

PMA Undergraduate Student Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

4th June 2020

In attendance:

- **Physics:** Morgaine Mandigo-Stoba, August Chen
- **Mathematics:** Arushi Gupta, Aru Mukherjea, Allison Wang, Michael Rupprecht
- Nam Ung, Freddy Mora

Structure of SAB for next year

- SAB members won't carry over to next year, there will be a separate sign-up (similar to how Graduate SAB is organised)

Newly declared UGs

- Event should be held after Caltech has made its Fall Term decision, but not too close to a SURF deadline
- Event format considerations
 - Casual conversation should happen at some point so that it's easier to connect to people
 - Ensure upperclassmen are present by asking people beforehand to commit to coming
 - would also be good to get a group of people who say they'll come to ensure upperclassmen are there
 - Better to reach out to graduating seniors before they graduate
 - Send out a form for PMA students/SAB members to volunteer to help run the event
 - If the event will include Astronomy freshmen, at least one student from the Ay major should be present
- Communicating with students now
 - Email with information about who EOs and ORs are, and their roles/relevance to UG students
 - More casual forums would also be good
 - Caltech Physics Slack exists - similar platforms could be created for other departments

Preparing for possible online fall term

- Ensuring access to technology
 - Some programs exist, such as the library loaning out iPads
 - CTLO is chairing an institute-wide teaching group
 - Some summer programs/companies pay for better internet for employees - could Caltech do this?
 - Deans asked people to go to them if they're having such issues but unsure if there's a more formal method
 - Ensuring classes provide good lecture notes/lecture recordings
- Other considerations
 - Office hours are more challenging because students can't show their work to a TA without also showing it to all other students present
 - CS classes have an OH queue - creates more work for the TA but fixes this issue
 - Benefits of submitting work via email vs Gradescope, particularly for smaller classes

Status check on action items discussed throughout the year

- Achievements
 - Established SAB and committees; Set ground rules; Created website with roster, minutes, and feedback forms; Met with Division Chair, Option Reps, EOs; Updated PMA website to fix broken links, limited information on research areas of faculty, etc
- Pending action items
 - Mission statement
 - Getting research area information from all PMA faculty
 - Resources for 4-year plans for students
 - TA trainings (TIX, BOC, option-specific)
 - Communicating with newly declared students
 - Polling faculty about research opportunities
- Next year's SAB should think about its organisation, particularly with respect to committees

Other comments/concerns

- PMA merchandise