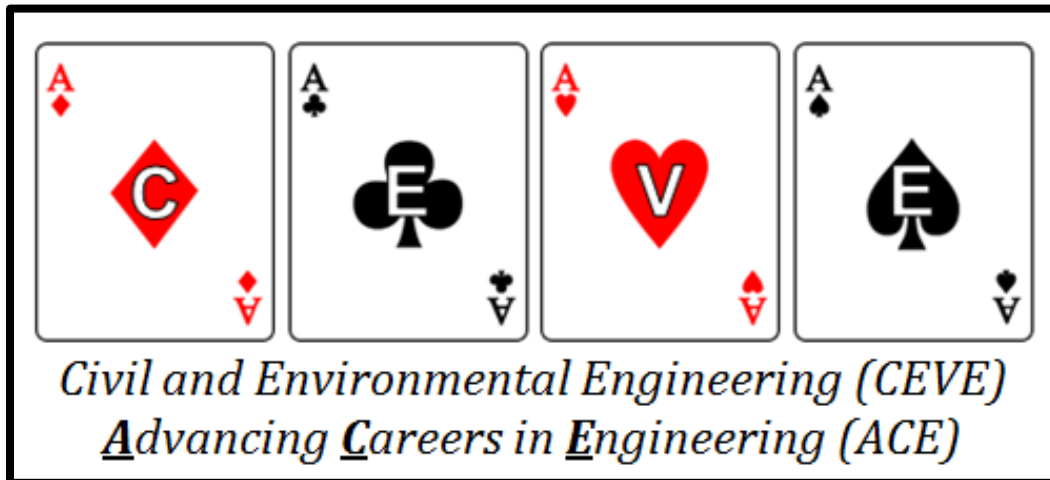


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PROJECT TITLE: CEVE A.C.E

PROJECT TAGLINE/CAPTION: Advancing Careers in Engineering

IMAGE:



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Primary Contact Department: Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEVE)

Name of Group/Organization: CEVE GSA

PROJECT DETAILS

CEVE A.C.E is a multi-faceted project that aims to create intradepartmental and external networking and professional development opportunities for graduate students in the Civil and Environmental Engineering department. This project will be comprised of a series of events aimed at providing the CEVE graduate student body with tools to assist in early career planning and achieving scholarly success, as outlined below.

- I. Early Career Planning
 - a. Networking luncheons with alumni – CEVE GSA will invite local alumni working in industry and academia to interact with CEVE graduate students over lunch. Alumni will be asked to share the evolution of their career path and then students will be given the opportunity to ask questions and solicit advice from alumni through an open forum environment. This event will be an excellent opportunity for students exploring

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various career options or currently searching for jobs to ask questions or seek advice from professionals of similar academic background. While several local alumni have already been identified for this event, the CEVE GSA also plans to reach out to the Rice Engineering Alumni organization for additional contacts.

- b. Alumni picnic – CEVE alumni will be invited to a social networking event with undergraduates, graduate students, and CEVE faculty during Willy Week. This event will provide all CEVE students with an opportunity to socialize and network with many alumni at once in a relaxed atmosphere.

II. Scholarly Success

- a. “Monthly Tips” luncheon – Each month over lunch, a post-doctoral research associate or senior graduate student will be invited to present a tutorial on a topic of their choosing related to tools that they found particularly useful during their graduate career. Potential tutorials could include introductions to programming languages (e.g. Matlab, Python, or Fortran), tips on organizing research materials and academic literature (e.g. utilizing software such as Endnote or Papers), time management, and developing cohesive scientific presentations. New graduate students often spend countless hours learning new software packages and other research tools; the Monthly Tips luncheon will provide students with knowledge to expedite and improve introductory learning of such tools. Experienced individuals will also be invited to provide career development tutorials (e.g. job search strategies in the CEVE field, networking skills, and resume building). Postdoctoral researchers and senior graduate students are ideal candidates to disseminate such skills and experiences, which will likely be crucial toward the technical and professional growth of CEVE graduate students. This project will also provide valuable teaching experience for the instructors.
- b. Graduate student colloquium – This event currently occurs at lunchtime on the first Friday of each month and consists of two graduate students presenting their research to peers in a friendly, graduate student only environment. This event presents a great platform for students to solicit feedback on the technical and non-technical aspects of their presentations as well as improve their presentation skills.
- c. Intradepartmental networking – CEVE graduate students have very little opportunity to interact with each other as research groups are scattered in three separate buildings. Therefore, to promote interaction amongst CEVE graduate students, which we believe is vital to student wellbeing, the following social events are proposed:
 - i. Picnics – Two picnics are planned for the fall semester. The first picnic, which will occur during the first week of fall classes, is meant to serve as a welcome picnic for incoming graduate students. Currently, the CEVE department does not organize any welcome events for new graduate students, which can result in new students going unknown to each other and the rest of the graduate student body. A second picnic will be planned towards the end of the semester.
 - ii. Other events will be organized based on input from the graduate student body, which is usually solicited during general meetings or from surveys.

