Columbia College Computer Science Club 2011-2012 Goals and Review

*Goal Guidelines: Obtainable, Quantifiable, Time sensitive, Reasonable*

* ***Goals***
  + ***What did we hope to accomplish?*** This has still been a year of building. There has yet to be a group of people associated with the club who has been organized/determined enough to make a successful semester/year. There have been many signs of hope, but none of those elements came together to make a complete year. The biggest goal has been to organize, which brings about this document. The club has failed to organize itself and therefore it’s been hard to track failures/success in past and build on those in the future. If time is spent to record events throughout the semester and to organize events we will have a much greater success. As mentioned, there were several signs of determination and genuine care for the wellbeing of the club, but we need to continue to put forth effort to chain these events together into a whole product: a successful club.
  + ***How well did we do on each goal?*** Since there hadn’t been much time spent on putting together a list of goals for the semester/year, it’s hard to track what goals we did meet. We have been improving the clubs look and productivity but again, time must be spent on things such as goal-setting to be able to know what has and has not been accomplished. Overall, we haven’t failed yet. Obviously that’s a good thing. But I believe that in a few short years this will be one of the best academic clubs on campus, given that the club continues to have members who are dedicated to its success.
  + ***Which goals should be carried on this year?*** First step is to actually make a list. There is no way of tracking progress without such a list. Next step is to look back at the list ever so often throughout the semester/year to make sure that we stay on track. Here is a proposed list for the Fall Semester ’12:
    - Plan
      * Sit down before the semester starts to figure out what we want to be covered in the semester and how we want to do it
        + Have an idea of what we want to do for each meeting for the whole semester
        + Meetings 1/month
      * Advertise
        + Posters in the commons
        + Flyers to classes
        + Posters on bulletin boards
        + PA-it would help if we had a public affairs officer to take pictures, video, etc.
      * Contact individuals for planning meetings *ahead of time*
        + Room reservations
        + Guest speakers
        + Food (contact restaurants/pizza ahead of time)
        + Talking to High Schools/Elementary Schools
        + Trips to companies
    - Keep on top of things
      * Be prepared for meetings
        + Know what is going to be talked about
        + Have an agenda/slides ready
        + Prepare for speeches
        + Food (order/buy early – get it done early)
        + Let the word out ASAP (not the week of the meetings

