Department of Computing – Macquarie University
Minutes of the 300-level Liaison Committee Meeting
31 March 2015, 1pm in E6A357

Student Representatives | Units
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David Lewis (DL) | ELEC346, ISYS302
Natalie Batshon (NB) | ISYS302
Darce Le (DLe) (correspondence via email) | COMP330

Staff Representatives | Units
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Les Bell | COMP343
Stephen Smith | COMP355, ISYS355/8
Franck Cassez | ELEC436
Carl Svensson (CS) | ELEC436
Peter Busch | ISYS360
Len Hamey (LH) | COMP330
Mike Johnson | ELEC346
Malcolm Ryan | COMP352
Damian Jurd | ScienceIT
Melina Chan (MC) | Executive Officer
Annabelle McIver (AM) | Chair
Matt Cabanag | COMP330, Minutes
Mark Johnson | COMP348
Deborah Richards | PACE
IAN KRYCER | ISYS302, ISYS360
Christophe Doche (CD) | Head of Department

- Meeting started at 1:07pm.
- A very warm thanks to David Lewis for being the only student present at the beginning!
- Previous minutes was approved.
ELEC436 - Advanced Software Engineering

Mike Johnson

- SR: Concerned about 436 not having coalesced into a well-structured unit with solid timelines and uncertain tasks - had all been resolved.
- SR: Things were looking good now.

ISYS302 - Management of IT Systems and Projects

Ian Krycer

- SR: First half of the course really lent itself to “pop quiz” type questions, which were not terribly helpful. This issue had been addressed. No longer this way.
- SR: 2nd half of the unit was full of things that were useful and interesting.
- All looking pretty good as well.
- SR: Going pretty good. First assignment submitted. Quite happy with unit, no complaints.
- IK: remarked 2nd half will be more interesting, covering: mobile, social, wearable, cloud + guest speakers.
- MC: Remarked that the Timetable team needed more explanation about moving lectures from room: E7B T3. What was wrong with it?
- SR:
  - Hadn’t had a refresh on the projection system.
  - Rear projection, could not point laser
  - Top projection, front people strained necks looking up.
  - Room was too cold
  - T2 is much better since refurbished.
  - Not enough powerpoints along the rows for laptops.

COMP330 - Computer Graphics

Len Hamey, Matt Cabanag

- No students present, but email from SR was read out by AM.
- SR: Two hours together was more efficient. LH agreed that 2hrs + 1 format is good, not having to re-establish the context for the 2nd hour and then wrapping things up in the final hour.
- SR requested: could Lecture slides be put up? LH said he could, but it probably wouldn’t make much difference because he did not use powerpoint. LH used physical models, notes on the whiteboard, notes on the visualiser, but no power point slides.
- LH: Lecture slides were not the best way to find out what was in lecture, should be done through the readings and the textbook.
- AM asked if relevant textbook chapters were announced prior to lectures. LH remarked that this was already listed in the unit outline. CD suggested if this could be made in weekly announcements on iLearn. LH agreed it could be done as iLearn announcements and also put on iLearn notes.
- SR quoted: “Teaching quality is high standard and professional”.
SR remarked: all information was well prepared. Graphics demos, physical demos and code provided great insight into how to approach specific design problems.

SR remarked that students needed more guidance on C++ code and structure:
  - How inheritance was done in C++.
  - How Polymorphism was dealt with in C++ and Java.

LH remarked that he understood this issue through a conversation with one or students, but it was within the last week of the assignment being due. Felt it unfair to provide new material at such a late stage.

LH remarked that Computer Graphics was not a course for OO, but when it came to building a GUI App, it was best to do it with an OO approach.

LH took the point on board. Suggested for next year, he wished to provide a demo program early in the semester demonstrating OO.

LH remarked that a lot of existing examples only showed direct, static, graphics code, which did not do a good job of handling data driven development, i.e. in a drawing application.

LH remarked that there were two issues:
  - Students who had not done OO needed a viable alternative
  - Students who had done OO needed a way to map the concepts in a graphics application setting; C++.

CD asked whether the prereqs should be 202 and 229? LH remarked that this was a job for teaching committee.. LH’s concern was providing a unit that is compatible with the students.

SR: Lecture room E7B100 - Not enough room for legs; seats. CS remarked that students had open access legroom at the front row right up to the lectern.

SR reported on comments about assignment 1:
  - “Too hard.”
  - “Like having 4 weeks to think about the code.”

SR commented on workshops:
  - Teaching and practical exercises were helpful for setting foundations.
  - Tutors not there for full 2 hours. Tutors should stay for the full 2 hours. Students did not get enough opportunity to ask questions.
  - LH Response: budget issue. Not enough money to keep the tutors there for the full two hours. Either that or cut classes.

SR commented on online resources:
  - They liked the code demos and examples to help understand the content.
  - ECHO360 recordings were of a high standard for students to revise the lecture
  - Excellent tutorials and practicals. LH gave credit to Scott McCallum and previous conveners for providing developing previous materials, which LH built on.

Printer Policy:
  - CD: We wanted put a limit on the number of pages you can accumulate. 200 limit max. 40 per unit.
• Accumulation was a problem because of the sudden onrush of printing at the end of semester when students found that they had a large amount of printing credit.
• SR remarked that she liked to print notes and writing on paper when rafting assignments, cautions against limiting numbers too much.
• PB remarked that assignment boxes were not utilised, except for a few PACE units. Submissions were mostly digital, not as much need for printing.

Meeting closed at 1.35pm.