Department of Computing – Macquarie University

Postgraduate Liaison Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, 11\textsuperscript{th} September 2019

Room: Room 288, 4 Research Park Drive

Student Representatives (SR)

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<tr>
<th>Student Representative</th>
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<tr>
<td>David Steele</td>
<td>MIT - Management</td>
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<td>Gum, San Aung</td>
<td>MIT - Management</td>
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<td>Jawad Yousaf</td>
<td>MIT – Internetworking and Cybersecurity</td>
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<td>Saeed Baayoun</td>
<td>MIT – Internetworking and Cybersecurity</td>
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<td>Nischal Shetty</td>
<td>MIT - Management</td>
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<td>Saurav Thapa</td>
<td>MIT – Internetworking and Cybersecurity</td>
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Staff

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<tr>
<td>Dr. Peter Busch (PB)</td>
<td>Chair/ITEC601</td>
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<td>Prof. Michael Sheng</td>
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<td>Prof. Yan Wang</td>
<td>ITEC810, ITEC812</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Ian Krycer (IK)</td>
<td>ITEC842, ITEC871/COMP771</td>
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<td>Dr. Stephen Smith (SS)</td>
<td>ITEC871/COMP771</td>
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<td>Dr. Diego Molla Aliod (DMA)</td>
<td>ITEC874/COMP733</td>
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<td>Dr. Guanfeng Liu</td>
<td>ITEC874/COMP733, ITEC601</td>
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<td>Dr. Gaurav Gupta</td>
<td>Student Liaison Officer</td>
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<td>Dr. Young Choon Lee</td>
<td>ITEC801</td>
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<td>Mr. Milton Baar (Online)</td>
<td>ITEC854</td>
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<td>Prof. Mehmet Orgun</td>
<td>ITEC624</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Melina Chan</td>
<td>Department Manager</td>
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<td>Ms. Hijab Alavi</td>
<td>Minute Taker</td>
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The meeting opened at 5:04pm by Peter Busch. He introduced the purpose of the meeting and briefly went through the agenda of the meeting.

Everyone went around the room and introduced themselves.

2020 Curriculum

PB let students know there would be changes to the 2020 curriculum next year. Some people were aware that there will be changes. The PG coursework courses on offer will be: Masters of IT in Cyber Security, Masters of IT in Networking, Master of Information System Management. There would be changes in the number of credit points per unit - from 4 to 10 cp, name changes and new units. There will not be much change to the structure and these changes shouldn’t impact students too much or put them at a disadvantage. All units will have the prefix COMP (no longer ISYS, INFO or ITEC codes) with 4 digits to follow. Student asked if the students' transcripts will have the new unit codes and the names when they graduate. PB did not have the information on this at the moment.

Relocation to BD

PB let the students know that from approximately second semester next year the plan is to vacate 09WW and EMC and move all labs to BD Ground and First floor. The labs will also have student common areas to study. Student asked about pass access and PB said this was still at the early stage to know the details.
Timetabling
PB said the department was aware virtually all students now enrolled in computing postgraduate coursework programs were international students. Concerns about security have been raised by students for the PG evening classes finishing at 10pm. Hence the department proposed to move the classes to day offerings. IK suggested splitting large classes into 2 streams: morning and evening. Many students supported the idea since some students worked during the day.

PB mentioned that PG unit structures will be focused more like UG units with lectures, practicals and tutorials. A student said that splitting the classes into smaller groups was a good idea as currently some units had a large enrolment, class objectives were not completed and material not covered, such as in ITEC854. PB mentioned that the department had to keep in mind that the university had to offer enough seats for the number of students enrolled even if they might not attend the class.

Unit
ITEC801
No student reps at the meeting.

ITEC810/ITEC812
Student said the unit was going well and the convenor Yan was very organised. The material and resources were good, and he was happy to assist with queries. PB said the Department was aware classes are held on Friday evening and would look into changing this. YW said he had run classes more frequently but didn’t see many people showing up.

A student asked about the requirement to do an internship as it was important that students have industry experience. PB explained that internships were not guaranteed and were a privilege rather than a right. Students were required to have a certain GPA/WAM and to pass an interview with the company and that this would remain a requirement. Amin was currently in the process of creating a database to standardise the students’ interest and resumes in one place. The unit will be called COMP8851 next year and the alternative to the unit was ITEC810 in order to complete the MIT degree. Those who didn’t finish the MIT degree at this stage could graduate with a diploma. In the past students not maintaining a certain GPA or those failing more than one ITEC8## unit completed with a diploma. The choice these days for either a masters or a diploma rests with the students and not the department.

