Present:

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<th>Student Representatives</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tr>
<td>Emmanuel Chamala</td>
<td>ISYS224, COMP229, COMP255</td>
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<td>Colin Coker</td>
<td>ISYS224, COMP226, COMP229, COMP255</td>
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<td>Joseph Mahoney</td>
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<td>Douglas Shearman</td>
<td>ISYS224, COMP229, COMP255</td>
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<td>Mark Dras</td>
<td>Chair</td>
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<td>Mehmet Orgun</td>
<td>ISYS224</td>
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<td>Len Hamey</td>
<td>COMP226</td>
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<td>Michael Johnson</td>
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<td>Dominic Verity</td>
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<td>Deborah Richards</td>
<td>COMP255</td>
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<td>Richard Miller</td>
<td>Science IT</td>
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<td>Margot McNeill</td>
<td>iLearn/LTC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bernard Mans</td>
<td>Head of Department</td>
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<td>Christophe Doche</td>
<td>Director of Teaching</td>
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<td>Melina Chan</td>
<td>Executive Officer</td>
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<td>Sylvian Chow</td>
<td>DA (Minutes)</td>
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<td>Toni Kernick</td>
<td>DA</td>
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Apologies: Samuel Marks, Frank Moisiadis, Ian Joyner, Darius Taslim, Christopher Walker

Meeting started at 1:03 pm

MD asked if there was any time constraint, otherwise, the meeting would be run in the order of the units. However, students would like to raise some general issues first.

Any General Issues:
- Students would like to thank Lecturers and Convenors for granting extensions in submitting their assignments due to various issues with the Labs problems (e.g. very slow speed in transmission, connectivity to database and SQL, students could not log in etc.)
• RM confirmed that ScienceIT had since resolved the matter, however, still not entirely sure of the cause of the problem. It was suspected that the server Claudius was under excessive load and after getting some work done to the replacement of connection, logging in went back to normal. Last Wed was really bad and Thur was better. Things has now gone back to normal and appeared to be more acceptable. RM admitted that performance was not as good this Semester and especially for the past few weeks.
• Students thanked ScienceIT for acting immediately and fixing the problem as fast as they possibly could (i.e. Student lodged a request on Sunday and received a quick response from ScienceIT).
• DR said that for COMP255, only one group asked for extension. She asked if it would be better if she gave extension to everyone. DR did not automatically grant extension to all students this time round. Student reps said there were no problem for them and they received no complaints from students. Guessed everyone was happy about it.
• For any future incidents, students please feel free to raise it to the Unit Convenor immediately.

UNIT MATTERS

ISYS224 : Unit Convenor – Mehmet Orgun, Frank Moisiadis
Lectures:
• Students said that it was dragging a little bit, but not much of a broader context for the technical material.
• It was said that there were a lot of examples of each model. However, students said it did not tell them why they use this one. Students would like to see how they were related to their assignments and appreciated if this issue could be addressed in the future.
• MO pointed out that because there were no longer tutorials in ISYS224, students were missing out on some learning experiences.

Assignments:
• Students said last week, SQL*Plus was not working. Students had to use SQL Developer. MO said students indeed could upload scripts and run them faster with SQL*Plus but similar options are available under SQL Developer via menus.
• Students said they would prefer to have weekly submission to ensure that they were keeping up with their work. Some suggested once every few weeks with a few related questions would be good.
• MD admitted that weekly submission was not quite as much in 200-level units.
• MJ remarked that COMP226 had had to give up tutorials, but he was unwilling to give up on them completely and still required students to submit weekly tutorial material. If there were common misconceptions then they were worked through in lectures.
• MO welcomed the idea of having a submission once every few weeks since ISYS224 did not have tutorials.
Practicals:
No issues.

Others:
- Students said the video tutorials in COMP229 were very good and that had helped increasing the contact hours. Something that ISYS224 may consider.

COMP226: Unit Convenor – Len Hamey, Michael Johnson

Lectures:
- MD asked if the Lecture appeared to be better and easier to follow as it was mentioned last time that it was a bit hard to follow.
- Students said that the current topics were a bit hard like “Hierarchy” which they skimmed through a bit and it was considered more balanced. In general, materials were still hard. But what had seemed hard before now seemed easier. MJ remarked that this suggested good learning.
- MD asked how that unit fitted into other units and students said COMP225 came before this and they were enjoying the subject.

Assignments:
- Students asked when they would be getting back their assignment marks. MJ said that they would be returned when he returned, next week. (Post-meeting note : Since the meeting, lectures have been rearranged a bit and MJ won’t be returning until a week later).
- Students said 2nd Assignment was superficially easier, but indeed was difficult as you dug more into it. They admitted it was quite hard and more challenging.
- One student worried about the testing program. LH said to the student that he should be more confident. It was highly recommended that students tested their programs as they went along and should not leave it to the end to do the testing.
- Students asked if the current tutorial submission questions had been put up yet and LH confirmed “No” but it would be out soon and an extension would be given to students.

COMP229: Unit Convenor – Dominic Verity

Lectures:
- Students commented that the pre-recorded videos were very helpful. While videos were not regarded as a replacement for lectures and face-to-face engagement, they were seen as a very useful supplement to those modes.
- MD pointed out that Rolf’s experience with making videos for COMP249 was that it involved a lot of re-shootings, which meant that a 2 hr video took many more hours to actually record.
- Given the investment involved, it was suggested that it would be good to keep a publicly accessible library of all of these video materials.
The unit was also commended for the way that it provided materials to support students at all levels. This included detailed problem solving "walk throughs" to support weaker students and links to further reading to extend and deepen the understanding of the stronger ones.

