

**DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTING ~ MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY**  
**Minutes of the 100-Level Liaison Committee Meeting**  
**18<sup>th</sup> March 2009 1pm**

**Present:**

<b>Student Representatives</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Student ID</b>
Cynthia Lin	ISYS123	
James Geortsis	COMP115	
Jennifer Nicholls	ISYS123	
Ahmad Faril	ISYS123,COMP115	
Brian Yuen	COMP115	
Hye Min Kim	COMP115	
Joseph Camilleri	ISYS123	
Chin Yee Ng	COMP115	
Joseph Chan	COMP115	

<b>Staff Representatives</b>	<b>Units</b>
Ros Ballantyne	100 level convenor && COMP125
Bernard Mans	HoD
Tony Sloane	COMP115
Richard Miller	Science IT
Abhaya Nayak	COMP115
Yan Wang	COMP115
Michael Hitchens	ISYS123
Matthew Mansour	ISYS123
Melina Chan	Executive Office
Raina Kim	Minutes

**Apologies :** Diego Molla Aliod

**Meeting started 1:05pm**

**UNIT MATTERS**

**ISYS123:** Michael Hitchens

**Lectures:**

- Students had positive comments about the lectures.
- Students who did not have computing background had a lot of materials to learn in a couple of weeks. However, the tutorials helped to refresh the important points.
- MM mentioned that the lecture materials were in line with the tutorials.

- Student said this unit was not easy as thought and many underestimated the course.
- MM said the course had been changed over the years and that as long as all classes and materials were followed it would not be very hard to receive a good grade.

**Practicals:**

- Student said her prac tutor did not ask relevant questions. MM said the tutors were given a set of questions at the beginning of the semester in different levels of difficulties. The question asked would be from the standard list of questions.

**Tutorials:**

- Student said her tutor was quite helpful. Another student said her tutor did not really engage with the students.

**Assignment:**

- Due week 4.

**Labs:**

- There were no software issues.
- Student said the directions given were clear and helpful.

**COMP115: Tony Sloane**

The following include comments from an RB interview with a student.

**Lectures:**

- Students were happy with the lectures.
- Some students with no computing background found the course difficult and this reflected in delivering the assignments. These students did not understand the basics. RB said if the students persist in learning the materials they would eventually understand.
- Student had some very positive comments about the lecturer and the notes given. She much preferred COMP115 to ISYS123 because COMP115 was more practical.
- Student was very happy with TS who was very patient with students from non computing background and tried to keep everyone interested.
- Student said she would prefer lectures in 2-3 hour blocks.
- Some students did not buy the textbook because the lecture notes were quite extensive. One student said the textbook was very helpful in learning the terms.
- RB said there were helpful C++ materials on the web but often hard to find the right level of difficulty. (RB adds later : there are some quite good You-tube videos of c++ tutorials, worth a try).

**Tutorial and Practical:**

- Student said the tutor did not engage with the students. Perhaps the students did not know what to ask. RB said tutorial questions were set to help students to identify their problems. TS encouraged the students to approach the tutors for a better interaction within the class room.
- Student said her tutor was quite helpful and asked those students who wanted more explanation to come to the front the of the class room.
- Student was very happy with Abeed. Student would prefer to do more group work for more interaction and social skills.

- Some students prefer to work together to work out an algorithm for a program and this could end up producing similar programs. RB warned that students should beware of plagiarism penalty when submitting similar programs. There was a BIG difference between discussing algorithms and looking at others code.
- TS said students would learn faster if they practised writing and running programs using the examples in the textbook.

#### **Labs:**

- Some students had problems in downloading Eclipse. TS said the cause of the problem had not been identified.
- Students preferred Moodle to Blackboard.

#### **Assignments:**

- 360 out of 418 students have submitted their assignments due this morning.
- Student said the feedback given were a little confusing. TS said the students were given check points rather than a sample program. Student said some did not use the check points.

#### **COMP125: Ros Ballantyne**

No COMP125 representatives present so RB addressed possible issues.

- RB said the lecture notes were posted after the lecture to avoid posting the answers prior to the lectures. No point in asking students questions if the answer is on the next page. It keeps the lectures more interactive and interesting.
- RB organizes day lectures into a 2 hour block for main topics and a 1 hour block for extra examples etc for those who need more.
- Assignment is due Sunday. Students will have 2 checkpoints and several extra previews.
- This unit is still using Blackboard.
- There are about 70 students enrolled into this unit which is offered in the evenings this semester.

#### **General Issues**

- Web-CT had problems with Firefox 3 (week 3-4) but has been fixed now.
- Students preferred Moodle to Blackboard. Blackboard opened one thing at a time whereas Moodle allowed multiple pages to be opened. Students were advised that eventually all units would be using Moodle.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year labs will be open for 1<sup>st</sup> year students when they are free because 1<sup>st</sup> year labs are always full.
- There will be suggestion boxes set up for each level near the assignment boxes. Students will be encouraged to provide feedbacks on unit matters etc. This feedback will only be read by HoD and the Director of Teaching.

**Meeting finished:** 2pm

**Next Meeting:** 8<sup>th</sup> April 2009