Department of Computing - Macquarie University
Minutes for the PG Liaison Meeting
5:00pm - 23rd October 2014 - EMC Tea Room

Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Name</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soumya Mukherjee</td>
<td>COMP700, COMP777</td>
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<td>Damian Jurd</td>
<td>COMP700, COMP777</td>
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<td>Peter Reeves</td>
<td>ITEC802, COMP700, COMP777</td>
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<td>Nick Reynolds</td>
<td>ITEC802, COMP700, COMP777</td>
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<td>Imran Khan</td>
<td>ITEC801, ITEC802, ITEC810, ITEC830</td>
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<td>Anusorn Swasdee</td>
<td>ITEC810, ITEC851, ITEC852, ITEC854</td>
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Staff Members

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<tr>
<th>Staff Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tr>
<td>Christophe Doche</td>
<td>Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sylvian Chow</td>
<td>Department Admin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natalia Salzberg</td>
<td>IT Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nick Reynolds</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
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<td>Mark Johnson</td>
<td>COMP700, COMP777</td>
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<td>Pongsak Suvanpong</td>
<td>ITEC802</td>
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<td>Abhaya Nayak</td>
<td>ITEC810</td>
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<td>Diego Molla-Aliod</td>
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<td>Milton Baar</td>
<td>ITEC854</td>
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Apologies: Dzung Le, Peter Busch.

Meeting opened at 5:06pm by Christophe Doche.
COMP700 - Research Frontiers in Computing 1
Mark Johnson

• Students were pleased with the feedback they have been receiving and the speed at which marks are being returned

• Students commented that Mark provided them with great feedback on their first assignment presentations which they could then incorporate into their report for resubmission without penalty

• Four seminars have been held so far

• A student suggested that the seminars in the future be run by past MRES students to give current MRES students a better feel for where their degree can take them, another student agreed adding that this would be interesting for them too. This will be discussed with the MRes coordinator for next offering.

• Mark added that he would like the seminars to be interesting and appropriate for the students, one of the seminars this semester was given by a department PhD student as his research was of interest to Damian

COMP777 - Computing Methods for Research
Mark Dras, Mark Johnson

Mark Dras takes the first half of the unit, covering publishing, Python and editorial content. Mark Johnson covers the statistical Machine Learning side with the R language.

• Students are finding the unit really good

• The unit is covering a number of topics which some students are unfamiliar with, such as version control, latex and statistics. Latex is especially useful in other disciplines such as engineering

• Mark thought it was good that a number of students do both COMP777 and COMP700 as there is some overlap in content

• Mark is also finding that there is a large interest in statistics as a number of non-enrolled students will attend the lectures. Christophe asked if there was a STAT unit equivalent, Mark said that COMP777s statistic content is more of a 3 week crash course

• Mark commented that if they teach data science at 700 level it will free up this unit to discuss how to write scientific papers

ITEC801 - Introduction to Distributed Systems
Ian Joyner

• Students think the unit is going well

• Some complaints were received that the slide sets are too long (100-150 slides a topic) so they end up being skimmed through

• Christophe asked the units if they are clear on what they will be assessed on, the student replying that the tutorial questions help with this understanding

• Students commented that there is a lot of old material in the unit and some students want to cover newer things like cloud computing for longer than a week
ITEC802 - Object Oriented Technology

Pongsak Suvanpong, Luke Mathieson

- Students have been enjoying the unit and also enjoyed the first assignment which was a Blackjack game
- The biweekly tasks are also good
- A student asked about changing the assessment weightings mid-semester, Christophe replied that this is possible if the students are all in agreement and the unit guide is amended.

The student added that the current structure is 60% exam and 40% assessment, but said this did not represent the practical aspects of our MIT and may result in students who are less capable developers. Christophe mentioned that plagiarism can be an issue but with such a small class the convenor should be more aware of students capabilities and can manually step through programs with students. Natalia agreed that practical skills are very important. Pongsak also agreed and added that he wanted to change it to be weighted 60% assessment and 40% exam. Pongsak will follow this up.

ITEC810 - Information Technology Project

Abhaya Nayak

- The unit is going well with no problems, the students have been enjoying the presentations and finds them well worth their time
- Abaya believed the unit is going smoothly and will work on simplifying the structure of the unit and making it more consistent
- The rooms for the final presentations have been booked for week 12, Abaya has not asked industry to attend

ITEC830 - XML Technologies

Diego Molla-Aliod, Rolf Schwitter

- The unit is going well and students enjoyed assignment 1
- Biweekly assessments are informative and interactive
- Student commented that other students found some lecture slides inconsistent with slight errors, Diego asked for more information and will follow this up with the student
- Student did not think there was too much overlap with ITEC833 Web Services which only covers XML at a basic level for web services

ITEC851 - System and Network Technologies

Rajan Shankaran, Nabil Mirza

- A student commented that they do not like quizzes and prefer homework, adding that previously Rajan had more homework and 1 quiz, but now they have less homework and 3 quizzes
- The unit has about 10 students and has good attendance to the lectures
ITEC852 - Network and Systems Security

Vijay Varadharajan

- A student commented that the room is a bit crowded as there are 20 students plus any extra PhD students who decide to attend

ITEC854 - Security Management

Milton Baar

- A student believed that the unit was going well and has been enjoying the group work
- Milton commented that some students are in a panic as they have neglected to dedicate enough time towards the unit, adding that he informs students to spend 8 hours a week on the units content but by week 5 many students are behind as the work is nontrivial. Regardless all students are roughly in the right place now
- All 28 students are attending the lectures and are in the MIT program

ITEC870 - Advanced Database Applications Development

Dzung Le

A student could not attend but forwarded his comments in, they are presented verbatim below:

The subject which is lectured by Dzung Le this semester provides well-structured lecture notes and enough references for further studies. The lab works are designed to practically understand the implementation and Ms. Le provides the solutions after each submission which helps students to discuss issues further if there is need for it. Ms. Le is very responsive to any questions and she provides feedbacks on time. She assigns extra help if students needed. The mid semester exam was well designed to test the material taught. Overall the standard of teaching is high and students can benefit from Ms. Le's knowledge and experience.

Labs

- Milton finds that in EMC G240 the wireless microphone is not being left on the charger, resulting in it always being flat when he comes to lecture

MRES

- Christophe asked about MRES issues adding that most things will be ironed out when more units are offered for the program
- A student asked that the enrolment process be made easier with others commenting about the difficulties of dealing with the HDRO
- A student asked about MIT units on their transcript only showing up as 700 level COMP units, Christophe clarifying that this is so students can not take an MRES scholarship and do the MIT program for free

Meeting closed at 5:40pm.