One student representative pointed out that the week 10 mixed class exercises seemed to significantly more difficult than those of previous weeks. DV said that this was partly because these questions were the first of a batch of exam style questions... to start the exam preparation process.

DV also pointed out that the particular topics covered in week 10 (threads / concurrency and code refactoring) were advanced topics and that, as a result, the questions in that week had been taken from the harder (distinction / high distinction) section of some previous exam papers.

DV said that students would find specific information to help with these questions in the lecture notes on threads and concurrency.

This opened a general discussion, in which MD commented that under the University's standards based assessment system examination questions were often graded by difficulty. Students of differing abilities and interests were encouraged to only answer those questions which suited their level of expertise.

One student representative said he did not like the standards-based assessment system applied in the 1st year.

In reference to COMP125 – some student representatives said they did not want to be forced to do the pass-level stuff; sometimes they just wanted to skip that and do the harder material.

CD commented that it was important that all of the material of a unit should be examined and that all students gained a valuable learning opportunity by engaging with questions at all levels of complexity.

It was also pointed out that many students believe that they have mastered the basic material in a unit, but that the only way that examiners could be sure was to ask questions about all of the material in a unit.

Exams:
- DV said that sample exam questions would be made available from week 10 onward, and that complete sample / past papers would be made available in week 12/13.

Other issues:
- One student mentioned that he had been having difficulty visualizing what the bush fire simulation in assignment 2 should look like and how it should behave. Other students pointed out that many examples could be found on the Internet, and that some of these were linked to the assignment specification. DV promised to look into the possibility of making a video to demonstrate this kind of application - but also said that he would certainly make sure that links to further resources of this kind would be posted to the assignment 2 forum on iLearn.
COMP255: Unit Convenor – Debbie Richards

Lectures:
- Students said materials given in the Lecture (in the last couple of weeks) were not relevant. Students acknowledged the time and effort IJ put in, however, students would really like to see how philosophy and thinking apply to it. DR will talk to IJ.
- Students said they were given some background information. However, they were not 100% sure what was examinable. Students said it was pushed out too far! It was suggested that IJ should condense some background materials.
- Students were asked if the materials would be useful for the next assignment and they said that assignment 2 was not very specific. They were not sure how it applied to the case study. It seemed that the lecture materials were not very relevant and made it hard for them to do their assignments.

Assignment:
- Student said assignment was quite daunting. It was really quite time consuming. DR said it was a lot less than what was originally planned. IJ would be giving further relevant guidance via lectures and mixed classes. But the key goal was for students themselves to think about how to apply the principles and concepts being covered in lectures to the case studies.

Other issues:
- DR asked if students had seen the message at the Forum and they replied they had not yet. Issue was raised about students not having the latest edition of the textbook.
- DR said the textbook and notes were quite tightly referring to each other. However, differences existed between the 8th edition and 9th edition (around 30%-40% changes; e.g. slides are exceptionally different!). The unit had not used the previous edition, there was a different author last year. But some students had found an online copy of the previous version.
- MD confirmed that after a lot of detailed discussion academics did not support the idea of having COMP255 and COMP229 be corequisite. Students would be encouraged to do the project unit in 3rd year level and that is where the different approaches to software engineering would be linked up.
- DR encouraged students to send feedback/comments to her.
- Students said they would like to handle real life situation with some actual/concrete examples, at a small scale like a mini project and be allowed to choose the case study. DR pointed out that this is what the assignments are doing and both involve case studies.

Peerwise:
- Put up a question – to help other students to study. Need feedback from students.
• There are about 80 questions, but some of them are trivial or not useful. DR said she would remove some questions.
• While there could be errors because the questions and answers are made up by peers, it means you have to keep your brain switched on when you answer the question.
• A collection of good questions forms as it goes along.
• DR asked students to give her feedback if they like it or not, and whether it is good or bad.

**iLearn (Moodle):**
• Regarding Forum – one student said it did not show when forum questions were read. Some students said they did not have that problem. MN thought it would be something to do with the setting. MN would ensure some information was made available to help people to check this.
• Students said Moodle was more transparent – not like Blackboard.
• Students said there were different looks and feels. Students asked if there would be any chance of getting a standardised version.
• Moodle has been used for quite a while, students hope to see the ease of using it.
• Some said it would be good to have a standard template – it would be more consistent that way.
• MN confirmed iLearn was done manually and just out of observation, there was no complaint so far.
• It was discussed that academics might like to have a few options – therefore, a range of templates might be suggested.
• It was asked what LTC was based on to select the best template. CD said we would collect feedback from students through Focus group and then define which one would be a better template.
• Student remarked that COMP226 material was in a really good format. MD asked MJ about that, and MJ explained that while iLearn is really important for the University, often for our students it didn’t provide the learning environment that was best for them. Thus COMP226 had a minimal presence on iLearn linking to materials outside iLearn which presented students with basic html pages (no distractions, no calendar, no mention of other units, no banners etc, just the problems that they needed to concentrate carefully on in their learning). The student remarked that students in fact bypassed iLearn for comp226 and preferred the simple web arrangement.

MD thanked students for giving their opinions and wished them good luck for their exams.

**Meeting finished at 2:03pm.**