Posters

Several ***WEEKS*** in advance

* + - * Talk to people
        + When coordinating with individuals make sure you ask and forget – follow up!
  + ***Which goals need to be changed?*** Stick with the goals that we have now. We will improve on them in the future.
  + ***Which goals are no longer feasible?*** At this point, they are all feasible. We just need to find out if we can do them!
* ***Programs and Activities***
  + ***How effective were the programs/activities we sponsored?*** When we actually were able to get activities done, they were great, especially spring 2012. At the beginning of the semester we were able to get an idea of what we wanted to do for every meeting and planned for those meetings to be the first Thursday of every month. The topics we covered were relevant and the presenters were very helpful. Even though this is the case, they weren’t very effective, as the question asks. We were not able to get many people to attend, we didn’t inform the students on campus about them in a timely manner, and we usually waited until the last minute to reserve the room. This goes the same for the fundraiser that we did on Valentine’s Day. It was quite disorganized but the event itself was great. All the problems that we had with these events are addressed in our goals above. I think there is no reason why we can’t have the same sort of quality in our meetings this coming year, but with more success, assuming we strive to reach our goals.
  + ***Did we have a good balance in our schedule of programs and activities?*** Very much so. It was decided very early that we only wanted to have one meeting/month. This worked out very well. We were also able to put in a fundraiser and a trip to Midway. Could we have had more events outside of meetings? Most definitely, and we should. We need to focus as much as we have been on meetings but much more on events outside of meetings. People won’t necessarily want to come to meetings as much as they want to be involved in other events. Talking isn’t always fun ☺
  + ***Were our programs and activities consistent with our goals?*** Considering we didn’t really have any goals, no. Had we have had the same goals as listed above, no we wouldn’t have met them. But now we do have goals and I believe we will be more of a success if we just try to stick to them.
  + ***Which activities and programs do we want to repeat?*** All of them! Continue having meetings, going to companies, and having fundraisers. I think we had great ideas for the events that we planned and can only improve. Keep the ideas coming!
* ***Membership***
  + ***Do we have too many, too few, or just the right amount of members?*** The answer to this should be obvious. I think the most consistent members we had coming to meetings/events were the same group of people. That needs to change. What’s the point of having a club if we don’t grow membership?
  + ***Were our recruitment efforts successful?*** No they were not. I am confident that will change in the future.
  + ***Are our members as actively involved as we want them to be?*** At this point, with the number of members we have, I think they are. We were able to change that a bit this last spring semester (2012) with the “Events Committee”. There was a specific list of groups who were responsible for taking care of certain items in the club. The list was brought to the first couple of meetings and members signed up. If we continue to do this in the future there will be no problem with recruiting members for different projects. It also helps with giving away responsibility – aka delegating. Hooray delegating!
  + ***Were there chances for members to get involved in a meaningful way?*** Yes. The above question answers this. The list of committees that was formed will help keep the group responsibilities to club officials and more specific tasks to members.
* ***Officers and Organizational Structure***
  + ***Are officer roles and responsibilities clearly described?*** I wouldn’t say so. I’m not sure it’s so easy to make that distinction at this point, as silly as that might sound. At this point in time, anybody that holds a position is part of every process in the clubs events: Planning, organizing, and executing. I imagine as the club gets larger and we have more success in our events it will be more clear what everyone’s responsibility should be.
  + ***Did officers work as a team, or is there more teamwork needed?*** Yes and no. As a whole, we all did a great job working together towards the same goal. We were able to talk about issues and find solutions in an orderly manner and for the most part everyone did their job as needed. There has always been an issue though, with accepting criticism, especially on my part. We need to accept that things will go wrong and gracefully accept constructive criticism. If we ignore failures in the club we can never fix those failures and we will not move forward.
  + ***Is the time and effort required in each office comparable?*** Yes. Everyone worked equally and did their part, as outlined by the president. Jobs and responsibilities may get heavier, but only to equal out the effort and be more structured in reaching a common goal.
  + ***Is there two-way communication between officers and members?*** Great question. I’m not exactly sure how this applies in our current state. If I were to have to give a solid answer, yes or no, I’d say no. It’s not to say that the officers disregarded the presence of the club’s members, but it’s more like we weren’t organized enough to be able to say exactly what the plan was.
  + ***How do the members feel about the officers?*** I wish I could say. I don’t think there are enough members to be able to give a straight answer to that. But if I had to guess, I would say that they probably think that we aren’t very organized, which isn’t too far from the truth. If anybody on campus were asked about the CS Club, they would probably say “we have a CS Club?” which is of course *not* the response we want to hear. Our club isn’t very well known and the events not very well attended. This is due to a lack of communication to the members, at least on a consistent basis.
* ***Organizational Operations***
  + ***Were the finances adequate for our group and managed properly?*** Were the finances adequate? Yes, but only adequate. We need to work harder to have more fundraisers and to get more funds to the club. Anything will help. With the amount of stuff we did, we were able to slide by with the funds that we had, but more will definitely help. Were they managed properly? Yeah pretty much. But again, could have been handled better. The treasurer didn’t have an easy time working with the funds because nobody really knew what to do. It will be helpful for future treasurers to be more aware of their responsibilities and to be able to train others on the process of finances.
  + ***Did meetings run effectively?*** Yes they did. Every group meeting we had was successful. The content was relevant and applied to what we are doing or could be doing with our degree. If we work as hard as we did last semester at finding such relevant topics and speakers we will have a very successful semester.
  + ***Did the committee structure work?*** Very much so, yes. We were able to separate different responsibilities within the group and assign different people to be in charge of each activity. We will continue to do this in the future to help delegate responsibility and to get members involved.
  + ***Did we have scheduling conflicts with other groups or activities?*** I know we had conflicts with at least SGA. It is difficult to schedule a time that works for everybody that doesn’t conflict with anybody. We may stick with the same time for meetings but we may also look for another time to do them. There just isn’t much wiggle room unfortunately.
* ***Faculty Involvement***
  + ***Did our advisor provide the support we needed?*** One thing that is very helpful from our advisor is that he is able to provide feedback on how we are performing as a group. He is also able to provide constructive criticism on the things we do and is very willing to help out with the club.I get frustrated sometimes when I hear input from our advisor. It seems that input is sometimes vague and the instructions aren’t very specific. Certainly this isn’t the case all the time but in general, I believe that’s the type of input we get.
  + ***Did we give our advisors and other faculty a chance to get involved?*** Yes. We need to work a bit harder though on getting more of this input. It may be good to have regular meetings with our advisor and other faculty to see what their opinion is on certain topics.
  + ***How could we improve faculty involvement?*** In the way mentioned in the question above. We could have regular meetings to get input on how they think the club is doing and suggestions for improvement. We can also of course ask them to be involved more in some of the clubs activities.
* ***Public Image***
  + ***How do we see ourselves? Is this how “outsiders” see us?*** I know we all recognize that there is a need for improvement. It is pretty clear that the club hasn’t been as successful as it could have been. I also know that we all envision a better club with more success and higher recognition. We need to dig deep to accomplish this…
  + ***How can we enhance our image?*** Better advertising for one. Nobody knows that we exist, except for the dedicated members. We need to get out posters in the commons, slides onto the TV, and flyers onto the bulletin boards. It would also help if we had an active social network profile. We have both a Facebook and Twitter account, both things that almost everybody uses these days. If we were to wisely implement these things, we could see a rise in our membership and recognition.