

# Spanish Courses offered by Humanities Department

**Sijia Wu**

LAYOUT EDITOR

IIT has offered Spanish language and culture courses over the past two and a half years and will continue to offer them in the spring semester. This is an achievement of a completed project initiated by the Student Government Association (SGA), consisting of four sequential Spanish courses offered by the Department of Humanities. The second and last course in the series, offered under the COM (Communication) 126 and 226 designations respectively, will be available to register for in the spring 2015 term.

The second course, Spanish Language and Culture 2 (COM 126) is suitable for students with approximately one year of Spanish study or those who have taken COM 125. It covers basic grammar structures and helps build vocabulary. This course counts as a humanities or social science general education course. However, for those intermediate level Spanish speakers (students with two years of high school Spanish or equivalent), Spanish 4 (COM 226) would be the best choice, as it fo-

cuses on description and narration in multiple Spanish tenses and involves watching short Spanish videos and reading Spanish journalistic texts. This course counts towards the 300+ level humanities requirement.

The instructor for these courses, Professor Kate Thompson, received her PhD in Latin American literature at the University of Maryland and has been teaching Spanish at the University of Chicago for 11 years.

"Learning another language helps us to communicate across cultural boundaries. It's also just plain fun to communicate in a different language—there is a thrill in being able to express yourself in a language that is not your own," said Thompson, stressing the significance and pleasure of learning a foreign language. She highly encourages IIT students to enroll in either COM 126 or COM 226 next semester, as they are helpful and well designed.

"Conversation, reading, writing and listening skills are all emphasized in these classes, along with a lot of cultural content including reading and videos that showcase some of the different aspects of various Hispanic cultures." The feedback from students

who have taken Spanish classes with Thompson has been excellent.

Cara Karter, a third year social and economic development policy major, has taken the full sequence (COM 125, COM 126, COM 225 and COM 226) and has found the courses to be very valuable to her during her time at IIT. "I came in with an interest in continuing language studies but was unaware that the opportunity existed. My brother, who is also at IIT, told me about the first course, COM 125, and we were both enrolled in the course during its inaugural semester," said Karter. She also mentions that the course has enabled her to vastly improve her Spanish skills, which she has utilized while travelling to Nicaragua (in March 2013 and May 2014) with IIT's student chapter of Engineers Without Borders.

Precious Eboh, a fourth year biomedical engineering student, has also benefited from Spanish classes offered on campus and has enjoyed Thompson's teaching style. "She employs a variety of methods to keep you interested in the class. She is a professor who expects a lot from you and in return she gives her all, to help you meet her expectation," said

Eboh.

He is not the only one who feels this way. Rohit Agarwal, a senior student majoring in electrical and computer engineering, has also provided a positive review regarding the instructor: "Professor Thompson is very open and inviting to questions during class and always engages in an informative classroom discussion. She is helpful to students who are struggling more than others and does her best to make sure no one is left behind." He further adds that from his perspective, the class itself is conducted in a fairly professional manner that creates a friendly and successful learning environment.

All registered students (except native speakers) at IIT with an interest in language studies are encouraged to enroll in either of the two Spanish classes offered in the spring semester based on different individual backgrounds. If you have any questions, please email Professor Kate Thompson at [kthomps8@iit.edu](mailto:kthomps8@iit.edu).

# Student Gift 2015 seeks input

**Zaira Ortiz**

TECHNEWS WRITER

Once a year, IIT students from all over the university gather with one common goal in mind – to give. Some would call this annual event a testament of true love for our university, others would call it a simple act of kindness, but I call it the IIT Student Gift. You may be wondering what the IIT Student Gift is, and in simple terms, it is the single most generous act students participate in every year.

In more descriptive terms, the Student Gift is a student-run effort to enhance both community and philanthropy at the

university. Through this endeavor, IIT students fund projects that enhance the campus community and build on a tradition of giving while they learn how generosity impacts the lives around them. Basically, the Student Gift is an opportunity for the students to present IIT with a gift that will make the experiences of current and future students better, enhance the university's uniqueness, and give back to the IIT community we all know and love.

