Minutes of the PG Liaison Committee Meeting

5pm - 16th May 2014

Present

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Representatives</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas Reynolds</td>
<td>COMP796, ITEC831, ITEC832, ITEC833</td>
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<tr>
<td>Damian Jurd</td>
<td>COMP796, ITEC803, ITEC831</td>
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<td>Jackie Atkins</td>
<td>ITEC810</td>
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<td>Fiona Martin</td>
<td>MRES Student</td>
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<tr>
<th>Staff Representatives</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christophe Doche</td>
<td>Head of Department</td>
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<td>Melina Chan</td>
<td>Executive Officer</td>
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<td>Manolya Kavakli</td>
<td>Chair, ITEC810</td>
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<td>Diego Mollá Aliod</td>
<td>MRES Coordinator</td>
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<td>Carl Svensson</td>
<td>ITEC800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rajan Shankaran</td>
<td>ITEC803</td>
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<td>Abhaya Nayak</td>
<td>ITEC810</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zehua Liu</td>
<td>ITEC831</td>
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<tr>
<td>Milton Baar</td>
<td>ITEC850</td>
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<tr>
<td>Udaya Tupakula</td>
<td>ITEC855</td>
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<td>Nick Reynolds</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
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Apologies:
- Ian Krycer
- Marwan El Tannir
- Tony Sloane
- Luke Mathieson
- Peiyuan Qin
- Cathy Campbell

Units are in the order that they were mentioned.
Meeting commenced at 5:05pm with an address by Manolya.
ITEC800 - Systems Engineering Process
Unit Convenor: Carl Svensson

Scheduling

The main issue has been that the classes are run every two weeks. Carl tries to keep constant contact with the students by maintaining a strong online presence via iLearn and email, However, he mentions that students only really get 1.5 hours of lecture and 1.5 hours of practical a week (when averaged out over a two week period) which is far less face to face time than other units. Zehua and Abaya confirmed that these sort of class schedules can be difficult to manage.

The two week holiday period also resulted in students not having contact for four weeks.

Melina comments that because of most of the core MIT units are run on weeknights they decided to move some classes to the weekend to avoid having too many clashes.

General

Students are receiving prompt, useful feedback on their assessments. They also commented that while the assignment specifications can be daunting at first, they are in-depth and ensure students know what requirements they need to meet to receive marks.

ITEC803 - Computer Networks
Unit Convenor: Rajan Shankaran
Lecturer: Peiyuan Qin

Most of Rajan’s time is being used to update the course with new material and topics such as multimedia and to bring the content up to a postgraduate level. Peiyuan covered some topics while Rajan was away, students commenting that Peiyuan has been doing really well.

There was some discussion regarding some of the systems taught in the unit but this was resolved between Rajan and the student.

Access to the labs has now been fixed which means that the practicals have been pushed towards the end of the semester, students believe that having peer tutors would be useful to assist in catching up on the content.
ITEC831 - Web Applications
Unit Convenor: Zehua Liu

Scheduling

Zehua has addressed some of the issues from the last meeting by making the practicals optional. There is a consistent group of students which stay back for these sessions while the students who are more comfortable with the content leave.

Capabilities and Waivers

Some students have a weak programming background. Manolya, Rajan and Zehua discussed how it is difficult to assess students on paper as they may have no solid practical skills. Zehua believes that these students are not at risk of failing.

Assessment

Zehua has altered the previous assignment for the struggling students, allowing them to work on it as a group for a passing mark.

ITEC832 - Enterprise Application Integration
Unit Convenor: Ian Krycer

Everything is going well, students are enjoying the lectures.

ITEC841 - Information Systems Project and Risk Management
Unit Convenor: Ian Krycer

No students present.
ITEC833 - Web Services
Unit Convenor: Marwan El Tannir

Assessments

Students have not received any marks or written feedback for any of their submitted tasks, the first one being submitted in week 4. This equates to 6% of the units marks. The class is small according to iLearn with 9 or 10 students.

Manolya suggests that perhaps Marwan is overloaded with work and that this might be a problem. Diego suggests that students can still estimate how well they are going based on how they found the tasks.

iLearn

New assessments or resources are not being announced on the iLearn forums. Students understand they are meant to check themselves but, there is an expectation created by other units that relevant announcements will be made. Forums are not being used to create an engaging online unit.

Assignment 2

The assignment was not released until after week 8’s class where it was actively discussed. Marwan asked for a proposal to be submitted ‘ASAP’ before week 10’s submission however they have not yet received feedback.

