Minutes of the 200-Level Liaison Committee Meeting

9th May 2011 1pm

Present:

**Student Representatives** | **Units**
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Colin Coker | ISYS254, COMP225, COMP249
Samuel Marks | COMP225, COMP247, COMP249
Chris Walker | COMP247, COMP249

**Staff Representatives** | **Units**
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Michael Johnson (MJ) | Chair of the Committee
Bernard Mans (BM) | Head of Department
Christophe Doche | Director of Teaching
Steve Cassidy | COMP249
Len Hamey (LH) | COMP247
Rajan Shankaran (RS) | COMP247
Diego Molla-Aliod | COMP249
Yan Wang (YW) | ISYS254
Mark Dras | COMP225
Richard Miller (RM) | Science IT
Darius Taslim (DT) | Science IT
Melina Chan (MC) | Executive Officer
Jackie Walsh (JW) | Department Administrator (Minutes)

Apologies:
- Igor Shparlinski (COMP225).
Meeting started at 1:05pm

MJ welcomed all to the meeting.

Unit Matters

COMP225: Mark Dras

Lectures:

- Student Representative: MD one of the best lecturers he has had. MD taught well and students actually learn. Animation is good. Having clear mathematical structure is good. When student rep asks a question, MD answers in real time.
- Student Rep: Has part B of COMP225 about it – not getting a great sense of what other part of COMP225 promised.
- MD: Something going to cover in next few weeks….binary trees etc. Two aspects – new data structures to handle new problems or more efficient way of doing things i.e. problems encountered before and handled with old data structures. Binary search tree as an example – will learn some new more efficient data structures for the same problem.

Assignments:

- Student Rep: Assignment 3 is more a task. Other assignments he has done are more a project. It is a bit disappointing.
- Another Student Rep liked the assignment.
- MD: Wrote assignment from scratch this time. Tutors did it and because it was new, MD did it too, not sure how long it takes. Accused in past of making things too hard.
- Student Rep: Found other two assignments from IS just as challenging.
- Student Rep: 225 tuned really well.
- Student Rep: A lot of students are afraid of 225. Get scared of Maths stuff – maybe should do this in week 3.
- Department is doing a review of the transition from 125 to 225.
- Student Rep spoke to other students who had mixed views about the structure to the assignment.
- Student Rep: 125 assignment is very hand-holding, whereas 225 is open slather.
- MD replied that this is actually the intention.
- Student Rep liked the 225 style but it would be good to have more introduction on how to do things.

COMP247: Unit Convenor – Len Hamey

- Student Rep found the website not very good.
- RS fixed it – looks like it was a browser problem. Firefox is more readable.
- Student Rep has slight dyslexia and found going through the website hard – did not know he had an assignment till other students started to submit it. Having everything in one space would be good. If you have to dig around on individual sites you will sometimes miss things.
- RS: Moral of the story is that if things got moved into Moodle it would be good.
- SC: In transition at moment – new system – so is unfortunate.
- Student Rep said an email reminder about assignments would be good.
- MJ suggested a reminder in lectures would be better as students email inboxes can get too full.
- LH said he was pretty sure he would have mentioned assignments in lectures – maybe some students were not there – cannot guarantee this would have been captured in iLectures. If Moodle announcements are centralised – students may benefit. Not ready to move into Moodle in this unit as yet.
- Student Rep asked why the unit does not use online submission.
- SC said that Moodle will do online submission but not all units are using Moodle. Blackboard is severely broken.
- MD advised that a whole lot of work was done before semester on getting class lists into Moodle and it is quite a lot of work.
- RS said lets experiment with online submission with Moodle and see how it goes.
- LH advised that the problem with online submission of documents is that we have to print it all, get it marked, annotate it and return. Makes more sense to get it in paper form. It is amazing how having to hand in paper based assignments increases the lecture attendance.
- Student Rep: There is an over information issue on website.
- Student Rep advised that since the 1st lecture that RS presented he has not attended and he found that RS was screaming at the students.
- RS replied that he naturally had a really loud voice. For iLecture students he has to put on a microphone – if he unplugs the microphone, he is not sure that iLecture students would hear.
- BM advised that with a wireless microphone, you can tune around a bit more.
- RS replied that he was here to teach and that students have the right to stop him during the lecture if they do not understand, rather than wait to the end of the lecture.
- Student Rep: Peter Nicola is a good prac teacher who is very helpful. He reinforces the material even after the students have completed the task.

**COMP249: Unit Convenor – Steve Cassidy**

**Lectures:**

- Student Rep: Another one of the success units – enjoy it.
- Student Rep: Assignment is an ongoing project rather than tasks.
- Student Rep: A lot of students falling behind in the lectures.
- Student Rep: Students want something in the unit that forces them to come to pracs.
• SC advised that 116/168 passed and 28 failed the test.
• SC: Do have prac submissions. Suggestions are welcome.
• SC: attendance at lectures is 50%.
• SC explained that iVideo lectures can do more than iLecture recording.
• Student rep suggested milestones in assignment submission.
• SC: Will reopen the assignment for submission.
• SC: Can see value in lecture for time-keeping. Lecture attendance not good.
• SC: It’s all a balancing act.
• SC: Will put out a survey about video lectures.
• Student Rep: Assignment 3 proposal is a bit daunting.
• SC explained that the idea of the proposal is to show it is your working.
• SC said he could extend the proposal. Trying to get you to think before you jump in.

ISYS254: Unit Convenor – Yan Wang

• Student Rep: Enjoying Javascript half of the unit. Questions whether it should be taught in the first half of the unit. Some people do not know programming and not taught till second half – maybe swap around.
• Student Rep: It is very hand holding – lingering too long on some things.
• Student Rep commented whether COMP115 be prerequisite for this unit.
• CD advised this was not possible due to requirements in some degrees.
• CD: Revising ISYS254 to remove programming content.
• YW explained why not introducing Javascript in the first half.
• YW: Design first and then programming.
• CD: Need to have a clearer idea of what Information Systems is.
• Student Rep: Good to have both streams in first year.
• CD: Planning to do that.
• CD: Need to talk about the different jobs you can do in IT.
• Student Rep advised that TS did this in COMP115.

General:

• DT: Everything smooth except Moodle crash over Easter. DT fixed.
• SC commented that DT was good at responding to his email.
• DT explained that one port is unstable. Had to reboot three times over Easter.
• Student Rep advised that the computers do not work every single time in 247 Lab (E6A 265).
• DT advised that this was a shared lab with Electronics and that an email had been received to advise that all computers will be replaced at the end of the semester.
• Student Rep advised that someone had left their password on a router. Suggested training whoever is running the lab how to get into router. Student Rep had to stay an extra half hour to fix this.
MJ thanked everyone for attending the meetings this semester and that their feedback was really appreciated.

The meeting closed at 2:10 pm