

DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTING ~ MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
Minutes of the 200-Level and 300-Level Liaison Committee
Meeting
6th April 2009 1pm

Present:

Student Representatives	Units	Student ID
Addison McDermid	COMP225,247,249	
Shane Grimson-Smith	COMP225,247,249	
Thomas Jackson	COMP225,247,249	
David Black	COMP225,247,249	
Leungkai Yuen Hoilioong	COMP247,340,342	
Peter Shmidt	COMP340,ISYS326	
Sarah Hobbs	COMP323,330	

Staff Representatives	Units
Abhaya Nayak	Chair
Bernard Mans	HoD
Scott McCallum	COMP323
Debbie Richards	COMP340, 345/6
Peter Busch	ISYS302, ISYS360
Steve Cassidy	COMP249
Rolf Schwitter	COMP249
Ros Ballantyne	COMP225
Donna Hua	Administrative Officer
Manolya Kavakli	COMP330
Mehmet Orgun	ISYS326
Rajan Shankaran	COMP247
Mike Johnson	COMP342
Diego Molla	COMP348
Len Hamey	COMP342
Adam Shah	ScienceIT
Josef Pieprzyk	COMP343
Raina Kim	Minutes

Apologies:

Annabelle McIver, Leszek Maciaszek

Meeting started 1:05pm

This was a combined meeting with the 200 level, 300 level student representatives and the academics.

UNIT MATTERS

ISYS201: Jian Yang

No student representative attended for this unit.

- The unit started gently with the basics and have developed into more difficult material.
- The 1st assignment is based on the tutorial and practical questions. Students should have no major problems since basic knowledge of softwares are required for this assignment.

COMP225: Ros Ballantyne

Practicals:

- More clarity in the practicals and tutorials since the last meeting. Students find the classes better.

Tutorials:

- Tutorial classes had low attendance perhaps due to the online facility. This was good for the students attending the classes since they were allocated more time for help.
- Monday afternoon tutorial and practical classes had been cancelled because of the drop in the enrolment number. RB pointed out that more classes would be closed if the low attendance continued.

Assignments:

- Two weeks extension was given for Assignment 1. Some students found this to be quite helpful because of the heavy workload from Maths. Although some students did not agree with the extension since their assignments were ready to be submitted. He would have preferred 2 to 3 days extension.
- The accounts for a few students were cancelled due to gaming and therefore caused a problem in delivering the assignments.
- Student wanted a clearer outline of the assignment.
- Assignment 2 seems to be better than the first.

COMP247: Rajan Shankaran

Lectures:

- MH has finished his part of the lectures. RS will start this week.
- It takes too long to download a word file on Blackboard. Students prefer pdf files.
- Students want the slides without lines.

Practicals:

- There is a technical issue in connecting the virtual machines. This could be due to network being too restrictive. RS and CTS staff have been checking every Monday morning where the most problem occurs. The cause of this problem has not yet been identified. It will be very helpful to have technical support personnel available on site every Monday morning. RS and AS will look into the problem.
- Students would like the tutors to explain the tasks at the start of the classes. RS pointed out that the tutors were advised to explain in the beginning.

Assessment:

- Michael's assignment is due in week 8.

- Student felt that there was an inconsistency in marking for the quiz. MH had given clear instructions for marking. Student wanted the questions to be more detailed with specific instructions. RS advised that the answers should be precise.

COMP249: Rolf Schwitter

Tutorials and Practicals:

- The portfolio will be marked this week and handed out along with the suggestions.
- Some students find Python, which is not covered extensively in the lectures, quite difficult.
- Python is covered more in the practicals, and as long as the students follow the work closely they should not have a problem.
- Students are advised to use the mixed class for any queries.
- Student feels that Python is similar to C++. The majority of the problem occurs in indentation and needs a lot of testing.
- Student would like testing to be introduced earlier in the stage.

Assignments:

- Close to finish marking the CSS websites. The marks will be finalised this week and will be out shortly.
- Some students ended up with two websites. SC advised that if two identical results were received from the same person, one will be filtered.
- Student asked if a different Browser version would affect marking. SC would look into it.

COMP323: Scott McCallum

Lectures:

- Student finds the lectures very dry with too much theory and not enough examples.
- Many students are distracted and talk during the lectures. Student has attempted to talk to the lecturer.
- 15 students are enrolled into the unit but only 8 attend the classes.

Practicals:

- Practical are a little confusing.
- Practical have a list of tasks to do but requires no submission, therefore they can be done in own time.

Tutorials:

- The classes are interesting but dry.
- In the earlier sessions there were a lot more interaction with the tutors. SM has made changes and advised that improvement is on the way.
- Student feels the classes have improved a bit.

COMP330: Manolya Kavakli

- Student had positive comments about this unit.

Practicals:

- Student is happy with the practicals and finds it quite helpful.

Tutorials:

- Student is generally happy with the tutorials.
- Students work in groups.

Assignments:

- The assignment is new this year which involves much more work than the past years. It is also time consuming.
- A lot more code examples were given out but required more work. Student took a massive time to complete the assignment. It was very hard to estimate how much time should be spent to complete an assignment. AN advised the student to ask around for an average time spent.

COMP340: Debbie Richards

- Project plan is due 1st May which is worth 10%.
- Only the templates are given.

COMP342: Len Hamey

Lectures:

- Student finds the lectures quite good.

Tutorials and Practicals:

- Student finds the practicals pointless and does not have a clue what to do.
- Low attendance in the practicals classes. MJ expressed a bit of ambivalence as to how best to utilize mixed-mode classes (tut+prac) as an educational tool.
- Student does not receive immediate feedback. There is no motivation to do the tutorial questions before the class although they are readily available online.
- MJ advised that towards the end of the semester only tutorials will be conducted.

ISYS326: Mehmet Orgun

Lectures:

- The attendance to the lectures is very poor. Out of 46 enrolled only about 14 attend. This maybe due to the availability of ilectures.
- Students are happy with the ilectures.
- Many students rely only on the lecture slides, but the slides do not have all the material covered in the lectures.
- There are two textbooks used in this unit. Student feels the books have a lot of materials but there is inconsistency in the information covered e.g. syntax.
- Object-oriented database should only be high level overview.
- Some topics are not covered extensively. MO advised that some issues regarding the coverage of the topics would be considered during course review.

Tutorials:

- Students are happy with the tutorials and have a high attendance.

Practicals:

- Student feels the material in the practicals jump around a lot.
- Audio issues that adequate audio equipment is not provided for videos. Students need to bring their own headphones.

General Issues:

- Some students only use lecture slides for information without attending the lectures. Lecturers should make it worthwhile for students to attend the lectures.
- Getting together the 2nd and the 3rd year students has brought more contribution and has been a very informative session for all. Perhaps an open forum should be arranged for the 2nd and 3rd students in the future. 1st year students will be done separately.
- BM mentioned that a focus group will be arranged this year.
- Suggestion box is up on the assignment boxes with posters on the noticeboards in the labs. Students are encouraged to pass on valuable comments. MC will put it on the screen saver in the labs.

Meeting finished at 2:25pm.

Next Meeting

200 level -12 May 2009

300 level -11 May 2009