

# **PMA Grad Student Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

December 6, 2018

## **Committee members in attendance**

Physics: Alex Dalzell, Eric Morgan, Matt Orr, Ashay Patel, Rajashik Tarafder, Yanjun Xu

Math: Angus Gruen, Tamir Hemo, Neeraka Kulkarni, Luciana Xiao

Astrophysics: Dillon Dong, Anna Ho

## **Committee members not in attendance**

Physics: Shreya Anand

Math: Forte Shinko

Astrophysics: Mia de los Reyes

Meeting led by Sofie Leon. Mika Walton also in attendance.

## **Introduction - Sofie**

This is the first meeting of the PMA Grad Student Advisory Board (SAB) for the 2018-2019 academic year. The purpose of the student advisory board is to give graduate a clear channel to have their voice heard in the division. The committee will meet approximately every 4-6 weeks to discuss issues relevant to the student experience and ideas for new or improved programming in the division. The committee will meet with the division chair 1-2 times per year.

## **Highlights of outcomes from last year's SAB - Sofie**

- Piloted candidacy info session in physics and math, to continue in 2018-2019
- Introduced a few events including
  - Diverse careers panel with PMA PhD alumni
  - PMA Talk Swap
- Input on prospective visits
- Input on division-student communication (website, newsletter, etc)
- Help with PMA NASA/NSF Title IX Audit visit

## **Goals for the Winter-Summer 2019 – proposed by Sofie**

- 2 alumni/professional development events (e.g. careers panel, CV/resume or personal website workshop)
- 2 division wide social events (e.g. talk swap, weekend trip)
- Continue candidacy into sessions and expand to astrophysics
- Improve website for current student audience and forums for overall student communication

## **Open discussion on ideas for programming**

- Student-faculty relations
  - Resources for students related to advisor issues
  - Introduce an event on professional interaction with advisor, how to deal with issues that come up
- Role of the Thesis Advisory Committee

# PMA Grad Student Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

December 6, 2018

- Questions about the role of the committee, how do students interact, what is the committee supposed to do?
  - Address these through an event? Or email/website
- Division-wide town hall
  - In collaboration with the GSC, several members of the SAB are also GSC members
  - Townhall tentatively scheduled for January 22<sup>nd</sup> with pre-survey to be issued to all PMA grad students before winter break
  - Details to come from GSC/SAB members
- Mentorship programs
  - Bring back peer mentorship program in physics and math, already exists in astro
  - Start with an event/mixer like was done in 2016, mentors/mentees submit their preferences after the event, pairing is sent via email
  - Make sure there is a clear way to switch mentor/mentee later in the year
  - Especially important for incoming G1s, could make this part of orientation week
- Prospective visits
  - Differing opinions on the value of student panels vs. 1:1 discussion with current students
  - Caltech does not have a presence on sites like gradschoolshopper.com, which may be more heavily used by international applicants
  - Website is severely lacking admissions information, difficult to navigate
  - Research categories are buried and difficult for students to identify the type of work done at Caltech and by which professors
  - Add survey for students who accept Caltech's offer for feedback on the prospective visit

## Next steps

- PMA Town Hall coming in January, stay tuned for details and survey from GSC/SAB members
- Prioritize goals and come up with a proposed programming for 2018-19, Sofie to lead with input from SAB via email
- Distribute plan to PMA grads via email and website