PMA Undergraduate Student Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
30th April 2020

In attendance:
- **Physics:** Morgaine Mandigo-Stoba, Danny Wendt, August Chen, Alexandra Klipfel
- **Mathematics:** Arushi Gupta, Aru Mukherjea, Allison Wang
- Nam Ung, Freddy Mora

Online learning
- Problems
  - Professors unaware of how to use (e.g.) Zoom
  - Difficulty in remote collaboration
- Benefits
  - Course materials are more accessible, such as lectures being recorded and lectures notes being posted
  - Online Q&A and Gradescope have been useful
- Ideas
  - Carnegie Mellon has created a Piazza whose admins are their equivalent of Freddy and Nam, which could be useful at Caltech
  - In general, more avenues for feedback would be beneficial

SURFs (Updates with the shift to online)
- PMA likely has a higher proportion of SURFs that can be carried out remotely
- International students
  - Caltech international students can still take projects under SURF, but students attending universities internationally cannot
- Ways to help students whose SURFs couldn't be virtual
  - Professors with opportunities that students now aren't able to accept can make those available to Caltech students who are without summer plans
  - Putting current students in touch with alumni who might have opportunities, possibly through an online forum
  - Freddy and Nam: PMA Division is working with the SFP office on this - these ideas can be passed on

Online social event for new PMA freshmen
- Ideas
  - Continue the annual Math Tea when freshmen declare their majors
  - Graduate students put together a "Talk Swap" event where people volunteer to present each other's research slides, which we can also do
  - It's helpful for freshmen to have a welcome event where they can meet upperclassmen and professors
- Possible formats
  - Two separate calls - one with only students, one with students and professors, or professors only present for part of the call
  - Panel of current students and professors
  - Current students each create their own Zoom link
  - Breakout rooms within a zoom call

- ○ Slack or Discord
- ○ EOs/option reps do introductions
- ○ One all-PMA event, or separate events for each option?
- ○ A schedule of events, and students can drop into whichever is relevant to/suits them
- Timing
  - ○ All freshmen should have declared by registration, so the event can be held soon afterwards
  - ○ It would be helpful for the event to run before registration to aid in choosing classes
  - ○ Students-only meeting should happen after the meeting with professors, so that professors don't scare students with unrealistic expectations

Committee Updates
- Clarification on organisation of committees - the goal is for people to come to committees with problems or ideas, which are then taken to the board to be carried out

Other concerns
- Digital divide - is anyone disadvantaged by lack of access to technology, and how do we mitigate this?
- How do we start talking about research/other opportunities for next summer?

Action items
- Respond to remote learning surveys as more information would be helpful when planning for the possibility of a remote fall term
- Set up committee of students to organise a welcome event