



Graduate Association of Mechanical Engineers Annual Report 2006-2007

Officers:

President: Anjuli Appapillai

Vice President: Anurag Baipayee

Secretary: Priam Pillai

Treasurer: Allison Beese

Social Chairs: Barbara Botros & Vikas Srivastava

Publications Chair: Amy Banzaert

Orientation Chair: Erica Ueda & Carlos Castro

Coffee Chairs: Eerik Hantsoo

Webmaster: Tony Yu

GSC Representatives:

Chris Bae

David Hennann

Josh Taylor

Cherry Wan

Austin Minnich

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

December 17, 2007

Executive Summary:

The following report outlines the activities and initiatives undertaken by the MIT Graduate Association of Mechanical Engineering (GAME) from Spring 2006 through Summer 2007. GAME has organized many activities that increase interaction between graduate student and faculty in both academic and social environments.

This year GAME continued with its traditional coffee hours, happy hours, and lunchtime seminars with the same success as before. Our wine and cheese social, winter ball, quals info-session were also well received. We also initiated many new measures including a survey about what the graduate community would like from GAME during the upcoming year. We have also brought in industry sponsorship into our events which was reflected in the dinner hosted by Ethicon Endo-Surgery. We hope to continue the traditions that GAME has started within the department as well as start many more events during the upcoming year.

Introduction:

The Graduate Association of Mechanical Engineering (GAME) represents the graduate students within the Mechanical Engineering Department at MIT. The overall goal of GAME is to strengthen the faculty-student relationship and encourage interaction among graduate students within the department. We do this through weekly and monthly events such as weekly coffee hours, biweekly lunch seminars and monthly happy hours.

Game Activities

Coffee Hour

Each Friday morning in the Miller Room, GAME hosts grad students, staff, and faculty of the Mechanical Engineering department for its weekly Coffee Hour. Coffee Hour features coffee, tea, donuts, and bagels – as well as an opportunity for socializing among people from all across the Mechanical Engineering Department. Typically, the event draws 30-50 people each week. GAME Coffee Hour is funded by the Mechanical Engineering Department and the GSC Funding Board.



GAME Happy Hours

Our monthly happy hour attracts a large gathering of graduate students who are looking for a way to unwind after a long week. Hosted at the Thirsty Ear Pub in Ashdown, this event brings together students from various labs to vent about their classes, work and life. But mainly, it's a time to get together, enjoy some free pizza and drinks, and have a good time. The socials are one of the most well attended events hosted by GAME, and continue to be a successful way to help students take a break and relax!



Lunch Time Seminars

Continuing previous years' tradition, the Graduate Association of Mechanical Engineers witnessed another successful semester of their lunch seminars. A total of 6 lunch seminars were hosted that featured research presentations by 12 mechanical engineering graduate students. The presentations covered a wide variety of topics from molecular dynamics of heat conduction to building prototypes of water strider robots. The attendance at the seminars varied throughout the semester with a peak attendance of 42 and an average of 30. Free pizza and drinks were provided to all attendees. Students used the seminars as practice presentations for conferences, thesis defenses, and qualifying examinations.

Game Events

Orientation Week, Sept 2006

Meet-Your-Mentor Brunch: The kick-off event took place in the Sidney-Pacific Multipurpose Room, with pancakes, eggs, fruit, pastries, coffee, and other breakfast fare served to ~100 incoming students and current students. This is always a great opportunity to introduce GAME to the new students, and for them to meet students who can give advice about advisors and classes, as well as become acquainted with the faces they will see throughout the year in the hallways.

Harbor Islands Trip: This trip was initially rained out, and rescheduled for the following week. GAME partially subsidized ferry tickets for new students who attended, and provided some snacks for the day's visit. Approximately 25 students attended and enjoyed some wiffleball, exploring the fort on Gorges Island, and other outdoor activities until the last ferry left.

Pub Crawl: Our orientation chairs lead a pub crawl through Boston with the new students. This was a great opportunity for them to mingle with the current students and also get to Boston.

Winter Party, December 15, 2006

This annual semi-formal dinner-dance celebration was held in Lobdell in December, just before final exams. Appetizers from MIT Tech Catering and entrees from The Middle East were enjoyed by ~100 students and 2-3 faculty/staff members while listening to live jazz from the Mark Harvey Jazz Quintet. This event is a great chance to celebrate the end of the semester in a festive manner, and GAME would like to increase faculty participation and move to a more intimate setting next year, such as the Ashdown Hulsizer Room.

Game Wine and Cheese, April 20th, 2007

GAME hosted its second successful wine and cheese this year. The event is intended to increase social interaction between the Mechanical Engineering faculty and students in an informal setting. A busy week concluded at the Fishbowls with an interesting selection of wines and cheese. This informal mingling of faculty and students resulted in some of the most interesting conversations which varied from student's discussing random topics to faculty's tales of their own remembrances of exciting times in their graduate life.



Ethicon Endo-Surgery Dinner, May 18, 2007

Ethicon Endo-Surgery of Johnson & Johnson is a company that designs medical devices and wanted to enhance their relationship and recognition with the Mechanical Engineering department. They plan to sponsor a design contest in Winter 2007-8 and wanted to introduce themselves to the students by sponsoring a dinner with GAME – the planned BBQ was rained out, and Quiznos subs were served in 5-314 where an EES representative (MIT Alum Richard Timm) brought promotional material and EES devices to share. Attendance was approximately 75 students.



GAME BBQ, July 25th, 2007

GAME hosted its summer BBQ at the Kresge Pits where students took pleasure in burgers, hot dogs, Korean ribs and some cool refreshing soft drinks. A group consisting of both amateur and skilled, but highly enthusiastic students took charge of the grills and provided a tasteful delight to the large number of students that were present. Students mixed and mingled, while some played Frisbee or softball, most of them kept enjoying the great food and interesting conversations.

New Initiatives and Future plans: We will continue to work towards improving GAME and the services we provide to the graduate community. GAME plans to include many more events that will be directly sponsored by industry. This will help increase its profile among companies well as educate the graduate community about various opportunities outside of MIT. GAME also plans to increase the interaction of the graduate students with alumni of the department to help them decide on future career paths.

Conclusions:

Now in its fifth year, GAME has had a very productive year with many great activities. We are already starting to plan for the fall lunchtime series, orientation and many other social through the year. Though GAME feels that this has been an amazing year, there are areas that still need improvement. As the new academic year comes we look forward to building on our current level of success and improving not only the academic standards of excellence, but also the quality of life among the students in the department.