EECS GRADUATE STUDENT TOWN HALLS – Action Items (Fall 2013)
EE – October 14, 2013; CS – October 21, 2013

Following is a list of issues that were discussed at the Fall 2013 Town Hall, organized by topic area. Some of the items already had guidelines in place that just needed resurfacing and clarification, whereas others have action items that were assigned to specific members of the EECS community. The process will be ongoing. Updates, suggestions, and an archive of the documents distributed at the Town Hall can be found here, http://www.eecs.berkeley.edu/Students/TownHall/.

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| DIVERSITY  | There is a lack of diversity in ethnicity and gender among the student population. | ● Have students reach out to their undergraduate institutions or other organizations to promote the department.  
● Tiffany can provide recruitment materials to interested students.  
● When students attend a conference, they can promote the program with their peers.  
● The Graduate Admissions team can develop a recruitment letter template and share with the students, who can then send it to their peers.  
● Adopt other sister schools.  
● Chairs and Head Graduate Advisors can visit additional schools that have historically had large numbers of underrepresented minorities.  
● Have a conference similar to MIT’s “Rising Stars” at Berkeley  
● Keep track of EDGE conference participants  
● Increase undergrad to grad pipeline | 1) Students that are interested in diversity issues can contact the Diversity and Achievement Coordinator, Tiffany Reardon, (treardon@berkeley.edu) to participate in recruitment efforts.  
2) Asso. Chair King-Liu and EE Head Graduate Advisor Prof. Arcak will visit schools in CA that historically have large numbers of underrepresented minorities (e.g., UCR, Cal-Poly, CSU-SLO) to encourage qualified students to apply.  
3) Working with the EDGE conference facilitators and Tiffany, the faculty will actively select qualified applicants to participate in the event.  
4) The Graduate Admissions team to draft a recruitment letter to be shared with the students.  
5) Graduate students interested in diversity should contact Tiffany or the Admissions Coordinators. | Chair Culler  
Asso. Chair King-Liu  
Prof. Arcak  
Prof. Arias  
Prof. Wawrzynek  
Prof. Canny  
Prof. Papadimitriou  
Tiffany Reardon  
Patrick Hernan  
Marta Bebok  
Jennifer Gardner  
Shirley Salanio  
Graduate Students | 1) Ongoing  
2) Ongoing  
3) Done  
4) Done  
5) Ongoing |
## DIVERSITY

**Issue:** There is a lack of diversity in ethnicity and gender among the EECS faculty.

**Suggestions:**
- Can the students be informed of what specific actions the department is doing to recruit more diverse faculty?
- Can the chairs give a “State of the Department” talk or send an email to inform the community of the efforts that are being done to increase faculty? (perhaps during Orientation)
- Chair Culler to invite an outside speaker to address the underlining biases of hiring
- Have students that are involved in the diversity training also participate in the faculty hiring

**Action Item(s):**
- Asso. Chair King-Liu has been working on this issue quite vigorously. A challenge with recruiting more diverse faculty is that there is not a large pool of applicants. Some ongoing action items include:
  1. Actively identifying diverse, qualified prospective faculty candidate and inviting them to Cal to give seminars.
  2. Attending the MIT “Rising Stars” workshop for women interested in careers in academia (Asso. Chair King-Liu will be serving on a panel).
  3. Once a semester, the Chairs to draft a “State of the Department” email/newsletter.
  4. Students participating in faculty candidate interviews should participate in diversity training along with the students on the graduate admissions committee.

**Person(s) Responsible:** Chair Culler
- Asso. Chair King-Liu
- Prof. Zakhor
- Prof. Chang-Hasnain

**Status:**
- 1) Ongoing
- 2) Done
- 3) Ongoing
- 4) Pending

## FACILITIES

**Issue:** Is there an online site where all the breakout rooms can be listed?

**Suggestions:** Add a list of the breakout rooms somewhere on the website.

**Action Item(s):**
- Mark Davis to add a list of the breakout rooms on the Building and Maintenance website.
- Mark Davis to request the rooms be added to the bcal system.
- Staff to edit the handbook to include a list of breakout rooms.

