

DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTING ~ MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
Minutes of the 300-Level Liaison Committee Meeting

12th May 2011 1pm

Present:

Student Representatives	Units
Nathan Gorney	ISYS302, ISYS326, ISYS360
Scott Buckley	COMP343, COMP348
Adrian Melara	ISY302, ISYS326, ISYS360

Staff Representatives	Units
Len Hamey (LM)	Chair of the Committee
Bernard Mans (BM)	Head of Department
Manning Li (ML)	ISYS302
Mehmet Orgun (MO)	ISYS326
Christophe Doche (CD)	COMP343, Director of Teaching
Robert Dale (RD)	COMP348
Mark Johnson (MJ)	COMP348
Debbie Richards (DR)	COMP365
Richard Miller (RM)	ScienceIT
Darius Taslim (DT)	ScienceIT
Melina Chan (MC)	Executive Officer
Sylvian Chow (SC)	Department Administrator (Minutes)

Apologies: Gary Lau (Unit – ISYS360)
Jye Murray (Stu Rep : COMP348)

Meeting started at 1:05pm

LH welcomed all for attending the meeting.

Matters arising from previous minutes – Len Hamey

- 1) ISYS326 – using OneIDs to connect to Oracle has now been fixed
- 2) COMP348 Mixed Class – students are happy now with the pace of the class
- 3) Library – currently open from 8am – 10pm. Once it moves on to the next stage, the opening hours will be extended from 10pm – 2am and working groups can use rooms for assignments/projects. In addition, remote access to computers can be arranged with ScienceIT people if needed.
- 4) Missing profile – is now fixed

Unit Matters

ISYS302: Unit Convenor – Manning Li

Assignment:

- Assignment Due (together with submission of presentation slides) – students were generally confused as to when exactly slides need to be submitted. ML confirmed that slides are to be submitted together with their assignment. However, students are allowed to make slight changes after submission.
- Students are not sure how long the presentation they will need to do. ML suggested that students should check on Blackboard as Peter Busch has already made announcement in the Blackboard regarding full details of the presentation including timeslots and venue.
- Group Assignment – although group allocation has been made long time ago, and group members have been able to communicate with each other through Forum, it still appeared that some students did not get involved in the group assignment and contacted his/her assigned group at a very late stage. ML confirmed that peers evaluation will be taken into account when it comes to marks allocation.
- Students think Moodle is a better option as it has a build-in facility to send emails to students' accounts. It is confirmed that Blackboard will not be used and all Computing Units will be using Moodle next Semester.

ISYS326: Unit Convenor – Mehmet Orgun

2nd Assignment:

- It seemed pretty hard. MO confirmed that it was a different nature this time and assignment would be due in 2 weeks. In the meantime, should there be any issues, students can discuss with MO/tutor.

Lectures/Practical:

- It is good and no problem at all.

- There are two ways of accessing Oracle in the labs : SQLDeveloper and SQL*Plus. SQLDeveloper is the one which is working at the moment.

COMP343: Unit Convenor – Christophe Doche

It is pretty good.

Assignment:

- Students asked if submission can be made available for a bit longer time.
- Moodle reminder of assignment is great.
- Assignment is pretty hard but is considered appropriate by students.

Lab Issues:

- Stu Rep was frustrated about lab closing at 10pm. However, due to university policy regarding safety reasons, there will be no change.
- All software needed for the unit can be installed in student's own laptop – there is no further issue of the restricted accessing hours of the lab.

Other issues:

- A lot of students don't know C++ or programming, a review of the pre-requisite of the unit is raised (e.g. Maths would be deemed necessary).

COMP348: Unit Convenor – Robert Dale

Mixed Classes:

- Stu Rep advised that tutor has now changed and has been well prepared for his class. It is very helpful now.

Assignment:

- Students think it would be good if Python-example-codes could be given.
- 2nd Assignment is part of the transition from easier material in the first half to harder material in the second half.
- 3rd Assignment should be easy if students have mastered their knowledge.

Other issues:

- Stu Rep thinks that COMP249 needs NOT to be a pre-requisite for COMP348.

COMP365: Unit Convenor – Deborah Richards

- There was no student representative from this unit present at the meeting.

Any Other General Matters

Lectures:

- Academic is concerned about the low attendance in all 300 level units. Students generally feel that they could cope without attending the lecture and would prefer to read the lecture notes/slides on their own and work at their own pace. Students also commented that this would also depend on the style of the lecturer. For an added-value lecture (i.e. lecturer do not just read from the slides, but allow students to ask questions) which would certainly attract more students.
- Students commented that even if lecture materials would be made available to them ahead of time (i.e. in a way to allow students to have more time for questions during Lecture time), it would still be highly unlikely that students would read them before they come to the lecture.
- Stu Rep commented that some tutors could not answer questions he asked but found that talking to the lecturer was indeed much better. MJ also commented that in the contrary, some students might find it much more easier to understand the ideas/concepts while they were explained by the tutors instead of the lecturer.
- Generally students felt that they would be able to master technical details by themselves and could refer to textbooks for help and could also do online tutorial by themselves. Current teaching models are acceptable by students.

Lab Issues:

Lab issues that was raised from previous liaison meeting (and solved by now):

- Unable to connect to SQL Server - Fixed by Lee Coady (using SQLDeveloper)
- Printer in 114 can't print duplex (because the duplexer is broken)
- Printer for students defaulted to 119 (likely because that one is duplex capable to avoid single-sided printing)
- SQLPLUS (a different method to connect to SQL Server) - still not working, but since SQLDeveloper method is working, pressure is off in pursuing this at the moment.

Assignment:

- Stu Rep said that he forgot to click the button named "Submit for Final Marking" for his assignment while doing the online submission. It was explained that the design of it was entirely for students having the options to upload their assignments many times before the submission deadline.
- Stu Rep also found it very useful having sample assignments provided for them.

LH thanked everyone and announced that this was our last meeting for this Semester. LH would be glad to see all those familiar faces in the next Semester.

The meeting closed at 2:00 pm.