discussed a new option for graduate students – this program is being organized and run by Bobby Bhattacharjee and will launch this year.

**MPI software program** – new PHD program. Program scheduled to launch formally very soon. Exciting program, some issues to be worked out still. Specialization – for UG students Data Science or Cyber Security /we can have more programs if it goes well.

ACO Program (Algorithms, Combinatorics, and Optimization – GA Tech and CMU. The ACO Program curriculum provides required course work designed to ensure that students have a strong fundamental algorithmic base that serves to facilitate and enhance their research options. GA Tech has essentially eliminated the traditional walls that usually separate academic units since this program is open to students in three separate departments.

Something to think about here in CS at the graduate level - Samir

**Course Requirement Changes – Jeff Foster**

Course requirement changes in Grad Course, going to survey the faculty. Concentration that CS does on paper, but doesn’t actually offer. We need to do more work on finding out what it means to do specializations.

**Merit Review -**

Election are in May. Faculty feel it’s a black box process. Committee meets send recommendation to chair. Chair meets with UMIACS Director and then they next meet with the Dean to discuss the merit raises. Input used to be a faculty activity report. CV from faculty member with a summary from the last 12 months.

Samir inquired about how Journalism does their merit review:

Committee formed by dean. CV’s are given to committee and they rate individually returning their confidential ratings back to the Dean. The Dean then merges the recommendations. Each committee member gives a separate score on Teaching, Research and Service and gives those scores back to Dean. The scores are merged and that is how the merit is decided. Explicit breakup of the three components of Research, Service and Teaching (as %).

Should we force the committee to reveal how they make the recommendations? Faculty meeting next week to talk about merit review?

**Cheating in courses (Mike Hicks wanted to discuss):**

Students are posting projects on the internet. Current students can look up the projects and copy the work.
How do we deal with this? Big problem that department needs to look at.

Can a button on the submit server be added to run a report?

Committee will meet again in November. Stephanie will send out a doodle with dates. Next meeting should begin at 5pm to enable more people to attend.