

DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTING ~ MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
Minutes of the 300-Level Liaison Committee Meeting
19 October 2010 1pm

Present:

| Student Representatives | Units | Student ID |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| David Black | COMP347, 332, 340 | |
| Shane Grimson-Smith | COMP332, 333, 340 | |
| Daniel Kenji Toyama | COMP332, 333, 355, ISYS303 | |
| Steen Cummings | COMP332, 333 | |
| Ollie Wang | ISYS301, ISYS303, ISYS355, COMP344 | |
| Peter Schmidt | COMP332, 333, ISYS303 | |
| Den Allen Angeles | COMP344, ISYS303, ISYS301, ISYS355 | |

| Staff Representatives | Units |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Annabelle Mclver | Chair |
| Bernard Mans | COMP333, Head of Department |
| Tony Sloane | COMP332 |
| Rajan Shankaran | COMP347 |
| Michael Hitchens | COMP344 |
| Abhaya Nayak | COMP329 |
| Les Bell | COMP344 |
| Rolf Schwitter | COMP329 |
| Matthew Roberts | ISYS303 |
| Len Hamey | COMP347 |
| Christophe Doche | Director of Teaching |
| Dominic Verity | COMP332 |
| Jian Yang | ISYS301 |
| Melina Chan | Executive Officer |
| Jackie Walsh | Minutes |

Apologies:

Frank Moisiadis

Meeting started 1:04 pm

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

UNIT MATTERS

COMP332: Unit Convenor – Tony Sloane

- Good.
- Wish assignment could be released earlier so can start working on.
- TS will return marks this afternoon. Coding done well but testing and report not particularly well.
- 2nd assignment will be harder.
- Writing report was a bit hard – did not know what to say.
- TS advised that trying to encourage you to think more about what you are doing and why. First one is lets see what you can do.
- Running very well – enjoying the course.
- Lectures and LOTW very good.
- Tuts/pracs good.
- Assignment was interesting, though ideas for extensions hard to come by.
- Also, perhaps a demo video of building the first parser or how to interpret SBT/Kiama's compiler errors (which were present until you basically completed Part One of the assignment) would have been good.

COMP333: Unit Convenor – Igor Shparlinski

- Tut marking is a bit harsh. If we get one tiny thing wrong, we get zero for that question – put in a lot of work – a bit heartbreaking. Would like effort recognised.
- IS said that giving you a full mark is very misleading – a great disservice to you.
- IS will think about differentiating the marks a little bit more.
- BM will post the tutorial solutions.
- Presentations were a nice addition to our assignments. Student said it was a very enjoyable experience. First time he had done this in 3 years.
- BM advised that the quality of the presentations was very good.
- Lectures and Research Topics quite interesting (except for number theory partly due to its overlap with COMP343 Cryptography, though we acknowledge its necessity as an important foundation for what we need to do).
- Tutorials seem to be quite brief with few questions.
- Some points on Assignment 1 Part B (group work): Good – e.g. able to take advantage of previous assignment, able to work with a partner, able to share algorithms and ideas with other groups. Not so good – e.g. 2nd set of automated tests very different to previous tests, were also released close to assignment deadline and initially did not comply with input specs. Interesting – e.g. working on what we believe is an NP-complete/hard problem, not very satisfying to some students.

ISYS301: Unit Convenor – Peter Busch

- Assignment ok.

- There is a problem with BPM Workbench – the software seems to have a bug and it will not perform the calculation function.
- PB advised that the calculation could be performed manually.
- AM suggested putting a note on Blackboard to this effect and PB advised he would do this.
- Lecture pretty good – moved on topics smoothly.

ISYS303: Unit Convenor – Matthew Roberts

- Assignment – major project – bit hard to distribute the work between team mates.
- MR aware of situation and that is the main purpose of people coming to see him.
- MR can offer something outside of spec.
- For students that have come to see MR so far, this has worked quite well. MR can customise the work that can get them the mark.
- Only about 60% of students have come to see MR or email him.
- MR has told students a number of times they can come and see him, not sure what else he can do.
- Attendance at Wed prac is up – so this is good.
- MR: Recording???? Slides – no voice ???
- MR has stated these are back up recordings and are not to be relied upon.
- MR advised that only about 50% of students attending – Friday is the worst day.

COMP340: Unit Convenor – Frank Moisiadis (not present)

- Going well.
- Projects coming to an end.
- FM has asked for projects to be submitted by this Friday.

COMP344: Unit Convenor – Michael Hitchens (not present)

- Really good having two lecturers switching between technical and theory.
- Some students love to attend Michael's lectures and some love to attend Les's lectures.
- MH explained that the switching was because had to fit what topics Les was able to cover and when.
- MH: Assignment 1 due on 2nd Monday of break not 1st Monday. Will announce at Lecture. Will not announce when 2nd assignment due until first one due.
- Len asked if students prefer switching – one student liked another one didn't.
- MS advised that 344 was forced upon us because staffing not sorted. Discussions between two departments.
- Student asked if tutorial solutions would be published.
- MH advised to address question to Les for solutions for previous weeks.

COMP347: Unit Convenor – Rajan Shankaran

- Student questioned whether IP Version 6 would be covered in lectures. RS advised that LH does some lectures on IP Version 6.
- Student asked how to answer questions in quizzes. RS advised that in relation to quizzes the answers need to be precise, to the point and need not be lengthy.
- Lecture slides too long.
- Tuts good.
- Pracs getting better.

COMP355/ISYS355: Unit Convenor – Frank Moisiadis (not present)

- Regarding the project, the students tightened scope on what they were going to do and what they will implement.
- A lot of students got hammered with a lot of assignments last week.
- Students can be more clear with scope if they have discussion with Frank more. Frank advised students they could call him or email him any time.
- Only have two hours face-to-face contact hours every fortnight.
- Conflict within group on what they think is right – hard to resolve with Frank with only 2 hours every fortnight.
- Need someone outside of group.
- Questioned whether there was a project leader to resolve issues.

COMP329: Unit Convenor – Rolf Schwitter

- RS advised that last Tuesday nobody came to the Lecture.
- RS did not provide lecture notes online and then all students came back.
- When RS asked why students did not attend the Lecture, one student advised that MU is promoting the idea of free learning and therefore did not have to attend Lecture.
- Another student advised that they worked 5 days a week and therefore unable to attend the Lecture.
- Another student advised that they had a timetable clash. RS checked this and found it to be untrue.
- RS advised that students not attending Lectures are not performing very well.
- MR 's experience is that has dropped below a critical mass that allows good discussion to happen. Looking for suggestions to get attendance up besides punitive measures.
- RS advised that it does not say anywhere that we have to provide lecture notes.
- DV said that we might have to bow to the inevitable and record Lectures – iLectures.
- AN tells his students that his Lecture notes are not self-sufficient and just bare bones Lecture notes. Rolf's Lecture notes are self-sufficient.
- MH said that students have not been attending Lectures for a long time and passing the unit. He is personally not in favour of catering to this. Does not think we should forget the effort that students have put in that have turned up.

- MR advised that for some students this is outside of their control, they are working etc.
- AM asked students how they felt about recording Lectures – iLectures?
- One student thinks this is just an excuse for Lecturers to not turn up.

General comments on labs:

- Can Office 2007 can be updated so you can save as pdf?

Action Points: Science IT to be advised.

- Moodle is no longer sending emails. This is on the to-do list.

AM thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for their participation this semester.

The meeting closed at 2.04 pm.