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Timeline: *If the project will take place at a specific time and place, please give details. Is it a one-time event or a series?*

This project is comprised of a series of events. The tentative details are:

- The graduate student colloquium will be held at lunchtime on the first Friday of each month.
- The Monthly Tips meetings will be held at lunchtime on the third Friday of each month.
- Alumni networking luncheons will be scheduled at least once a semester, according to the availability of alumni.
- The alumni picnic will be a one-time event in the spring, which will be scheduled based upon availability of alumni, ideally during Willy Week when alumni attendance is at its peak.
- The first picnic will be held during the first week of classes and the second picnic toward the end of the fall semester.

Audience: *Who is your target audience? (e.g. program-specific, interdisciplinary, or university-wide? Will undergraduates, faculty, staff, or postdocs be involved? Any off campus participants?)*

The target audience is primarily graduate students; however, postdocs and faculty will also be invited to several of the planned events.

How many people do you anticipate will participate?

Depending on the type of event, the number of participants may vary. Based on similar events we have hosted this past year, approximately 70 to 100 people may attend social events (fall picnics and the alumni picnic) and around 20 graduate students typically attend student seminars (Monthly Tips, alumni networking luncheons, and graduate student colloquium).

Marketing Plan: *How do you plan to publicize the project?*

The project will be publicized via emails, flyers and door to door visits.

ADVANCEMENT

What are the goals of the project?

This project primarily aims to provide CEVE graduate students with professional and career development opportunities along with promoting social interactions within the department.

Briefly explain the need for the project and how it will promote excellence in scholarship, training, and/or development?

Several events proposed in this project aim to develop presentation and other technical skills pertinent to the CEVE discipline. For example, the Monthly Tips sessions can be utilized to

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learn general tools such as Latex, Matlab, programming languages, or reference managers; while the student seminars are perfect opportunities to obtain feedback on technical and non-technical aspects of oral communication. These events will enable graduate students in the CEVE department to advance academically and professionally.

If this is an existing project/event or a similar one exists, describe how the project/event is being expanded or enhanced.

Programs similar to those proposed in this project exist at Rice but they are not specific to the CEVE department and therefore, many times, are not relevant to CEVE graduate students. However, the events proposed in this project are program specific and are designed to meet the needs of the CEVE graduate student body.

If your proposal is for a pilot project, suggest how it might develop over a three-year period.

The Monthly Tips and alumni networking events are pilot projects that we anticipate will grow over the next three years as we expand our professional and intradepartmental connections. We aim to expand our pool of senior graduate students and postdocs willing to provide tutorials for the Monthly Tips sessions, while also diversifying the professional and technical topics covered during these tutorials. The CEVE GSA will solicit feedback from students after each event and keep a log of Monthly Tips tutorials that were particularly helpful in order to maintain a foundation for future CEVE GSA council to build upon or reschedule on a yearly basis. In addition, the CEVE GSA will aim to steadily expand the CEVE alumni and professional network over the next three years based on feedback from students.

Describe how you will measure the success and impact of this project. Please, provide quantitative targets, if possible.

The success and impact of the proposed events will be measured in several ways. We will evaluate success first through participation during events throughout the semester based on percentage of the student population in attendance. "Good" participation during graduate student colloquium, Monthly Tips sessions, and alumni networking luncheons will equate to a 40% or higher attendance. For the fall and alumni picnics, 70% participation from the graduate student body and CEVE faculty will be indicative of a successfully attended event (80% participation was observed during the 2015 CEVE GSA Spring Picnic). To evaluate the impact of the proposed events, anonymous feedback will be gathered from participating students and alumni and modifications will be made to the events as needed.



BUDGET

Itemized Budget

Please, provide an itemized budget. List each item, a description, and the anticipated cost.

Item	Description	Amount
Student colloquium	Once every month	4 X \$200 = \$800
Monthly Tips meeting	Once every month	4 X \$200 = \$800
Picnics	Twice in fall	2 X \$400 = \$800
Alumni Picnic	Once in spring	1 X \$400 = \$400
Networking luncheons	Twice in fall	2 X \$150 = \$300
Total Expenses		\$3,100

Funds from other sources

Please, provide any information on funds from other sources that you have secured or potential funds that you plan to apply for.

Source	Status	Amount
CEVE Department	Request pending	\$500
GSA activity fund	Application pending	2 X \$250 = \$500
SAPP	Application pending	\$400
Total Amount		\$1,400

If the project/event has been offered in the past, how was it supported?

The graduate student colloquium has been supported by the CEVE department over the past several years. A picnic was partially supported by GSA, SAPP, and CEVE GSA club funds in spring 2015.