**Person(s) Responsible:** Mark Davis
- Xuan Quach
- Shirley Salanio

**Status:**
- 1) Pending
- 2) Pending
- 3) Done
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| FACILITIES | There is inequity in the lab spaces; some spaces are nicely renovated and others are not. | Students can encourage their faculty advisors to share in research space renovations.                                                        | 1) The EECS department to share cost of space renovations.  
2) GSAs to make a list of labs that need renovation.  
3) GSA to draft email for students to have a discussion with their advisors about encouraging them to help pay for renovations. | Chair Culler  
Asso. Chair King-Liu GSAs | 1) Ongoing  
2) Pending  
3) Pending |
| FACILITIES | Elevators in Cory not working.                                          | Can the department give a status update on the elevators in Cory?                                                                           | Asso. Chair has raised funds to upgrade the elevator and will work with the PPCS (Physical Plant Campus Services) to make this a higher priority. The work is expected to be completed by Summer 2014. | Asso. Chair King-Liu | Pending |
| FACILITIES | The second floor mezzanine in Cory has had a lot of thefts.            | Can that area be card-key only access?                                                                                                       | Mark Davis to have that area card-key only accessible. Also, the stairwell to that entrance has been locked. A phone outside the entrance to be added for people to contact those in the card-key access. | Mark Davis | Done |
| FACILITIES | Students are worried about the support for trans/gender non-conforming students and partners | Can the department have a gender neutral bathroom?  
*Given recent contract negotiations with the campus unions, the issue of unisex bathrooms may have a standard resolution. Pending the decision on the resolution, the Facilities team will need to follow up. | 1) The Facilities team to look into the policies on bathrooms in buildings, and what options we may have to accommodate transgender students.  
2) Unisex bathroom to be included in renovation of Cory Hall first floor bathrooms. | Scott McNally  
Mark Davis | 1) Done  
2) Ongoing |
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<td>FACILITIES</td>
<td>The third floor women’s bathroom’s sign indicates “Women Students” but the men’s bathroom only states “Men”.</td>
<td>To instill equity, can the sign be changed just to “Women”.</td>
<td>Have the third floor women’s bathroom changed.</td>
<td>Asso. Chair King-Liu</td>
<td>Done</td>
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<td>FACILITIES</td>
<td>Card key access to all research lab areas has been problematic because of missing items and noisy events.</td>
<td>1) GSAs to draft a message to student body to inform them that refreshments are funded by the research labs and not the department. Therefore, the students using the labs should be respectful of the research space and usage policy. 2) Research centers to post signage of space usage policies so that it is clear to all visitors.</td>
<td>GSAs Research Center Directors</td>
<td></td>
<td>1) Ongoing 2) Ongoing</td>
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| FACULTY-STUDENT  | Students would like more collegial events and opportunities to interact with faculty.                                                                                                                  | • Have faculty driven talks  
• Students join a faculty lunch in the Spring (similar to the Town Hall) to discuss a topic (such as strategizing for Visit Days)  
• Have talks by research areas  
• No events on Friday afternoons                                                                 | 1) Students try not to schedule events on Friday afternoons.  
2) Hold at least one faculty/grad student lunch each semester, either divisional or joint.  
3) Asso. Chair to investigate the possibility of a coffee shop in the Cory Hall second floor to facilitate social interaction. | Chair Culler Asso. Chair King-Liu | 1) Pending 2) Ongoing 3) Ongoing |
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| FACULTY-STUDENT INTERACTION   | Could the department establish a list of advisors (someone who is not the student’s research advisor) to ask questions to that may help, particularly in mentoring or career advising? | ● Students can informally ask faculty teaching a course that they are a GSI to mentor them.  
● The Graduate Student Advisors to serve as an intermediary and arrange meetings with faculty.  
● Students can contact their area coordinator for some guidance  
● Use the faculty’s office hours as a means to have more personal meetings with the faculty.  
● EE students suggest having an email invitation or other formal method from the department to see a particular faculty. | 1) Faculty to update and keep to their office hours.  
2) Faculty should also be frank about their availability with students.  
3) Have peer advisors (from Visit Days) recommend faculty members to serve as "secondary mentors" for their incoming students. | Faculty  
