Department of Computing - Macquarie University
Minutes for the 200-Level Liaison Meeting
1:00pm - 17th September 2014 - Room E6A357

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Name</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Thompson</td>
<td>COMP202, COMP255</td>
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<td>Barak Alkhaldi</td>
<td>ISYS200</td>
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<td>David Burke</td>
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<td>Ed Little</td>
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<td>Matthew Pigram</td>
<td>COMP202, COMP229</td>
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<td>Natalie Batshon</td>
<td>ISYS200, ISYS224</td>
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<td>Rebekah Coote</td>
<td>ISYS200</td>
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<td>Shireen Karnib</td>
<td>ISYS202</td>
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<td>Yvonne Nemes</td>
<td>COMP229, COMP255</td>
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<tr>
<th>Staff Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stephen Smith</td>
<td>Chair</td>
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<td>Melina Chan</td>
<td>Executive Officer</td>
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<td>Natalia Salzberg</td>
<td>IT Manager</td>
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<td>Matt Roberts</td>
<td>COMP229</td>
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<td>Matt Mansour</td>
<td>ISYS200</td>
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<td>Jian Yang</td>
<td>ISYS224</td>
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<td>Len Hamey</td>
<td>COMP202</td>
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<td>Mike Johnson</td>
<td>COMP255</td>
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<td>Nick Reynolds</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
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Meeting opened at 1:04pm by Stephen Smith.
COMP255 - Software Engineering

Michael Johnson

Lectures

- The lectures had been good, Steve Cassidy’s lecturing had been enjoyable.
- The expertise of the guest speaker Jared Berghold from Intersect had been appreciated.

Tutorials

- There had been lots of group work, sometimes getting groups to cooperate was difficult.
- Some students were turning up just for the tutorial and not the lecture.
- The tutors were really good.

General

- The content for the unit was very relevant to industry, with one student finding strong relevance with her internship.
- Mike asked whether he should extend the deadline for the assignment due on Thursday due to his absence from the lecture on Monday. Students thought that this time would be useful so that they could revise their work. Mike would consider extending the deadline by two days and would post iLearn updates. CD suggested that the reason for given the extension should be mentioned.

ISYS224 - Database Systems

Jian Yang, Eng Lim

- Unit was going well, the tutorials reinforce what was learned in the lectures. They summarise all the key points and Jian put up the answers on iLearn.
- The tutors had gone through the assignment with the students and it looked okay.
- Some students didn’t attend the lectures due to their late scheduling which made traveling home difficult. Some students believed that reading through the slides and taking notes was more valuable.
- Attendance to lectures was low even though they stepped through complex examples of normalisation and difficult queries.
COMP202 - Systems Programming

Len Hamey

General

- Students had been enjoying the assignments, some asked if assignment 4 could be released earlier, Len would release it after the break as there were two assignment due in the break.
- The Ash server had been functioning fine.
- The lectures being recorded were good.

Tutorials and Textbooks

There are two sets of weekly questions, self test questions set by Len and tutorial questions from the textbook.

- The tutorials were being more focused on the self test questions as not every student has the textbook. Len was disappointed that students did not have copies of the textbook. Students suggested scanning in the exercises or retyping them.
- Matt R discussed how textbooks were often not purchased by students as in most units they were unused and students viewed them as a waste of money. COMP229 students purchased the textbook as Luke M convinced students it was worth getting, Steve S suggested conveying to students that all of the material for the exams would be based on the textbook.
- Matt M asked what resources convenors could make required for a unit, Christophe clarified that anything with a dollar value could not be compulsory unless they could be accessed for free at the library or in other ways.
- Students had found the textbook for COMP202 very useful, some assignment related topics were covered in great detail in the book so it was an asset for students.

iLearn

- Some students had been receiving a lot of emails from the computing department from the group email aliases which was making it hard for them to keep track of important emails. Melina would look into this issue.
- Sometimes students had their iLearn settings defaulted to send them an email for every post made to the forums, that should be changed.
- Matt M sympathised with students as iLearn announcements often got buried in daily digest emails from iLearn. Students suggested putting these announcements at the top of the email or splitting the digest emails up into their different units.
- Steve S would like a student log in to see the emails from a students perspective for his units.
ISYS200 - IT and the Future of Society

Matthew Mansour

Forums

- Students asked why there was no general iLearn forums for the unit, Matt M explained that due to the issues in ISYS100 in previous offerings, he had decided not to have the general forum and would only set it up when required. The recent inappropriate usage of the forums in other unit had validated his thoughts. Matt M will consider setting up his own threads in a general form with topics specified by the students which will reduce inappropriate usage.

- Matt M asked if there was some way to rank or report posts on iLearn forums, it would be looked at.

Mixed Classes

- Students found that randomising the groups for the mixed class presentations made it harder to get the group to work together and would rather groups be set for the whole semester.

- This week students had to do a debate in class, some students found that the debating style wasn’t well defined, their class had 3 affirmative speakers and 3 negative speakers which was not what Matt M had specified, Matt M would speak to the relevant tutors, commenting that it was hard to be in every room.

- A student asked if the presentations would be better if they had a week to prepare, Matt M stated that the assessment style had been copied from ACCG355 and that preparing presentations in 20 minutes made students think on their feet to do some specific study about this week’s topic. Other students confirmed that they were finding the classes useful.

Assessments

- Students had different opinions on the quizzes, one claiming that the quizzes were fair and anyone that studied would have done well. Matt M found that most students in his class got fair marks in relation to the amount of study they did.

- A student asked for the marking criteria for the reflection assessment, Matt M confirmed that it was at the end of the specification on iLearn and encourages students to talk to their tutors if they felt there was a discrepancy in the marking.
COMP229 - Object-Oriented Programming Practices
Matthew Roberts, Luke Mathieson

General

- Recording issues had been fixed.
- The assignment was straightforward, everything students needed was covered throughout the lectures and practical classes.
- Matt R released a video of some code being typed up so students couldn’t simply copy paste but he accidentally bundled the code with the assignment download briefly before it could be removed.

Modular Exams

- Students appreciated having sample modular exams, Matt R would be providing these for future exams too. Matt R stated that because the design patterns were becoming more conceptual we wanted students to be better prepared for the exams.
- The modular exams were very fair, students had found them less stressful than regular exams as they could come back to them later if they wished. If they were too busy they could always have a go and see how they do.

Reading Game

The reading game is a university supplied question and answer system. There is a participation mark of 8% allocated to it for this unit.

- Students commented that the UI didn’t encourage karma particularly well because it was a bit clunky and unintuitive.
- Students were unsure whether they should report irrelevant or incorrect questions to Matt R, Matt R would send out an announcement to clarify the usage of the tool.
- Some students were too competitive and would not vote on other students questions, Matt R reassured students that the karma won’t dictate the final marks he allocated to them. He would have a process for marking these and would go through every question and answer.

IT Issues

- Students asked if PowerDesigner could be put on iLab, Natalia confirmed that the ticket had been lodged and they were currently assessing its feasibility.

Meeting closed at 1:58pm.