Manolya closed the discussion saying that these issues will need to be addressed.

Addendum 26-05-2014: Marwan uploaded all of the assignment marks onto iLearn at the end of week 10. All important events in the course will now be announced using the forums if not announced in the lectures.

ITEC844 - Strategic Project Management
Unit Convenor: Cathy Campbell

No students present.
ITEC850 - Network Management
Unit Convenor: Milton Baar

General

This year a change was made where students make three presentations over the 12 weeks with topics chosen from a pool specified by Milton, he has found most students chose almost the same topics each time. He will consider delegating tasks in the future.

Unit Requirements

Some students don’t have the undergraduate or prerequisite skills which results in time being used to explain basic principles at an undergraduate level.

A student comments that units don’t describe what technical level they require, Manolya states that this content is available in the handbook where the student has to search for it. Manolya mentions that the enrolment package is to be improved so that students are better informed.

Rajan and the student agreed that experience is much desired in the MIT and MRES programmes and enhances the learning experience of students.

Enrolment

Christophe asks for clarification on the process for enrolment into a unit, Manolya explaining that the student transcripts are held in the enrolment office and must be requested individually. This was an issue where staff didn’t have the transcripts and they had to be requested one by one, It would be good to have a database of transcripts.

To waive prerequisites each convenor had to examine the student transcript which put a lot of pressure on them. Christophe states that we need to see the transcripts before students are accepted because once they are here we need to find units for them. Computer department admin staff accept students into the MIT based on their transcript and their GPA.

The English capabilities of students is also raised as an issue.
ITEC855 - Security and Forensic Discovery
Unit Convenor: Udaya Tupakula

Everything is going well, there are active forum discussions and classes are finishing on time. Students are given the option of contacting Udaya for additional content or resources.

ITEC810 - Information Technology Project
Unit Convenor: Manolya Kavakli-Thorne
Other Lecturers: Abhaya Nayak

A student comments that the projects should be determined before the start of the semester based on which students are enrolled and what types of topics there are, as otherwise it can cost students a few weeks of wasted time.

Presentations

Student also comments that doing presentations each week takes a significant amount of time in preparation and suggests the time would be better spent working on the project. Students would rather give a status update instead. Manolya says that the presentations are important because they let each group see each others progress.

Asking students to volunteer for presentations was suggested however Manolya and Abaya believe that this approach would result in no one volunteering and it requires quite a bit of work to ensure fairness. Abaya also comments that the presentations are good preparation for the final workshop and that engaging the audience is more important than people realise.

Manolya says in the second half of semester they could remove some of the presentations to give groups more time to work on their projects.

Ethics Forms

Student asks that the ethics form be mentioned and discussed earlier to prepare students, as the form is quite long and requires some time be set aside. Manolya comments that they should not mention it in the first week as it is too confronting but they will do it earlier rather than later and that the form is mentioned in the unit guide.

Abaya says he will restructure the unit next semester.

COMP796 - Advanced Topics in Theory and Practice of Software
Unit Convenor: Anthony Sloane

Students comment that the unit is going really well.
A student emailed in their feedback, saying that the ‘max flow’ homework they were given during the break was a really good idea. However the student is a little disappointed that they won’t be covering all the material they thought they would, he suggested moving through the content a little bit faster next time.

Overall the unit is going really well.

Masters of Research Feedback

General

A student is concerned with the workload for the second year of the MRES program. Diego confirms that there isn’t any coursework but there will be lots of thesis work to do and he will put more information on the website. Students would be able to fit in casual tutoring if they desired.

Zehua comments that there’s a discrepancy in skill levels, MRES students are meant to be taught at a 700 level and MIT students at an 800 level however the MRES students perform at a much higher level than the MIT students in his unit.

Constant Change

A student raises that the MRES assessment requirements keep changing and that it is difficult to keep up with. Diego says that as the number of students in the programme is small they can afford to adapt it for the benefit of the students. A student suggests that these changes need to be ironed out before the semester starts, with Christophe saying that this is impossible due to the nature of the MRES programme. Christophe also mentioned that they are ‘left in the dark’ regarding MRES requirements as well.

This will be worked on and in the future with dedicated MRES units the problem will be resolved.

Timetabling

A student is concerned about MRES700’s schedule as the classes are only run in the daytime. There is also uncertainty regarding whether the unit will be run in semester 3, Diego says that it is scheduled to run therefore it should run but he will check with his sources. Christophe also mentioned that they can voice their concerns if they attempt to cancel MRES700’s semester 3 offering.

Meeting closed at 6:20pm.