CSGSA  
EEGSA | 1) Ongoing  
2) Ongoing  
3) Ongoing |
| GSI                           | Hiring appointments are sent too late.                                 | Is it possible to have them decided earlier? And can students be made aware of how the assignments are done?  
● Prof. Sahai to work with Patrick Hernan to try and have a more expedient hiring process.  
● Prof. Sahai to summarize the hiring process and Shirley will post on the Graduate Student Services website. |                                                                                                                                         | Prof. Sahai  
Prof. Ayazifar  
Patrick Hernan  
Shirley Salanio | Pending                        |
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| GSI      | Students are teaching more than their appointed times of 10 or 20 hours. | • Increase the number of GSIs per section  
• Have a concrete number of GSIs per student taking the course.  
• Students should keep a log of hours they are working  
• Make it 15 hour GSI appointments | 1. The administration to share with the students the formula calculations of students per class.  
2. Re-evaluate the GSI calculations and the needs of the department.  
3. GSAs to maintain a log of hours that are worked. | Chair Culler  
Asso. Chair King-Liu  
Prof. Wawrzynek  
Prof. Arcak  
Prof. Hilfinger  
Prof. Sahai  
Prof. Ayazifar  
Patrick Hernan  
Marta Bebok  
Shirley Salanio  
GSAs | 1. Pending  
2. Pending  
3. Pending |
| GSI      | Students are entitled to a supplement, but several are still not receiving it. | The supplement should be automatically generated. | The Director of the Center for Student Affairs will work with CSS Team 2 to review the feasibility of this request. Unfortunately, given the large number of students, the numerous accounts that each student is funded through, as well as staffing and technological constraints this may not be possible to accomplish in a timely fashion at the start of each semester. | Susanne Kauer  
CSS Team 2 | Pending |
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| GSI      | Many students do not have formal training in teaching and the 301/375 courses are not effective. Also, some students want to teach, others don’t. Some want the course to be less work, some more. | • Is there an alternative to the course? Intense or minimal?  
• Can the department hire someone with more expertise in teaching and EE?  
• Can we work with the GSI Teaching and Learning Resource Center in improving the course?  
• Can we encourage students to take the course before they become a GSI?  
• Have “developmental GSIs” help to design the course – they can get credit for GSI requirement  
Suggestions specific to the course:  
● Keep a GSI journal with concerns that can then be shared with the class and instructor of 375; come up with strategies as a group  
● Do a mock course in 375  
● Have more in class teaching exercises  
● Faculty teaching 375 should visit at least one of the GSIs’ sections with their students  
● Have a GSI bootcamp before the course, and the actual class meetings will be more of a check-in (EE) | The faculty teaching 375, the Head Graduate Advisors, and the Chairs of GSI Hiring to look into the feasibility of offering a new type of course, or form a committee to improve the course. | Prof. Wawrzynek  
Prof. Arcak  
Prof. Hilfinger  
Prof. Sahai  
Prof. Ayazifar  
Prof. Fearing  
Prof. Rao  
Patrick Hernan  
Marta Bebok  
Shirley Salanio | Ongoing |
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| Prelim   | CS Students would like to get courses that are relevant to them | • Have “big ideas” courses  
• What is the mission statement of these requirements - have a common base knowledge in any area for collaboration  
• Offer a required seminar course to provide an overview of all areas  
• More course options.  
• Systems does not include networking, etc.  
• Add more courses or add a seminar breadth course? Perhaps add 290s to the list?  
• Design a course to teach what you think others should know about your area in 5 chunks instead of 15 weeks of one area  
• Courses should be focused on research methods of that area  
• Have a student representative participate in the Prelim/Grad Study Review meetings  
• Form a subcommittee of faculty and students to focus just on discussing the prelim breadth courses (CS) | 1. Review prelim breadth requirements in light of faculty and student concerns and consider alternatives to the current list  
2. Create a mission statement of the prelim breadth requirements  
3. Chair Culler to ask Prof. Paxson how he would like to manage the task force on focusing just on the prelim breadth courses  
4. Send notes of discussion topics of Town Hall to Prof. Paxson | Chair Culler  
Prof. Asanovic  
Prof. Paxson  
Prof. Malik  
Prof. Sinclair  
Xuan Quach  
Shirley Salanio | 1. Ongoing  
2. Pending  
3. Pending  
4. Done |

Status as of November 12, 2013

*Answers to additional topics that were not directly discussed at the Town Hall can be found in the Pre-Asked Questions document.*