

DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTING ~ MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
Minutes of the 100-Level Liaison Committee Meeting
20 April 2010 1pm

Present:

Student Representatives	Units	Student ID
Michelle Fox	COMP115	
Sajeda Khushbakht	ISYS100, ISYS104	
Kedar Malgaonkar	COMP115	
Sam Marks	COMP115	
Doug Shearman	COMP115	

Staff Representatives	Units
Bernard Mans	Head of Department, Chair
Ros Ballantyne	COMP125
Matt Cabanag	Science IT/Labs
Christophe Doche	Director of Teaching
Matthew Mansour	ISYS100, ISYS104
Diego Molla Aliod	COMP125
Dominic Verity	COMP115
Melina Chan	Executive Officer
Rosemary Elliott	Minutes

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

BM welcomed all and reported that Mike Johnson and Tony Sloane had sent their apologies for the meeting as they had been unable to travel back from Europe over the weekend due to the volcanic eruption in Iceland. Apologies had also been received from Anthony Tsui.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

BM noted the follow-up action from the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 March.

a) Selection of Majors

MJ had contacted staff in Student Services regarding student concerns about having to select a major at the time of enrolment. Staff have advised that these issues will be resolved prior to the next enrolment period.

b) People and Planet Unit information

RE has written to staff in the Science Centre regarding People and Planet Units listed on the website and whether this information could be set out in a more user-friendly way. At this point, no response has been received.

Action: RE to further follow-up with staff regarding layout of the People and Planet Unit information on the website.

There was general discussion on the People and Planet Units that had been selected by Computing students, and it was noted that these included units in philosophy, political theory and human resource management.

3. UNIT MATTERS

COMP115: Unit Convenor- Dominic Verity, Tony Sloane

Lectures:

- DS reported that he had put the minutes of the last Liaison Committee meeting on the Moodle site but that no issues had been raised by students. One student had commented that they had not been able to attend some lectures because of transport and lecture timing issues, and had found the iLectures very helpful.
- SM commented that some students are looking at programming for the first time and that it may be beneficial for them to review some of material on the COMP125 site.
- DS said while he understood the theory of Processing because of his business background, he had difficulty with the applications which are graphically based.
- DV asked whether students found it helpful to look at programming from a different perspective.
- Students commented that Processing is relatively new and the material available is limited – a few more examples, not necessarily in lectures but perhaps later as files, would be helpful for students. Some different bounce functions would also be good.

Action: DV to provide some additional examples on Processing for students.

Tutorials and Practicals:

- There were no specific issues raised; see Assignment and Labs sections in the minutes for related comments.

Assignment:

- SM reported that the two assignments each required a learning curve.
- DS commented that he found the first assignment to be straightforward while the second assignment has been very difficult.
- DV reminded students that questions can be asked in class - KM said the assignment had been discussed briefly in his class, eg how bouncing works.
- There was a feeling that some of the forum posts had been a bit “cryptic” in terms of the amount of information provided.
- DV said that he will discuss in lectures the types of questions that can be posted in forums.

Action: DV to discuss forum posts on the second assignment in lectures.

Labs:

- SM expressed concern that some of the software had not been installed on computers correctly and said it was taking some time for students to resolve this problem. MF concurred with these issues.
- DV said staff had been in contact with lab staff prior to classes commencing to ensure the correct permissions were in place.
- BM commented that the labs had been used during the break, so there may have been some timing issues with installing everything properly before classes commenced.

Action: DV to liaise with IT staff to ensure software is installed properly in E6A110 and E6A112.

ISYS100: Unit Convenor – Matthew Mansour

Lectures:

- SK reported that the lectures were proceeding very well.

Tutorials and Practicals:

- The tutorials and practicals are good and the tutors are very helpful.

Assignments

- No issues were raised.

Labs:

- No issues were raised.

ISYS104: Unit convenor - Jian Yang

Lectures:

- SK said the lectures were fun and the staff have been very helpful.

Tutorials:

- SK considered that there was not adequate time in tutorials to cover all the work required. MF commented that this did not seem to be an issue in her class.
- It was noted that the tutorials include 50 questions plus a quiz in one hour. The solution for the problem covered in the most recent tutorial was 22 pages.
- MM said the general feedback he had received in lectures was that the material to be covered in tutorials was quite lengthy, and he will further discuss this with JY.

Assignment

- SK commented that the assignment was fair, and that this view seemed to be representative of the student body.

4. GENERAL ISSUES

a) Labs

- SM commented that E6A110 often had problems with computers not working, missing chairs etc.
- MC acknowledged that there are hardware issues in the lab and reported that the Department is currently in the process of replacing computers. Supplier issues may also be contributing to the delay. It was noted that the labs have a very high volume of traffic compared to other Faculty labs.
- BM said the Department needs to control access to the labs as non-Computing students have used facilities in the past.

Action: Students to notify ScienceIT staff as soon as possible regarding any problems in the E6A labs. ScienceIT to make sure that casual staff maintaining the labs notify ScienceIT of issues.

b) Wireless

- DS commented that he has had problems connecting on MacquarieOneNet and so has to use Macquarie University Wireless which is scheduled to disappear.
- SM reported that he visits the IT Helpdesk weekly because of wireless connection problems and slow downloads.
- MF reported similar problems with wireless access.
- MC reported that the wireless facilities are under control of CentralIT and ScienceIT cannot do anything about it.

Action: BM and MC to discuss wireless problems with the Faculty and Central IT.

Action: Students to keep the Department informed of wireless issues.

c) New Library

KM asked when the new Library will open. BM advised that this will be in early 2011 and the Library will be open 24/7. An important feature will be the meeting rooms where students will be able to meet for group projects.

d) Student Representation

BM thanked students for their time and participation as representatives on the 100-Level Liaison Committee. Feedback from students is greatly appreciated by the Department. BM will write a letter formally thanking students for their involvement in the Department's activities at the conclusion of the semester.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at 1:00pm on Tuesday, 11 May 2010 in E6A 357.

The meeting closed at 1:45pm.