

Minutes of the meeting (CSE Teaching Committee Meeting 14/4) of the **COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING TEACHING COMMITTEE** held at 1:00pm on **Friday, 25 July 2014**, in Room 103 (HoS Meeting Room), Computer Science Building.

Present	AProfs M Pagnucco, F Rabhi Drs A Blair, B Gaeta, E Martin, J Shepherd, S Venugopal Mr O Tan
Absent with Apologies	AProf R Buckland Dr M Ryan
Absent	Profs A Sowmya, J Xue Dr H Guo Miss C Nock
In Attendance	Mr R Doran
	Present / Quorum: 8 / 7
	Attendance Rate: 9 / 15

1 APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

3 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

JAS noted that the following CSE proposals had been approved at the Faculty level since the last meeting

- Computer Science honours year program (4515)
- Bioinformatics Engineering stream (BINFA1) ... stream defining the BINF degree
- Bioinformatics stream (BINFB1) ... for use in the BSc degree

Unfortunately, the proposal

- Bioinformatics Engineering program (3647)

is on hold while the Faculty tries to introduce a generic BE(Hons) program which would include BINFA1 as a possible stream.

Having the program called simply "Bioinformatics" is not viable in the long term, since we cannot have a program called the same as a stream in some other program. Also, the name change is important to reflect the changes made to satisfy the EngAust accreditation process.

Hopefully the BE(Hons) program will be resolved soon, at which point the Bioinformatics (3647) program (and the Software and Computer Engineering programs) can be retired. All of the streams for our existing programs have already been vetted by the Faculty to fit the overall structure of the BE(Hons) degree.

4 REPORT FROM CHAIRS OF WORKING GROUPS

Neither of the chairs of the currently active Working Groups (Core Curriculum, Program Outcomes) attended the TC meeting. However, there has been no progress in either of these Working Groups since the last (inquorate) meeting of the TC in June.

FR expressed concern that the process was taking so long, and that the program directors (who will need to adjust their programs to fit the new core curriculum) were not being given sufficient information about the proposals being developed by the working groups. He also noted that the Core Curriculum Working Group needs to take into account the feasibility of any proposals they

produce. FR said that it was particularly important, at this stage, to know at least the learning outcomes of each of the proposed courses.

14/4.4.1. Action required by Prof. Jingling Xue

The existing preliminary proposals of the Core Curriculum working group be made available to all program directors.

14/4.4.2. Action required by AProf. Maurice Pagnucco

The HoS encourage the chairs of the working groups to complete their proposals as soon as possible.

5 ASSESSMENT REVIEW 14S1

JAS made some comments about the issues raised at the Faculty Assessment Review Group (FARG), which looks into failure rates and deviations from WAM of all courses in the faculty. Several CSE courses were flagged as having high failure rates. Comments from some LICs (COMP9021 excepted) suggesting that the poor results were attributable to the quality of students were not deemed acceptable either by the FARG or by the HoS.

There was some discussion about whether the School needed to have more stringent internal checks on marks distributions before the FARG.

One change this year that may be relevant is that students can now withdraw from courses without academic penalty as late as Week 12.

EM has been teaching COMP9021 for many years, and knows precisely the standards that have been demanded in the past. His comments that the standard of students has declined should be carefully considered.

Other comments (e.g. that the students were ill-prepared for courses) might suggest structural problems in degree programs, and also need to be investigated.

In addition, performance in highly-relevant disciplines and its correlation with CSE course performance should be investigated.

14/4.5.1. Action required by Dr. John Shepherd

Collect and analyse marks for COMP vs MATH courses

6 TEACHING REVIEW 14S1

JAS noted that the CATEI results for 14s1 were in and there were two courses whose evaluation was significantly below average.

FR requested that program directors be informed about low ranking courses, especially if they are core to their own degrees, so that they can investigate whether the causes are local to the particular offering or may reflect a structural problem with their program.

MP noted that he planned to introduce peer review (really: peer observation) of lectures this semester. Stuart Upton will present what the Faculty is doing in the next school meeting, with the intention of CSE adopting it in-house. Not onerous: two 1-hour observations, two brief discussions between observer and observee.

7 COURSE OFFERINGS

JAS pointed out (based on complaints from the Student Office) that it was important that all core courses be offered twice per year, to improve flexibility in student enrolment and to assist with recovering from fails. COMP2911, now offered only once per year, is a particular problem in this regard since it leads on to many other courses (a dozen or so students are affected this semester).

MP suggested that this can be dealt with when we introduce the new Core Curriculum. The Working Group should keep in mind that the new courses they propose will be offered twice per year.

8 ALLOCATION OF COURSE ADMINISTRATORS

JAS noted that, each semester, CSG field requests from academic staff to "give class privileges to my course administrator". Such requests should be addressed in the first instance to Jingling, who has ultimate responsibility for teaching allocations, and to Andrew Taylor, who handles casual teaching allocation. They can modify the allocation files and privileges will then flow through to the admin automatically.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

EM questioned whether plagiarism is increasing, based on observations of significant plagiarism and rent-a-coder activity in COMP9021. While plagiarism within the class is detectable, rent-a-coder submissions are not. Several suggestions were made on how to check that students had actually done the work themselves:

- put assignment-related questions in the exam
- ask students to make a simple change to the code
- in prac exam, get students to modify the submitted code

10 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on August 22nd.