The meeting was opened at noon by Larry Davis. Four members were absent.

The first topic presented was an update on the possible future use of room 1152 which is shared space among CS/UMIACS/ISR. Because graduate students in CS have been asking for an area to be designated as a Graduate Student Lounge, Larry had indicated that he would consider using that room for such a purpose assuming that the other units agreed that their graduate students could do so. Because the former CS Graduate Lounge was not maintained by the students, Larry emphasized that this lounge would need to be kept clean by forming a graduate cleaning committee and that the space would be patrolled to make sure that the area was being maintained. Larry has heard from Dr. Marcus who feels that using this space as a lounge would be a positive move for all of the graduate students in the AVW building but he wanted to speak to his own graduate students before making a final commitment. The room would require some new furniture and outfitting the kitchen with some new appliances. Eventually, there may also be changes made to the front of the room by adding glass windows so that it would have a more open feel and encourage students and faculty to use the area for socializing. A question was raised as to whether the room would be left open or locked. Larry responded that he would need to think about that but no decision has been reached. It is possible that all graduate students would be given keycard access.

UG student representatives asked about UG students using the lounge. Larry’s response was that the intent would be for use by graduate students as a lounge although if UG students went in to sit, he did not think anyone would ask them to leave. Currently the kitchen area has limited storage for keeping food and other items used by UG and graduate organizations and the hope that this could continue was mentioned. Larry said that would be ok but the intent is not to store food in that area. It should also be understood that there will be times when department functions will be held in that room since there is no other space available where receptions or other special functions can be held.

It will probably be early spring before a final decision is made and proposed changes are announced.

The second topic covered was an update on establishing an Advisory Board for the Department. The following people have been asked to participate and have agreed to do so:

1. Dr. Debasis Mitra (will be Chair of the Board)
2. Dr. Clint Kelley of SAIC
3. Dr. Al Gorin associated with NSA’s new Intelligent Systems Lab
4. Mr. Chris Foster who is with the State Economic Development Department
5. Dr. Ric Upton, a VP of BAE/Alphatek
A representative from AOL had been asked to recommend someone from that company but, thus far, there have not been any names submitted. Ashok has recommended a venture capitalist, Hamand Kamakia be asked to join the Board. We also need to add someone from the academic community, and ideally, a woman. Two names were mentioned, Margaret Wright and May Lou Soffa. Larry will follow-up with one of them regarding participation.

The role of the Board was then discussed with the following areas outlined:

1. The Board could be involved in the overview of our educational programs.
2. The Board could provide political clout, when necessary, regarding a variety of topics. This might help the Department with some campus issues.
3. The Board could help develop fundraising strategy and members could participate in fundraising activities if they so desired.
4. The Board members can spread the word about the Department and keep us in touch with external audiences.
5. The Board could recommend ways to improve the Department’s ranking.

It was further mentioned that the Board members should have terms of office. We anticipate that the first meeting will be held in February/March of 2005.

The third topic of discussion was whether Education and Department Council Meeting Minutes should be available on-line. The rationale for doing so is that topics have been discussed in the past but people forget that issues have already been reviewed and decisions made. It is hoped that by having minutes available on-line, that it will provide an easy mechanism for people to access past information. The committee members felt that the minutes should be placed on the Department’s in-house web site.

This discussion then focused on the availability of classrooms, how classes are scheduled, and the need for the Department to establish a teaching plan which can be put forward to campus explaining why the Department wants to teach classes in specified blocks of time. The class times and their frequency should be specified. There was also mention of the Department providing service courses. As the number of professors increases and there is a decrease in UG student numbers, more emphasis should be placed on offering service courses to UG students outside of the CS major.

Larry said it would be appropriate this spring to look at a course work plan and review it against available Department resources.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:55pm.