Department Council Meeting
Friday, March 1, 2013

The meeting was opened by Samir Khuller at 12:10pm.

The first topic discussed covered the forming of a joint CS/UMIACS Corporate Board and the Corporate Partner's Program. Eric Chapman began working with the department during fall 2012. He recommended that a Board be formed whose members would be from industry, government and possibly academia. The purpose of the board is to provide advice to the Department Chair/UMIACS Director on long-range strategic issues. Fund-raising, per se, is not a responsibility of the board members. The intent is to have 8 – 12 members with only one person having been asked thus far. A recommendation was made to invite Eric Horvitz to be a board member.

The purpose of the Corporate Partner's Program is to bring in funding to the department which can be used in a variety of ways. Corporations are interested in making contacts with faculty to discuss their research programs and determine if there are common areas of interest. Eric will be visiting VMware and Yahoo in the near future. Dante Consulting has met with Samir saying they have approximately a dozen former UMD CS graduates working for them and although they recruit at other schools, they are most pleased with students from this program.

Funds generated from the Corporate Program will be split between CS and UMIACS with some of the initial funding being put back into the program for future growth.

The Career Fair is handled by the undergraduate office and most recently was held at the Riggs Alumni Center with over 70 companies participating. The funds collected from the companies are used to off-set the cost of running the fair. Remaining funds are then reinvested in activities associated with the undergraduate program.

The department's 40th Anniversary will be celebrated in fall 2013. Sergey Brin has been invited. Some initial planning has occurred with possible event dates between Sept through mid-November being considered. The intent is that there would be a reception/dinner on a Friday evening with Saturday's focus being on topics of interest to alumni. State government, campus administrators, faculty, staff, and Ph.D. students would be invited as well as alumni who can be located. The campus has an alumni list with mail addresses which is reasonably reliable but email contact information cannot be used with confidence. The remaining issue to be resolved is whether the event should be used strictly as one of celebration or if it should be combined with fund-raising activities. Some members of the council felt that fund-raising should be involved at every opportunity.

There was mention that next year the department will under-go a department review. The first semester is spent in a self-evaluation process and the second in an external review. A member asked if a joint review with UMIACS could be scheduled due to the significant overlap between the two units. This will be a time-consuming process for all.

The college has asked department to submit a plan for a 1.5% budget reallocation to be effective FY14 (July 1, 2013). CS has submitted its plan which will be reviewed by the Dean and a decision made by May-June 2013. We hope that the full amount will not be taken from the department as initially requested. Because the department's state budget only consists of salary funds, there are few options when funds are reverted to the Dean's level. Some funds may be taken from the TA line which currently is underfunded and by moving additional staff salaries off budget lines. Salaries are then paid from DRIF money which is secured from overhead return rates or from remaining state funds due to professorial full sabbaticals, buy-outs and LWOPs in any given year. In the future, there could be consideration that only full sabbaticals will be considered by the Chair (saves on faculty salaries) and/or an increase to the professorial teaching workload so that more courses are covered without having to hire additional faculty.

For many years the department has told campus that a new building is needed for the computer science discipline to assist with recruiting the best professorial faculty, the need for additional socializing space for faculty and students, and lab space. It is unlikely without a very large donation, that the department will be considered for a new building anytime within the near future. Samir asked members what additional space is needed if a renovation became possible. Some members agreed it would be nice to have more socializing space available.

A renovation of the current department library is being considered. An estimate of $20K has been received for painting, carpeting, removal of the electrical race-track around the walls and glass doors. Additional electrical work would be needed as well as new furniture for the space which is to be used for a working area. The intention is that no food would be permitted in the area. Jenny Story will contact the library to see if someone can review the materials that are now in the library and either accept those materials into a campus collection or get rid of that which is available on-line. The department has very little space to which library materials could be moved where they could be accessed by faculty members who still find certain materials useful.

Samir adjourned the meeting at 1pm.