Monthly Meeting Minutes—November 6, 2014

The November monthly meeting of the Physics Graduate Student Council was held on November 6, 2014 at Panera in Harvard Square. Jae Hyeon Lee, Olivia Miller, Arthur Safira, and Anna Patej were in attendance. The present document summarizes items discussed, plans for the upcoming months, and division of responsibilities.

Summary

The Council began the meeting with the review of members’ activity during the month of October.

• Graduate student feedback session: Jae organized the session on October 28, 2014 at noon in J453. There were about 10 graduate students in attendance including three current Council members. Pizza lunch was provided for attendees.
  – Positive assessments:
    * The participation of the DGS, the chair, Jacob, Lisa, and older Council members made the feedback session more informative and meaningful.
    * Comments from the faculty were interesting and helpful for understanding faculty’s perspectives on issues discussed.
  – Suggestions/comments for the future:
    * To increase the attendance rate, inform students of how effective the Council can be in addressing various issues in the program.
    * The feedback session should be at least 1.5 hours long in order to be able to cover several issues.
    * Try to find a time that works for as many students as possible.
    * Provide food as incentives to increase the attendance rate.

• Arthur: Arthur will continue to work on the following tasks in November.
  1. Procure the approval of Prof. Morii for the creation of alumni directory.
  2. Contact the person who is in charge of deciding gym facility hours during the summer season.

• Olivia: Began planning for the puppet show to be held in February. Sent out an e-mail to all G2’s asking students to volunteer to lead. She will continue to organize the event.

• Victor: Officially stepped down from his position. He will write a brief report on his work on the free coffee project.
• Jae: Organized the graduate student feedback session. He also polished and distributed the summary report of the survey results.

Below are items that were discussed at the meeting.

• Couch for the G1 area: A project to place a couch in the G1 area. Arthur will work with Julian Kate-Harbeck, G1, to complete the project.

• Meeting with older Council members: In November, Jae will organize a meeting with former Council members to compile a comprehensive list of their accomplishments as well as to benefit from their perspectives on various issues.

• Exit survey, alumni survey, letter to alumni: To be drafted after the presentation at the faculty meeting.

• New seminar: Anna Patej, a new Council member, proposed a new seminar for the program. The proposed seminar will be modeled after a popular seminar at CfA. Each seminar will consist of three to four talks, approximately 15 mins each, given by graduate students, senior undergraduate students, and faculty. The seminar will serve various purposes including giving broader exposure to beginning students and giving faculty looking for students an opportunity to present their research. Free lunch will be provided at the seminar.

• Setting agenda for the Council: After the analysis of the surveys, the Council decided to focus on the following set of issues in the coming few months. The discussions of the Council on each subject will be summarized and published on the Council’s website as “progress reports” after discussing them with Lisa, Jacob, and the DGS.
  – Research for beginning students
  – Mental health issue
  – Professional development
  – Respect among community members

• Presentation at the faculty meeting: The Council decided that Jae will give the presentation at the faculty meeting. Olivia and Arthur will send Jae any materials to be included in the presentation by November 20th. More specifically, Arthur will prepare material on the topic of professional development/internship opportunities for graduate students and Olivia will contribute material on the topic of “respects among community members”.

  Jae will finish preparing the initial draft of the presentation by November 25, 2014. Afterwards, he will schedule a meeting with Jacob, Lisa, and the DGS for a practice run, where other Council members will also be invited to provide feedback.

Plains and division of responsibilities

Below is the summary of the plans and division of responsibilities within the Council until the next monthly meeting.

• Shared tasks:
1. Attend the meeting with former Council members.
2. Attend Jae’s practice run for the presentation at the faculty meeting and provide feedback.

- Arthur:
  2. Work with Julian, G1, on the project of getting a couch for G1 area.
  3. Procure the approval of Prof. Morii for the creation of alumni directory.
  4. Contact the person who is in charge of deciding gym facility hours during the summer season.

- Olivia:
  2. Continue planning/organizing for the puppet show event to be held in February.
  3. Begin planning for stress reduction events.

- Nick:
  1. Continue organizing social hour.
  2. Update the Council with the progress of his projects and tasks.

- Anna Patej:
  1. Meet with Jacob to discuss her ideas on the new, proposed seminar.

- Joe Olson:
  1. Understand when and how to organize open houses for beginning students.

- Jae:
  1. Organize the meeting with former Council members.
  2. Begin planning for the information session on student mental health issues.
  3. Prepare the faculty meeting presentation.
  4. Write progress reports on the issues the Council prioritized.

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1Though Joe was not present at the monthly meeting, he joined the Council on November 7, 2014 and is working on organizing open houses for beginning students. The following has been included for institutional memory purpose.