A few examples of past Student Gifts are the refurbishment of the enclosure space in MTCC in 2010, the completion of the reserved textbook collection at Galvin Library in 2011, the installation of drinking fountains in seven

academic buildings in 2012, the modular furniture for Galvin Library in 2013, and the new bikes racks and two new bike repair stations for campus in 2014. All of these gifts enhance the lives and experiences of students at IIT today, could you imagine the university without them? I know I couldn't. The value behind the Student Gift is tremendous, and it offers students an opportunity to see what IIT is missing come to life. Students in the past thought Galvin didn't have enough furniture, and so the students chose to gift the university with modern, comfortable, spacious furniture, all of which we now benefit from. Now, as students, it's your turn to choose how you'll impact IIT

and leave your mark on your university for years to come.

The last question to ask is how will you be remembered after you graduate from IIT? A great first step is taking the survey at [tinyurl.com/2015Gift](http://tinyurl.com/2015Gift), and voicing your opinion on what this year's Student Gift should be. The second step would be becoming even more involved with the Student Gift process, and joining the Student Gift Committee by contacting Sarah Zimmerman at her email [szimmer1@iit.edu](mailto:szimmer1@iit.edu). The Student Gift is your chance to be the change remembered at IIT.

# IEEE hosts final Fall 2014 meeting

**Vijai Baskar**

COPY EDITOR

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) at IIT held their last general body meeting for the semester on Wednesday, November 19, in the Perlstein Hall auditorium. This was their final interaction with students for the semester, and they had a lot to talk about: events that happened, laurels achieved, and tours organized.

The meeting began with an address by Rohit Agarwal, President of IEEE at IIT, who spoke about the events that have happened so far in the semester. Over the three general body meetings that were conducted, students saw guest speakers from Siemens and from the IEEE Chicago Section. The IEEE barbecue was a huge success, given the great turnout and the opportunity students were given to interact with fellow students and faculty as well.

Agarwal also mentioned that a team from IIT that participated in the IEEE Xtreme 24-hour programming competition stood second in the whole of Chicago only to be surpassed by a team from another local school. This earned IIT a good standing within the Region 4 IEEE section and also within the Chicago area.

In regards to tours, IEEE had organized a tour to a wind farm this semester. This provided students the opportunity to see for themselves what it is like to actually be at the site of a huge energy development installation. A lot of students took the initiative to participate in this tour and it turned out to be quite good; students got the opportunity to be exposed to the real engineering world.

The organization has been collecting resumes from students and sending them in batches to companies like Google and Epic. This is an effort made by the IEEE board to create job opportunities for students who are looking to work with these technological com-

panies, and for these companies who are looking to hire individuals from IIT.

A video on the progress of the Quadcopter project was shown to the attendees. It featured the working of the Quadcopter and its project members. Students are strongly encouraged to join projects funded by IEEE as they provide a great platform for engineers to showcase their skills and do something in addition to academics.

The guest speaker for the event was Vickie Peters, IEEE Chicago Section Chair. She spoke about various milestones achieved by IEEE and their section in particular. She encouraged students to step up and continue to excel in the field of engineering, keeping with the standard that has been set by the engineers of the past years.

Peters strongly asserted that if students are interested in attending any conferences or events that they think would help them professionally, and if the costs involved are high, the IEEE Chicago Section will definitely help compensate for their efforts. She also pointed out the benefits of being an IEEE National member and the networking opportunities it provides to aspiring engineers.

The IEEE Executive board has two open positions, namely, Publicity Chair, and Webmaster. Students who are interested in these positions can go to [iee.iit.edu](http://iee.iit.edu) and nominate themselves or anyone else they feel would be qualified for that position.

The next semester will see the organization planning a number of events such as company tours, general body meetings with new guest speakers, and the student branch as a whole will be given the opportunity to participate in conferences like the Region 4 Student Leadership Conference (SLC), and the 2015 Women in Engineering Conference. They hope to see more and more students be involved with IEEE and grow professionally and ethically as responsible engineers.

