

**School of Computer Science  
Council Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday June 29, 2021**

1:00pm – 2:30pm

**Microsoft Teams**

**Present –**

**Faculty:** L. Antonie, N. Bruce, D. Calvert, R. Chaturvedi, R. Dara, A. Dehghantanha, D. Flatla, D. Gillis, M. Gong (Director), G. Grewal, A. Hamilton-Wright, H. Khan, X. Lin, J. McCuaig, D. Nikitenko, J. Sawada, S. Scott, F. Song, F. Wang, Y. Xiang;

**Staff:** D. Byart, J. DeFreitas (recording secretary), C. Hosker, J. Hughes, K. Johnston, G. Klotz, L. Zalewski;

**Student Representatives:** S. Adi, A. Kohut;

**Regrets –**

**Faculty:** S. Kremer, P. Matsakis, C. Obimbo, D. Stacey, M. Wineberg, M. Wirth;

**Staff:** J. Lange, A. Nguyen, D. Rea,

**Student Representatives:** None;

**1. Approval of Agenda for June 29, 2021**

Motion: That the agenda for June 29, 2021 be approved.

( Y. Xiang, N. Bruce )

In Favour: All. Abstentions: None. **MOTION PASSED.**

**2. Announcements**

- M Gong reported that in preparation for the return to campus, wipes have been placed in common areas for cleaning before and after using high touch surfaces like photocopiers, microwaves, coffee machines etc. Please let Jacqui know if supplies are getting low.

**3. Approval of minutes from April 27, 2021**

Motion: That the minutes from April 27,, 2021 be approved.

(S. Scott, N. Bruce)

In Favour: All. Abstentions: None. **MOTION PASSED**

**4. Approval of minutes from May 25, 2021**

Motion: That the minutes from May 25, 2021 be approved.

(Y. Xiang, A. Dehghantanha)

In Favour: All. Abstentions: None. **MOTION PASSED**

## 5. Stacey Scott

- **Alumni Awards and SoCS 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Appendix A)**
  - S. Scott updated on the celebration which took place on June 24. There was a good turnout with representation from Faculty, Staff, Students and Alumni. Tim Bray '81 was the keynote speaker who entertained and provided insights drawn from his successful career.
  - S. Scott announced the 3 Alumni Awards that were presented (Appendix A). Introductions, awards and historical perspectives were presented by President Yates, Dean Darlington, Director Gong, Bill Van Heyst, S. Scott, Laura Gatto, and Kate Roberts. Dan Penfold conducted the Q&A session.
  - S. Scott relayed that the celebration was recorded and will provide a link when it becomes available. She redirected all of the event compliments, and expressed gratitude to, Melissa Woo, who organized the event with media support from Cam Baker. The two also produced a visual tour of Reynolds which was appreciated by Alumni who had not visited the building since the renovations.
  - S. Scott informed that the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration will continue with the launch of a "50 Days of SoCS" social media campaign and website, which will highlight key moments and achievements of the School. Interviews will continue with Alumni and Faculty for content. She acknowledged the work of student Rabia Qureshi with the campaign and called for content, especially from the time periods of the 80 and 90s. Emails with historical updates can be sent to S. Scott or L. Zalewski.
  - M. Gong thanked S. Scott and L. Zalewski for their efforts on the event and the upcoming activities.
  - D. Gilles in chat asked for the number of attendees at the event and if there will be a description of the criteria for selecting the winners. S. Scott replied that there were approximately 60 attendees, and that the introduction for each winner summarizes the reasons that they won and can be posted to social media/website as well.

## 6. Minglun Gong

- **Changes to graduate programs**

- M. Gong reported that the proposal for the new PhD in CS program and the major modification for the MSc program were both passed through Senate on June 7th. The proposal for the Data Science program was also approved on that day. OGPS will submit the proposal for the two programs to Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (OUCQA) next and the feedback from their Appraisal Committee is expected by July 12th.
- M. Gong expected that if approved, PhD students in CS will be taken in the Fall. Also, following formal approval, teaching assignment will be adjusted for Winter 2022 to accommodate the 2 courses that are committed for the Data Science program. F. Song and D. Gillis have agreed to make the changes. This should all be completed by August.
- M. Gong thanked the Grad Study Committee, and especially J. Sawada, for preparing the proposals and making the major modifications through the long process.

- **Updates on Faculty search**

- M. Gong informed that 4 candidates were interviewed between June 15th and 21st. Feedback from SoCS members was sought and collected by June 23rd. M. Gong thanked all that participated in the interviews, especially the students that joined the presentations, and/or those that provided feedback.
- M. Gong announced that after much deliberation, the search committee unanimously recommended Ritu and Denis for the 2 teaching focused positions. The hiring request has been submitted to the Provost office for approval. A July 1<sup>st</sup> start date was the recommendation and he is awaiting confirmation.
- M. Gong revealed that Tiffany He has formally declined the offer of Assistant Professor due to her concerns on pandemic and the restrictions on international travel. The budget is still allocated to SOCS and the Dean supports refilling the position. It is still unclear to M. Gong and G. Darlington if there is a requirement for forming a new search committee or a need to resubmit a new request for advertising the position. M. Gong is waiting for reply from G. Darlington before proceeding with reposting and rehiring for this position.
- M. Gong is hopeful that the position will be filled by January 2022 or July 2022 at the latest. The later start date may permit in-person interviews which will be more engaging, depending on the pandemic situation at the time.

