



	<p>3) It is also important to clearly let students know what is required in graduate school, i.e. that it will mean long hours in the laboratory and is not a continuation of their undergraduate studies, so that the graduate students know what to expect. This will be brought up at the information meeting for new graduate students starting Fall of 2006 and starting in the Spring of 2007 students will specifically be informed about this during the graduate recruiting process.</p>	<p>Fall 2006 – Spring 2007</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>These are our strategies to assure that we are admitting the right applicants once they have applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High standards of acceptance. Standards will only be relaxed under special circumstances.</li> <li>• When in doubt over an applicant, the referee (who wrote recommendation letters) will be contacted by phone.</li> <li>• Provide a good hosting program.</li> </ul> <p>A suggested comment for improvement is to keep records of the recommendation letters and how the recommendation letters correlate with each student's performance in the program. For future reference we will then know whether the recommendation letters from certain individuals reflect the students' likelihood for success in graduate school. This is particularly important for international students, where the university standards may be unknown. The following activities will be implemented beginning Spring/Summer 2006:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We will generate a database with information about the students and the people who wrote their recommendation letters.</li> <li>2. In the Fall 2006 and Spring 2007, we will then implement the use of this database during our graduate recruiting process.</li> </ol>	<p>Spring /Summer 2006</p> <p>Fall 2006 &amp; Spring 2007</p>

3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="444 268 1149 411">1. Exit interviews with our Ph.D. students, which can help to identify weaknesses and strengths of the department started in the with our PhD students started Fall 2005</li> <li data-bbox="444 453 1149 1104">2. Since publications are a measure of the productivity of students and faculty, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of publishing articles. High quality publications are very important, since it could increase the department's ranking, which in turn can increase the number of student applications as well as increasing the quality of the applying students. A suggestion is to implement a reward to faculty for high quality publications. To implement this reward, we will generate a list of high-quality, high impact, journals within certain fields and this "normalized" impact factor will be added to the annual faculty activities report. This annual faculty activities report is the basis on which merit raises are assigned. The list of high-impact journals will be completed in Spring 2006 and implemented in the annual faculty activities report during Summer 2006.</li> <li data-bbox="444 1146 1149 1507">3. Another activity that can improve the productive working relationship between faculty and students is for students to give presentations at national and international conferences. A suggestion is to implement an award at the GRACE symposium for the best presentation that can be used towards travel to a conference. At next year's GRACE symposium (Spring 2007) there will be an award (\$400) for the best presentation and \$200 for the second best presentation.</li> <li data-bbox="444 1549 1149 1873">4. It is also important to increase the standard of work ethic in the department. If students see that other groups work very hard, it will stimulate them to work harder, and they will be more productive. Currently, during their initial information session as new graduate students, we encourage our graduate students to work hard. However, to bring visibility to successful and productive graduate students, we will announce winners of awards before our weekly</li> </ol>	<p data-bbox="1182 268 1414 336">Fall 2005 thru the future</p> <p data-bbox="1182 453 1365 520">Spring 2006-Summer 2006</p> <p data-bbox="1182 1146 1341 1180">Spring 2007</p> <p data-bbox="1182 1549 1341 1583">Spring 2006</p>

	<p>seminars, as well as on the bulletin board in the hallway.</p> <p>5. Another suggestion is to add a minimum requirement of one peer-reviewed paper published to our Graduate Program Requirements, i.e. a student must have <u>at least</u> one peer-reviewed paper published before they can graduate with a PhD. This suggestion will be brought to the faculty for a vote in the Spring of 2006. If passed by the faculty, it will be implemented in the Fall of 2006.</p>	<p>Spring 2006 – Fall 2006</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>1. Since our number of female graduate students is much lower than our male graduate students, a mentoring program has been initiated for our female graduate students. The purpose of the mentoring program is to provide both personal and professional support for our female graduate students. We will continue with this mentoring program and perhaps add more activities in the fall of 2006.</p> <p>2. We are planning on adding questions to the exit interviews that can help us in evaluating and improving the social climate for our graduate students. One question that was implemented in the Fall of 2005 is: “How is the social climate in the department between students as well as between students and faculty”. In the Spring of 2006 the following question will be added to the exit survey: “What would you change to improve the social climate?”</p> <p>3. Furthermore, based on the suggestions for improvements from our graduate students we have include the following activities in our efforts to improve social support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher faculty attendance at GRACE events.</li> <li>• Starting Spring 2006 we will encourage GRACE to initiate a periodic, on-campus, Friday get-together after work to which faculty will be encouraged to attend.</li> <li>• Once a semester or once a year have mixed group dinners. This would improve</li> </ul>	<p>Fall 2006</p> <p>Spring 2006</p> <p>Spring 2007 – Spring 2007</p>

	<p>relationships between groups and also between students/advisors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Starting Spring 2007 we will have a banquet after the GRACE symposium to which all the graduate students and the entire faculty are invited. At this banquet the winners of the “best presentation” awards will be announced.</li></ul>	
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