Minutes
10/7/19

1. Introductions completed; representatives from Black Students in CS, CSLOL, COMP105, WiCS, COMP11, COMP15, etc.

2. Kathleen introduced the CS Student Council; exists to provide the visibility we have (as course/group representatives / members at large) to the faculty / staff. General plan for meeting:
   a. Department updates
   b. Student council projects?
      i. WiCS mentorship/mentee program
      ii. Bias/inclusivity training
   c. Writing thank you notes to the donors who supported the department
   d. Additional items

3. Chair Updates
   a. Megan Monaghan out on medical leave; hoping for a speedy recovery, though we’ve been left without an advising specialist
   b. Tara now working full-time in Dowling; went from 1.5 advising specialists to effectively 0; approval to hire new people, but advising period is rapidly approaching & that likely won’t be done on time. Solutions:
      i. Potential peer/group advising (pulled from TAs?)
      ii. Engineering Ambassadors
      iii. CSX advising program(s)
      iv. *Immediately Actionable*: Produce flyers / resources to point people towards the written guides that exist on the CS website
   c. Need a new office administrator to take the place of Beth (who is now playing the same role as Megan [advising specialist but for graduate/post-bac students]
   d. The construction has been disruptive, but there is a system; undergraduates should be able to get all the resources they need in Halligan (but at specific/fixed times.) The only time students should have to struggle to get the help they need is for special cases (e.g. research work)
      i. Scheduled to be completed Spring 2021
   e. New Faculty Members:
      i. Abani Patra - Running the DISC program
      ii. Raja Sambasivan - Networks Programming
      iii. Elaine Short - HRI, located in 574 Boston Ave
      iv. Marty Allen - Teaching track, associate prof., inaugural director of online MS/post-bac program
      v. Richard Townsend - PhD at Columbia, teaching 11 & 40 with Megan Monroe
   f. New Staff:
      i. Beth - Gone from office administrator to graduate program coordinator
ii. Sandie - Working as a temp since Megan is out on leave
iii. We should help out staff whenever/however we can!

4. Student Council Projects:
   a. TA Centralization / Subcommittee (For making uniform the ways in which TAs get feedback, work with Mark Sheldon (TA liaison), get hired, etc)

   *Action Required*: Get the word out to teaching staff, professors, students about Mark as the go-to person for TA issues. Best practice: Let Mark set the terms by which he introduces himself to the community at large. Also consider Megan Monroe as the “backup person” for issues directly related to Mark / Mark’s courses / Mark’s staff / etc

Making applications / timekeeping transparent and better

Develop a hiring process that doesn’t change from semester to semester

COMP11 is really hard to get right

*TA Committee*: 11 TFs, Caroline (Chair), Chris, Ray, and we should get a COMP40 person. We can work independently & report back at the next student council meeting

b. *Spring Action*: Commencement Speaker Selection - videos? Flyers?

c. Creating more opportunities for undergraduate research; matchmaking between PhD students / undergraduates, faculty / undergraduates, etc

   Potential actionable: Create a guide / matchmaking service for undergraduates who are interested in pursuing research

*Research Matchmaking Committee*: David, Victor (Chair), Kate

d. Interfacing with alumni, improving relationships between current students and alumni (talk with EAB / Tufts Alumni Association folks)

5. Thank You Notes for Donors to Department / GHC Crowdsourcing
   a. Grace Hopper: The people who attended could write meaningful/personal notes to the donors. *Action*: Get a list of attendees from Donna

b. Summer donors: ??? Unresolved.

6. Graduate Student Complaints
   a. 105 is a lot of work; should be 6 credits, or much less work. The new change to core competencies is a good step, but certainly frustrating to current graduate students in the course

b. What to do about the tooling; Gradescope, Canvas, Piazza, and so on. Good news: Online programs will force something to be standardized, and this will likely trickle down to the on-the-ground versions.
c. Current advising system is no good; creating the position of graduate program coordinator (i.e. Beth) should make this simpler and clearer, as hiring Megan Monaghan made the process better for undergraduates.
d. *Action*: TA Committee should address the compensation (in credits / hourly pay) for Masters students who are (or want to be) TAs; currently no opportunity to receive credit / higher pay.
e. *Action*: Need to address the attention given to part-time students during orientation for graduate students (Shannon knows a lot about this). In particular, considerations for post-bac students with respect to resources (e.g. career information normally targeted at undergraduates that should certainly also be provided to post-bacs).

7. Other Items
   a. Addressing the lack of UNIX experience / lack of resources provided to fill in those gaps. Being partially addressed by Megan Monroe in COMP11.

   *Action*: TA Committee should address the need for general UNIX stuff; assessing what can be done to help with it by TAs. Perhaps some workshops on “what you need to know to do this program effectively/efficiently.”

   b. *Action*: TA Committee should address TAs being compensated fairly (particularly TFs who should be compensated similarly to ARC head tutors).

   c. COMP11 in particular: Very stressful office hours; not a good work environment for either students or the TAs. Space issues in the current office hours setup are particularly egregious. *Action*: TA Committee can think about how to address some of these problems at the level of “what do we want CS TAs to be all about.”

   d. JumboCode scaling issues: ~160 applications, can only support about 40% of those. How to make JumboCode (or some other organization, new or otherwise) be accessible to more people?