Minutes

Staff and Student Liaison Meetings – Postgraduate

Date and Time: Tuesday, 21 April 2020, 1pm – 2pm
Meeting location: Zoom

Student Representatives:
Saif Ahmet, Najith Ratnyakamudiy Anselage, Colin Brown, Chitra Bhandari,
Michael Lay
Karthik Varma Keerthi Pati, Danish Raza, Shreyas Kumar Singh, Fahad Shafiq.

Staff Representatives:
Jo Aboud, Peter Busch, Steve Cassidy, Melina Chan, Sylvain Chow, Alireza Jolfaei,
Rajan Shankaran

Faculty Representative:
Professor James Downes

Peter Busch began the meeting and stated the purpose and agenda. The meeting will involve individual unit discussion, as well as general feedback.

Agenda 1: Lab Spaces
- Students are conducting their learning online.
- All the labs (including 09WW labs and EMC labs) are well maintained and kept clean.
- Students are overall happy with the conditions of the labs.
- Peter discussed the plan for the labs, they labs will be set up on Level 1 of Research Park Drive. Due to complications, the plan may not take place until next year.
- The overall plan is for students to be able to do their computing lab classes on Level 1, while Level 2 and 3 are currently occupied by Computing Department.
- While students moving back and having their classes started again on campus, there should be sanitary wipes in the labs, so that devices can be cleaned more often.

Agenda 2: COMP7000
- Michal Lay was the student representative for COMP7000. The unit is relatively small and there are some scheduling issues because the unit was added later. Because of that, students find the schedule a bit messy and staff are working to fix that problem.
- Classes did not start till week 2 or 3, which added to the confusion that students are facing.
- The Unit Guide must be updated to include details of staff teaching in the unit.
- The staff of the unit are supportive and are available to help students when needed.

Agenda 3: COMP7010
- Michael Lay was the only student representative for COMP7010.
• The unit is running well and smoothly.
• The teaching staff are up to date and inform students of everything they need to know.

Agenda 4: COMP7220/COMP8220
• Michael Lay was also the student representative for COMP7220.
• Students find the unit engaging because it is a very practical based unit.
• The assignments are hands on, as described by students and they find it enjoyable.

Agenda 5: COMP7900
• Michael Lay was the student representative for COMP7900.
• The unit involves a lot of reading and writing. For example, reading some papers and then writing a report about it.
• The unit is a research frontier in Computing and the aim of the unit is all about research.
• Students find this unit a bit dry.
• The unit is designed to give students a taste in different research areas of the department. It additionally involves guest academics to give students overviews of different topics.

Agenda 6: COMP8250, COMP8270, COMP8290
COMP8250 Advanced Topics in Computer Networks has 115 students. Nardin Hanna is the Lecturer.
COMP8270 Network System Design, Rajan is the Unit Convenor.
COMP8290 Multimedia Networks and Real Time Protocols – only a few students, and this is a new unit. Victor Govea is the Lecturer. However, no student representative.
• These units have been adapted to online teaching and are going well.
• The students have access to Google Cloud, and they do the experiments on there.
• The students do not need to physically go to the labs to be able to conduct their work.

Agenda 7: COMP8310
Security Technologies and Forensic Analysis – taught by Milton Bar.
No student representative.

Agenda 8: COMP8325
The unit is going well.
• The unit had a hiccup in the beginning because the required software was not installed in the labs.
• But the unit is going well now. It is a new unit.

Agenda 8: COMP8770
• No student representative.
• The tutor (Natalie) gave feedback on the unit.
• The unit overall is running smoothly.
• It has transitioned to online learning and student are receiving the feedback and support they require.

Agenda 8: COMP8790
• The unit is taught by Matthew Mansour, Jason Saba and Stephen Smith.
• The feedback for the unit was very positive.
• The unit has transitioned to online. It has lectures and tutorials.
• Students find the unit engaging,

Agenda 9: General Feedback
• There were technical difficulties with the Zoom link, so not all students were able to join at the beginning of the meeting.
• Because of the recent changes, final exams are still being prepared by Unit Convenors. Each unit will decide how to undertake the final exam and students should keep an eye out on iLearn for more information.
• Overall, the transition to online learning has been positive.
• Connection has been a problem though for staff and students with poor connection at home. Students and staff are facing lagging, which can really interrupt their classes. Especially when they cut out of classes because the connections keep dropping.
• Staff are also finding the Zoom recordings sometimes have problem and it take a while for them to upload.
• One solution has been to store the Zoom recordings on the cloud, rather than on device. However, it still takes a while to upload Zoom recordings.

Agenda 10: Student Engagement
• Teachers are finding it hard to engage with some students via Zoom. Especially students who have their video cameras off, as there is no way to tell they are engaged in the class.
• Students are also not engaging with other students. The feedback from the meeting showed that students are not meeting each other or talking to one another, which is problematic because it is important for students to be engaged in class.
• One-way teachers can encourage video cameras to be turned on, is by giving participation marks only to students who have their cameras on. Students can use their laptops, phones or any device with a camera.

Peter thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.