



What does the INFORMS Student Chapter at the University of Michigan do? A review of 2015 and a preview into 2016

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Each January the INFORMS Student Chapters complete an Annual Activities Report* highlighting the happenings of the previous year. These reports are a great way for the Student Chapters to reflect on the past year and (although it is not part of the official reporting process) often lead to a discussion of our Student Chapter's vision for the current year. Student Chapters that complete the Annual Activities Report are eligible for the INFORMS Student Chapter Annual Awards (presented at the INFORMS Annual Meeting) and a small amount of annual seed money. Here is a review of the 2015 year for the INFORMS Student Chapter at the University of Michigan, as well as a look into what we have planned for 2016!

*The Annual Activities Report template can be found on our [website](#).

OR/MS Tomorrow

The INFORMS Student Chapter at the University of Michigan was the Fall 2015 OR/MS Tomorrow's Spotlight Student Chapter. You can read about many of the annual events our chapter hosts (such as meet-the-faculty seminars, practice conference presentations, INFORMS Speakers Program luncheons, and community outreach) by [accessing the magazine article online](#). In addition to the events described in the OR/MS Tomorrow article, we would like to highlight the following 2015 activities:

PhD Mentoring Program

One of our biggest accomplishments in 2015 was initiating the PhD Student Mentoring Program. Through this program, each incoming PhD student is paired with a more senior PhD student mentor; these mentoring pairs meet regularly with the aim of helping first year PhD students navigate the transition to life as a doctoral student and fostering community among the various PhD cohorts. In addition to providing the mentoring pairs with funding for one lunch and one coffee outing per semester, the chapter organized a pizza and bowling party for all of the mentees and mentors during the fall semester, and a thank-you feedback dinner for the mentors in December.



(L) Mentors and mentees having fun at the bowling social (R) Mentoring while enjoying a free lunch

INFORMS Annual Meeting

In addition to hosting events at the University of Michigan, many of our student chapter members also attend the INFORMS Annual Meeting. Of the multitude of activities that occur during the annual meeting, two are of particular importance to student chapters: (1) the student awards ceremony and networking reception, and (2) the Student Chapters Meeting following the Chapters and Fora networking breakfast.

At the 2015 Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, the INFORMS Student Chapter at the University of Michigan received the Cum Laude award for their 2014 activities and Kayse Lee Maass, the 2015 student chapter president, was awarded the Judith Liebman award. Additionally, a number of the student chapter officers attended the Student Chapters Meeting. The meeting as a very low-key way to connect with officers from other student chapters, get inspiration for next year's chapter activities, and learn great ideas for how to get funding for chapter activities. *(We highly recommend all student chapters have at least one representative attend the meeting. You will gain many new insights and we would love to meet you!)*



(L) Kayse Lee Maass received the Judith Leibman Award (R) Our chapter received the Cum Laude Award

Cultural Awareness Workshop

Although many of our chapter activities relate specifically to Industrial and Operations Engineering (IOE), we also organize workshops that are of interest to a broader audience, such as the *Business in a global world: developing cultural awareness workshop* that we held in May. Students from all engineering departments were invited to attend the workshop which featured two guest panelists who have spent a large portion of their careers in international, cross-cultural environments. The panelists discussed the importance of developing cultural awareness and provided tips for how to navigate diverse cultural

landscapes in a respectful manner. We also utilized interactive case studies to foster discussion among participants.

This workshop was funded by a Graduate Student Community Grant that the student chapter officers applied for through the University of Michigan College of Engineering. The purpose of the grant was to foster creative initiatives that will enhance the collaborative spirit among graduate students in the College of Engineering.

INFORMS Speakers Program

This year the chapter invited Dr. Margaret Brandeau (Stanford University) to visit through the [INFORMS Speakers Program](#). To help distinguish the INFORMS Speakers from the weekly IOE departmental seminars, the chapter invited Dr. Brandeau to a student-only lunch during which she shared her experiences related to diversity in STEM, discussed how she became interested in health policy, and encouraged students to follow their passions. She also gave a research seminar entitled *Operations Research and Health Policy: Models that Can Make a Difference* during her visit.



Dr. Brandeau joined us through the INFORMS Speakers Program to discuss her research and give career advice.

Careers in Industry

A common theme that is discussed at the INFORMS Student Chapters Meeting is the need for student chapters to offer more events related to industry related careers. To address this, we invited Hillary Holloway and Tara Terry, two IOE PhD alumnae, to provide insights into industrial engineering industry, consulting, and governmental careers; the two events were titled “*What can I do with a PhD in IOE other than Academia?*” and “*What else can I do with a PhD in IOE other than Academia?*” respectively. We also had representatives from LLamasoft, Inc. and McKinsey Consulting visit our chapter to discuss industry career opportunities in supply chain optimization and consulting.

Outreach

In April, we partnered with Females Excelling More in Math, Engineering and the Sciences (FEMMES) to host a day-long hands-on workshop aimed at introducing industrial engineering concepts to female middle school students.

In December, we partnered with the GradSWE (Graduate Society of Women Engineers) “Engineering Club” to organize an outreach activity that encouraged 4th and 5th grade students at Adams’ STEM Academy to start thinking about industrial engineering concepts. The students participated in an emergency department simulation game that taught them about efficiency and optimizing a service system.