INFO843
No students at the meeting.

ITEC851
Student said the unit was okay but there was uncertainty over the assignment and the workload was too great. PB asked about practical classes for the unit, the student said that there were no practical yet and had been only lectures. The practicals were expected to start after the mid-semester break.

ITEC852
Students said that the unit was okay with no issues. There were no practicals in the units. There were only assignments and quizzes for the unit. A student said that he was finding it lightweight, but he understood that without having a background knowledge, the unit was heavy for students.

ITEC854
The unit had a large enrolment. MB said there were logistical problems at the start of the semester, but they were now resolved with new classes opened. Students said that one of the lecture streams clashed with ITEC601 and the other stream was full.
Another student noted lab classes were too full and the combined practical classes should be split into a class of half the student number.

The unit had a group assessment which had approximately 8 people in group. A couple of people in the room mentioned that might result in some group members not contributing. MB explained that the unit started off with groups of 6 people which was a minimum requirement - and any less for this stream/project was too few.

ITEC871
Student commented the unit was interesting. SS said that the unit offered different experiences by having two different lecturers with different industry and teaching style etc. Students said they were happy with no project management in this unit as there were 4 other units already focusing on it.

ITEC874
A student did it last year, compared to last year there was an improvement in the algorithms this year. Last year some of the tasks were too difficult for students and handicapped the students wishing to become data scientists.

DMA said students were weak in programming so the basics needed to be taught as well. The student said that with a large class with diverse backgrounds, there were different programming levels in the class from those lacking the knowledge to those with advanced programming skills.

The student also said this unit overlapped with other units as well. As a data scientist, the student's expectation was to focus on the technical side, but last year the unit didn’t focus on it as much, but the unit had changed this year and added more deep techniques about using big data. PB mentioned the management degree was the only non-programming degree, and students were made aware of that at the start.

ITEC876
Student said this unit was more about producing a technical paper. They had done GitHub versioning in other units, and the first 6 months was very repetitive with the content concerning data manipulation. This unit was more about self-learning rather than teaching some of the concepts. The unit lacked something at the moment.

ITEC877
Student said that he started in week 3 due to the contract with Cochlear. Students got the assessments a little late (around week 4) and had to write about 20 pages. The first part of the assessment focused on the background of the company and the second part of the project didn’t explain the project goals clearly. Student said those who found the internship on their own – struggled, as the company provided the student with a long-term internship rather than a project. This unit also had to be done alongside the other units. It was very difficult to balance the study load.

ITEC897/ITEC898
No student at the meeting. PB mentioned that Amin had created a system where students could upload their CV and preferences to assist the students with the internship process and as with ITEC810/812, the unit will continue next year. PB said there was no change for this unit.

ITEC601
Student mentioned his problem that he changed specialisations from cybersecurity to management at the end of week 2 and he has advised Rajan of the change. The change in specialisation was approved and he attended the lecture for the new specialisation in week. However, the first assignment was due start of week 4. Due to the change in specialisation he had to catch-up the workload for at least 3 units whilst submitting the assignments, which was difficult for him. The student applied for special consideration for an extension which was disapproved, and so was his appeal. The student said since Macquarie allowed the change until the end of week 2, the university should take this into
consideration when declining special consideration. PB asks if this was the students first semester? The student said this was his first semester and his student experience at Macquarie due to this was not good. PB agreed with the student and would try to help to sort something out. The student’s mark was subsequently changed.

ITEC624
Student said the unit was good and the structure was organised. All material related well and made sense.

ITEC625
Student said that the unit was good. However, the latest practical exam had a lot of coding and the students were expecting theory - this was a surprise for the class. The exam was a subset of some of the practicals. A student said no sample or mock-exams were provided. GG offered to hold revision classes during the mid-semester break since he had previously taught the unit.

ITEC643
Student said the unit was going okay but the content was a little heavy.

ITEC647
Student said that Ian Joyner’s slides were dry and that the students were not satisfied. There were around 200 slides covered in 2 hours. The class preferred Damien's lectures. PB said he would investigate and discuss with the lecturer concerned.

ITEC649
Student said the unit was very good. They were learning python during the unit, he was studying this language for the first time, but personally didn’t like the language. The student said that the studying content was broken down into steps and in separate videos was helpful and saved time when trying to find specific content. The student said this unit had no lectures. There was no need for lectures and the videos were sufficient for the unit.

ITEC653/ITEC657/ITEC663/ITEC801
No students at the meeting.

Meeting closed at 6:16pm