

Department of Computer Science

Minutes of Staff/Student Meeting

Monday 8 April 2013

Present:

Staff: Paul Denny (Chair), Robert sheehan, Ann Cameron, Angela Chang, Aniket Mahanti, Adriana Ferraro, Sean Davidson, Henry Guo, Pan Hu, Sithra Sukumaar and Johannes Dimyadi(PhD).

Students: Jonathan Koo(101), Justin Susans(105), Liz Walker(111), Amy Wang(220), Ryan O'Donoghue(225),Jeong Su Jeon (230), Nick Stones-Haves(350), Timothy Diack (351,373), Felix Mann (702), Pratik Gupta (705) and Kang Song (767,775)

Apologies:

Staff: Robert Amor

Student: Kelsey Michelle (345)

If you attended the meeting and your name does not appear above, you did not fill out the attendance sheet as requested.

1) Welcome

Paul welcomed all the class representatives, outlined their responsibilities, and thanked them for volunteering to represent their peers. Several of the reps present indicated that they had attended the class rep training sessions held by AUSA.

2) HoD report

Data centre outage - 19th March

- The Faculty of Science sent a memo to the Vice Chancellor in relation to the data centre outage. The memo noted that: "The Faculty would like to record its dismay at the IT outage yesterday and the impact it has had on the Faculty in all areas of teaching, research and administration."

CS@AU club established:

- A new student club focussed on Computer Science has been established (CS@AU). This club runs events and workshops tailored towards Computer Science students as well as promoting Computer Science on Campus. The current president is Faizev Hussein. They have created an executive and committee to ensure that there is a flow-through of students to keep the club running from year to year. The department is supporting the club by providing lab bookings and are sending

through information on the various competitions for them to decide upon teams to compete.

3) Technical report

Sean Davidson presented the technical report. He welcomed everyone back for the new year, and discussed the following points:

- The data center outage (mentioned in the HoD report) was a major disruption, and still appears to be the cause of some ongoing issues. One of the more severe problems occurs when students try to log in to computers in the lab and the user profile service sometimes fails to load, preventing the student from logging in. This is a "machine-level" issue, in the sense that the student may be able to successfully log in if they try a different machine. However, this causes significant problems in the closed lab sessions where there are a limited number of machines available. The data center outage has made this problem significantly worse - Sean personally fixed 122 machines the day after the outage. SIT are still working on this problem and attempting to discover why the user profile is not being loaded correctly.

- the Start menu on the lab Windows image has changed as part of the "One Windows" project. The goal of this project is to standardise the computing environment across the University. The idea is that installed software should be presented in a consistent manner across campus. Folders beginning with the tilde character (~) are being used to organise applications that are common to all Faculties, and applications that are specifically for Science.

- last year we experienced major problems with our file system provided by IBM, and as a result the University went back to IBM and requested they deliver on the service they had promised. IBM has since provided a new operating system and a new SONAS server that is performing much better than before... for most applications. One application in particular that is still not launching as quickly as it should is DrJava which is used in the COMPSCI101 course. Sean has agreed to look into this problem.

4) Elect representatives

The following students were selected as representatives on the Faculty Staff/Student Consultative Committee:

UG reps: Tim Diack (351.373) and Elizabeth Walker (111)

PG rep: Arthur Lewis (734)

6) General business

Tim Diack (last year's UG rep on the Faculty committee) reported back from the last Faculty Staff/Student consultative committee meeting held last year. Plans for the new construction work were shown at the meeting, and reps were asked for their input on the design of certain rooms. Ideas included having lots of power outlets, white boards around the outside of the room for diagramming and note taking, and display cases showcasing the best work from each department. Also, a new Faculty

student association has now begun and will organise a mix of social and academic events.

Air conditioning has been raised (yet again). This time, tutorial room G75 was reported as being too cold (and Sean added the B91 is also too cold). Part of the problem is the way the air conditioning system works in this building. Sean has agreed to raise this (once again) with Property Services.

Liz raised the issue of "poor" (paraphrasing her original choice of words) wifi connectivity in LargeChem. Other reps reported wifi being weak in MLT1, OGGB4 (where even cell phone reception is often unavailable) and the Info Commons computer labs. There was some discussion as to whether this was a signal strength issue, or whether access points were being overloaded (Sean noted that students now have noticeably more connected devices than before). ITS recently ran a connectivity survey, and the results of this will be examined Sean has agreed to follow this up with ITS.

A Stage 2 class does not yet have a class forum on the CS forum site. The class rep will request this from the course coordinator.

A Stage 3 class recently had an assignment that some students felt was not clearly defined and as a result there was some confusion regarding exactly how the submitted programs should function. This was exacerbated by the course tutor possibly providing advice contrary to the actual requirements. The class rep will follow this up with the lecturer concerned. There may be some impact on the assignment marking.

A Stage 3 CS class (cross-listed as SE) is using a mix of Cecil and the CS website for providing resources. Students in this course would prefer to have either one system used, or if both systems must be used they should have identical content. The class rep will follow this up with the lecturer concerned.

Meeting finished at 1.50 pm.