Call for Spring 2009 Mentor Application!

The Promoting Undergraduate Research in ECE (PURE) is a student initiative that aims at facilitating undergraduate research for underclassmen in the ECE department. We are currently looking for motivated ECE graduate students to join our PURE Research program as mentors in Spring 2009!

What is PURE Research?

The PURE Research is a semester long program that involves both ECE graduate students (as mentors) and underclassman (as mentees). The program will pair up 1-3 undergraduate students with a graduate student mentor based on the mentors' availability and the nature of the field. They will together decide on a project / research topic which the undergrads will be working on throughout the semester. The mentor and mentees will meet on a weekly basis to communicate about the progress. At the end of the semester, the undergraduate mentees will submit a 1-2-page summary and give a presentation on what they have learned and accomplished.

What has PURE achieved so far at UIUC?

We launched the PURE Pilot Program in spring 2008. PURE has since involved over 50 undergraduate students and 20 graduate students. Based on feedback, almost every participant considered the program to be a great opportunity to experience real-world research, and in the case of mentors, a valuable teaching experience.

You can find more about past events, project examples, and participant testimonies on our website at http://hkn.ec.uiuc.edu/pure.

What is the role as mentor?

The passion of our graduate mentors is definitely one of the most important factors that lead to PURE Pilot’s success. The mentors will help undergraduate define a problem, find resources, and most importantly, share their own learning experience and provide guidance.

In more specific terms, graduate mentors are expected to have one half-hour meeting per week with their mentees, and occasionally attend some of the events that PURE committee plans throughout the semester. Overall, the total weekly time commitment for mentors will be around 1 ~ 2 hours.

What are the benefits of becoming a mentor?

There are many benefits for participating in the PURE Research Program as a graduate mentors, such as:
1) **Unique teaching experience**: Different from being a TA, PURE mentors will have chance to build a close personal connection with their mentees, as well as have more freedom in their teaching style.

2) **Access to help in research**: many of our past mentees have proven to be great assistants for their graduate mentors. Some mentees continued to work with their mentors throughout the summer, even after the pilot program had ended.

3) **Course credits**: If they want to, mentors can also get one-hour course credit (ECE 598) for their participation in the PURE program.

**What should I do next? – Contact us!!**

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please send a brief email to uiucpure@gmail.com, with your name, year, advisor (if you have one), and area of interest. We will be sending out more information regarding registration shortly.

You are also welcome to email us through uiucpure@gmail.com at any time. We look forward to hearing from you soon!