DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTING - MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
Minutes of the 200-Level Liaison Committee Meeting

11th September 2013 (Wednesday) @ 1pm

Present:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Representatives</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Heimlich</td>
<td>COMP255, COMP226,</td>
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<td>COMP229</td>
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<td>Ronald Hancock</td>
<td>COMP255, COMP229, ISYS224</td>
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<th>Staff Representatives</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mark Dras (MD)</td>
<td>Chair</td>
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<td>Bernard Mans (BM)</td>
<td>Head of Department</td>
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<td>Christophe Doche (CD)</td>
<td>Director of Teaching</td>
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<td>Len Hamey (LH)</td>
<td>COMP226</td>
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<td>Michael Johnson (MJ)</td>
<td>COMP226</td>
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<td>Deborah Richards (DR)</td>
<td>COMP255</td>
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<td>Mehmet Orgun (MO)</td>
<td>ISYS224</td>
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<td>Jian Yang (JY)</td>
<td>ISYS224</td>
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<td>Melina Chan (MC)</td>
<td>Executive Officer</td>
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<td>Phil Ingram (PI)</td>
<td>Science IT</td>
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<td>Amara Atif</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
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Apologies: Matthew Roberts
Meeting started at 1:05 pm – E6A 357.
The chair welcomed everyone to the second 200-level liaison meeting (week 7) for semester 2, 2013.

UNIT MATTERS

ISYS224: Database Systems
Unit Convenor: Mehmet Orgun
Lecturer: Jian Yang

Lectures & Workshops:

- Student representative (rep) said they are happy with the unit.
- Student rep added to the discussion that students found the lecture breakdown very convenient. 2 hours of lecture on Tuesday, followed by 1 hour of lecture case study on Friday, gives them enough time between the lectures to go through the unit material.
- Student rep said that tutorials are well designed and the practicals are good, challenging and interesting. The material covered in workshops is very closely related to the lecture content.

Assessment Tasks:

- Student rep said that students have some dissatisfaction on the marking of Assignment 1.
- JY said that she has discussed the marking criteria of Assignment 1 in the lectures.
- JY explained to student rep that students can contact the tutor who did the marking and students can always contact her if there are issues.

COMP255: Software Engineering
Unit Convenor: Deborah Richards
Lecturer: Michael Johnson

Lectures:

- Student reps said that the content of the lectures is good.
- They also added to the discussion that because of a 3 hour lecture scheduled on Monday night, a number of students do not stay in lectures to the very end. In contrast, the workshops are very full during the week.

Workshops:

- Student reps valued that workshops are good and organised. The tutors explained well at the start of the workshop on what topics were to be covered.
- The workshop material is informative based on the lecture content.
- Student reps said that the 2 hours workshops are full on and students did not have individual activities.
- Student reps said that they want more opportunity to work on their own and get feedback, such as drawing UML diagrams themselves in workshops and want feedback on their work.
- The workshops are full because they are compulsory; this has meant that students who don’t come to lectures expect recaps of lecture material, which makes it difficult to complete the assigned workshop material.

Assessment Tasks:

- Student reps reported that some students were surprised that the midterm test required them to draw UML diagrams and it did not have any MCQ questions. Though the student reps confirmed this had been made clear in lectures and workshops, DR also confirmed that in all previous years the midterm test involved UML and there are many past tests available on iLearn.
• Student reps said that some students are concerned about the midterm (MT) test as the MT was 45 minutes and on iLearn it was mentioned it would be 1 hour. Many students didn’t have enough time to complete the test.
• DR explained that the midterm test was never said to be 1 hour long. Later DR confirmed that the only mention of time was in lectures and the iLearn forum which stated, “Please note that the midterm test will be held in the first hour of the lecture in Week 7. It will start just after 6 pm, so don’t be late.”
• MD said since there was concern from students, Deborah and Mike should take this into account when presenting the exam results and mention this incident in the exam meeting. DR explained that they “had been given sufficient time for the level of difficulty of the test (in line with the timings in previous years) and they were given time warnings during the test, at half time and five minutes before the end via a microphone announcement and as requested by individuals via hand signals as there was no clock in the room. The misconception has only arisen because it was a three hour lecture slot. Usually it is not possible to run past the hour and take a full hour by the time students settle, receive instructions and the paper and papers are collected in time for vacating the room for the next class.” BM suggested to use the exam question paper template in the future for these kind of internal assessments to give clearer instructions to students.
• Regarding workshop activities, SR said sometimes they ended up in groups where other members were not engaged in the unit and they had to spend lots of time to make the group working. It was suggested to have weekly assessed submissions, take attendance and give marks for participation to address the issue. DR noted that weekly submissions and attendance are both marked, each worth 6%.

COMP229: Object-Oriented Programming Practices
Unit Convener: Matthew Roberts

Lectures & Workshops:
• Student reps said that lectures are very interesting and the content is covered quite well.
• One student rep (previously done COMP225) found the text book very good while the other student rep (previously not done COMP225) thought the text book does not fully contain/explain the relevant material.
• MD explained that the text book is not a reference book, rather a reading to enhance their learning process.
• Student reps said that they are happy with the workshops.

Assessment Tasks:
• Student reps said that the evaluation criteria for the assessment tasks should be specified with more clarity as the students found the difference between the Credit and Distinction of the evaluation criteria of Assignment 1 quite unclear.

COMP226: Computer Architecture
Unit Convener: Len Hamey
Lecturer: Michael Johnson

Lectures & Workshops:
• Student rep said that the lectures are really good yet the attendance has gone down since LH took over, probably because Len put the lecture notes online. The lectures are very informative that she seldom used the textbook.
• Student rep said that the practical work is quite flexible as students can do that in their own time.
• The tutor Scott is good, he has consultation time after his class, which is very convenient.
Assessment Tasks:

- Student rep found Assignment 1 very good.
- MJ asked how students felt about being required to do something extra after assignment 1 had been submitted. He explained how the Bug Report made students reflect upon what they had achieved in the programming exercise (rather than just handing it in and hoping for some marks). It also gave them a chance to earn more marks. But it had to be a surprise added on at the end. The SR reported that it was a good idea and that the students didn’t mind the surprise.

General

- SR reported that the assigned tasks seemed to help with the learning, so that rather than being extra tasks that had to be done as well as studying, they replaced the study time. In this unit, you’ll understand and accumulate the knowledge at the end by doing the work.

IT Support Matters

- Student reps showed their satisfaction with the lab environments and services except they complained about problems with the JUnit (Eclipse) on a few computers.
- CD suggested student reps to use their USB to run their JUnit from their workspace in Eclipse.
- Student reps showed their concern about the iLearn scheduled maintenance during the week without any notification.
- PI said that the students should be notified about the scheduled maintenance and suggested them to check with Informatics.
- The Wi-Fi access in the library was not good during the last few weeks.
- Phil said Science IT had received a request about automatic logging off students when the evacuation alarm went off. Len explained that there could be times which students were unsupervised and didn’t want to leave the labs and also students could have sent print jobs and not want other students to pick up their printouts. Some discussions carried out, BM mentioned that this plan will not cater for students connected on their laptops and suggested to emphasize the problem of the lack of fire warden at this level to the Faculty for their consideration.

The Meeting closed at 2:15 pm.