Social Activities

In addition to the career development events our chapter sponsors, we also try to encourage the University of Michigan students to make time to relax and get to know one another. As a chapter, we hosted a summer picnic, organized a group whirlyball outing, and participated in the homecoming parade.



(L) Whirlyball Outing (R) Representing the INFORMS Student Chapter at the U of M Homecoming Parade

----- Student Chapter Officers -----

The INFORMS Student Chapter at the University of Michigan elects officers for one calendar year, with terms starting in January (so that a particular group of officers corresponds to the activities listed in the Annual Activities Report). We hold elections right before the INFORMS Annual Meeting so that the incoming officers can attend the Chapter and Fora networking breakfast and get ideas for the coming year. This also allows us approximately 3 months in October – December dedicated to having the incoming officers shadow the current officers, which helps with transitioning from one year to the next.

2015 Officers

President: Kayse Lee Maass
Vice-President: Victor Wu
Secretary: Maya Bam
Treasurer: Andrew Orso
Webmasters: Pooyan Kazemian
Lauren Steimle
Outreach: Boying Liu
Zhehui Wang
Shivani Palekar

2016 Officers

President: Victor Wu
Vice-President: Lauren Steimle
Past-President: Kayse Lee Maass
Secretary: Abdullah Shelahi
Treasurer: Lauren Steimle
Webmaster: Allison Sheesley
Community Outreach: Gian-Gabriel Garcia
Undergrad Outreach: Louis Goedker

-----An Overview of the 2015 Activities-----

January

- General body meeting: semester kickoff
- Practice academic job talk seminars
- Officer meetings
- Meet-the-faculty seminar/meet-and-greet with Prof. [Henry Lam](#) (*Computation tools to analyze decisions and to manage risk under stochastic environments*)

February

- Social event: Whirly Ball
- Officer meetings

March

- FEMMES Outreach
- C++ Workshop
- Officer meetings

April

- Matlab Workshop
- Python Workshop
- [INFORMS Speakers Program](#): Prof. [Margaret Brandeau](#) (*Operations research and health policy: models that can make a difference*)-Seminar and student luncheon
- Started the IOE PhD Mentoring Program
- Graduate Teacher of the Year Award: Prof. [Marina Epelman](#)
- Officer meetings

May

- Practice conference presentations
- General body meeting: end of year wrap-up
- Business in a global world: developing cultural awareness workshop
- Officer meetings

June

- PhD Mentoring Program planning meeting
- Summer kickoff picnic

July

- Practice conference presentations

August

- Officer meetings

September

- PhD Mentoring Program kickoff meeting
- PhD Mentoring Program 1-1 meetings
- LaTeX Workshop
- PhD Mentoring Program event in coordination with IOE picnic
- LLamasoft information session

- Alumna speaker: Hillary Holloway (*What can I do with a PhD in IOE other than academia?*)

- Officer meetings

October

- General body meeting: semester kickoff
- PhD Mentoring Program 1-1 meetings
- Meet-the-faculty seminar/meet-and-greet with Prof. [Ruiwei Jiang](#) (*Discrete optimization under uncertainty*)
- INFORMS Student Chapter elections
- Columbia Business School information session
- Homecoming parade
- Meet-the-faculty seminar/meet-and-greet with Prof. [Pascal Van Hentenryck](#) (*Optimization and humanitarian logistics*)
- Meet-the-faculty seminar/meet-and-greet with Prof. [Matthew Plumlee](#) (*Model calibration and statistics*)
- NSF GRFP peer review critique
- [OR/MS Tomorrow: Student Chapter Spotlight- University of Michigan](#)
- Officer meetings

November

- INFORMS Annual Meeting activities
- PhD Mentoring Program 1-1 meetings
- Masters panel regarding pursuing a PhD
- Meet-the-faculty seminar/meet-and-greet with Prof. [Seth Guikema](#) (*Data analytics and risk analysis*)
- McKinsey Consulting information session & women's networking reception
- Bowling: PhD Mentoring social event
- INFORMS Student Chapter officer training
- Officer meetings

December

- PhD Mentoring Program 1-1 meetings
- PhD Mentoring progress report dinner
- Engineering Club outreach to elementary students
- Alumna speaker: Tara Terry (*What else can you do with a PhD in IOE other than Academia?*)
- INFORMS Student Chapter officer training
- Officer meetings

----- **A Sneak Peek at the 2016 Activities** -----

January

- Career fair workshops: resume critiques and mock interviews
- Practice academic job talk seminars

February

- General body meeting: semester kickoff
- Creating a professional online presence workshop
- Pyramid Consulting information session

Upcoming

- Coding workshops (LaTeX, AMPL, Matlab, C++, etc.)
- Meet-the-faculty seminar: Vedat Verter
- Meet-the-postdocs seminar series
- Journal publishing workshop series
- Student-only cross-disciplinary seminar on mathematical modeling
- IOE PhD student movie night: PhD the Movie
- PhD Mentoring Program social event
- PhD Mentoring Program 1-1 meetings
- Undergraduate and graduate student social events
- Industry guest speaker: Olga Raskina (Schneider)
- Academic guest speaker: Mark Lewis (Cornell)
- INFORMS Speaker Program
- Xplore Engineering workshop (The Manufacturing Process Challenge)
- What can I do with an undergraduate degree in IOE?