Mentor Graphics selects UCSB as their first choice university partner by conducting a comprehensive management survey

Mentor Graphics is a leader in Electronic Design Automation (EDA). Through their well-established products and services, they enable companies to develop better electronic products faster and more cost-effectively. EDA is a very competitive field where having the advantage of interacting with and attracting the best and brightest engineers will give a competitive edge. The Wilsonville, Oregon based company has been successfully engaged with the students and faculty of UC Santa Barbara for a number of years. Recently, Mentor Graphics went through a detailed exercise to rank U.S. universities they interact with. The results were used to determine their priorities for driving university research collaborations and targeted student recruiting in a cost effective manner.

When Jami White, University Programs Manager, took on her new position earlier this year, she was tasked to direct a comprehensive study to understand where they should apply their resources regarding their university strategy. Prior to her taking the position, Mentor had been spending time at a number of different national campuses with varying degrees of success and no real metrics or understanding the effectiveness of their efforts and expenditures.

Jami, working with an internal targeted university program steering committee, created a comprehensive survey soliciting Mentors' division management as well as hiring managers. They looked at a variety of areas and developed metrics to measure the "effectiveness" of their university interactions. These metrics included how well the curriculum aligned with Mentors' technical direction and needs, faculty interactions, numbers of full-time hires, as well as interns that were produced from these university relationships. Another important measure was a high national ranking of the school and proximity to some of their corporate locations.

Two of Mentors' key technology product areas, printed circuit board design tools and simulation & functional verification, are firmly aligned with UCSB Electrical & Computer Engineering professors, Malgorzata Marek-Sadowska and Steven Butner. These have been long term and productive relationships, creating technology exchange and a steady stream of new engineer recruits for many years. Mentor has been supplying PCB design tools for UCSB's Computer Engineering Senior Capstone design class. This course is a two-quarter design class which allows students to specify, design and manufacture a circuit board based project.

Professor Steve Butner

After their exhaustive assessment, the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) was the clear leader. The recent 2010 National Research Council Rankings for U.S. Universities ranked UCSB College of Engineering #1 for all US public universities, as well as #4 in Electrical & Computer Engineering. The national ranking combined with the alignment of Mentor's technical direction with UCSB's engineering curriculum and an accessible engineering student population made UCSB a clear top choice for Mentor Graphics.

To learn more about how your company can work with UC Santa Barbara, contact Leslie Edwards (805-893-3944/ edwards@engineering.ucsb.edu) or Chris Russo (805-893-5544/crusso@engineering.ucsb.edu) in the Corporate Affiliate Programs office.

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