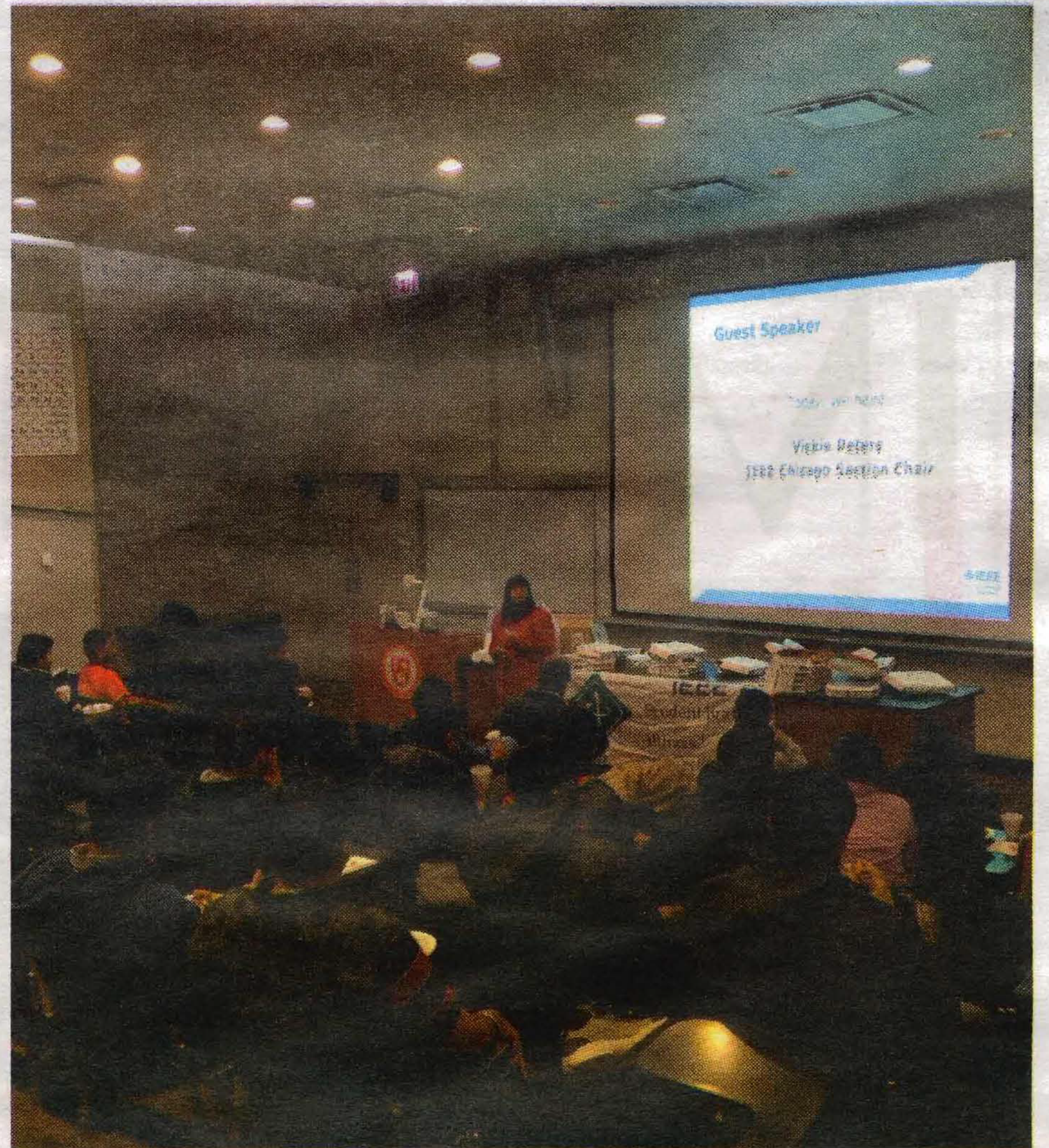


Photo by Vijai Baskar

## TechNews corrections

Last week, in an article covering IEEE events, the photo accompanying the article was credited to Vijai Baskar. This information is incorrect.

The images were taken by and are accredited to Subarno Saha. We apologize for the confusion.