- **Incoming students for Fall**

- M. Gong updated that as of June 2nd, the number of confirmed students for SoCS is 202, of which 141 are domestic and 61 international. He stated that the number is stable, however, the percentage of international students has increased.
- M. Gong indicated there are no General BCG students (due to a lack of interest from students who met the cut-off grade), 35 CS student, 102 CS co-op students, 18 SE students, and 47 SE co-op students. M. Gong considers the distribution healthy, and 65 in the SE program manageable.
- M. Gong relayed that the SOCS target is set to 200, which the Registrar's Office considers to be the target for November, after the summer melt. The June target is set to 217. Although 202 is 93% of the June target, Karen Gordon indicated that there are still transfer student requests to increase the number to meet the 200 Fall target. As of June 21<sup>st</sup>, when the confirmed numbers were presented at the AGM, accepted offers had increased to 206.
- S. Scott inquired in chat about capping international admissions. M. Gong replied that the message from K. Gordon was that the cut-off grades can not be different between international and domestic because it will be considered discrimination by the Registrar's Office. Without the ability to change the cut-off grades for international vs domestic, there is no way to control the international admissions. S. Scott also commented on the cut-off grade seems to be high. M. Gong responded that due to grade inflation from high schools in the last batch of applications, the University had to then increase last round cut-off grades to compensate for this. For example, both SE and SE coop cut off were raised to 94% in the last round. M. Gong expressed a concern that an identical grade for coop and non coop programs would result in less students opting for the non-coop. The feedback he got is that the University recognised this but did not want to lower the grade, which will generate too many offers.
- D. Gilles in chat asked about support for international students. M. Gong agrees international students generally demand more supports. The increase in international students also provides a good argument for a second program counsellor, now that April has left, since they require more resources to acclimatize and provide counselling services. The University considered revenue share for international undergrad students similar to Cybersecurity program but no changes have been announced yet.
- M. Gong noted that the overall CEPS achieved 91% of target, which is lower than expectation. Engineering has 448 confirmed students, which is right at their June target of 449. Their November target is 400.

- Campus wide, Commerce and Science are large program but did not get enough students. K. Gordon noted at Dean's Council that Administration did not want to run over corridor and recruiting was not as aggressive. Last year they were shooting for 120% and this year shot for 100%. This will result in a tighter budget for the University and thus the individual units.

- **Fall course delivery**

- M. Gong apprised of 2 changes in university's Fall course delivery plan in the past month. One is that the total number of students in each section is capped to 250. Within SOCS, only CIS\*1500 was scheduled as Face to Face and was larger than 250. It was changed it to online delivery as it is not a core course.
- Another change is that it requests 60% of courses to be delivered in face to face (F2F) format for each cohort of students. This is a reduction from their previous position that all courses have a F2F format in some manner. Requests were sent from the Dean's office directly to faculty members, asking them to consider F2F delivery. M. Gong noted that several SOCS faculty members had supported the requests and we have met the 60% requirement.
- M. Gong expressed his appreciation to the Faculty that are supporting the University's initiative. There is widespread discussion with unions as to who have the right to determine course delivery formats in the future.
- It is still unclear what will happen if students request to access F2F lectures/labs remotely. M. Gong expects the LOU between UgFA and the university will address how those students will be accommodated. M. Gong raised the question to K. Gordon and am waiting for her feedback.
- L. Zalewski in chat that Karen Gordon will be executing the Quad again this year. It is an online transitional program on CourseLink to join incoming students with senior students to answer questions and hopefully as a recruiting tool to prevent summer melt. M. Gong thanked student volunteers for their assistance with answering concerns from students.
- In chat, D. Flatla expressed a concern that his decision to teach online could be revoked. M. Gong indicated that a change in delivery format from online to in person cannot be done without Faculty approval. G. Klotz agreed.
- A. Hamilton-Wright in chat stated that WebAdvisor is authoritative once it is posted.

- **Other Updates from Dean's Council Meeting**

- M. Gong reported that Ben Bradshaw is working on a partnership agreement with the Egyptian government for Egyptian students to come to the UofG. Students will be funded by Egyptian government, but the University would be required to cover \$12,000 per student - \$6000 from OGPS, and advisors would have to cover the remainder. If anyone is thinking of recruiting grad students, this would be an good opportunity.
- M. Gong relayed the message from Bill Van Heyst that Creative Encounters will be virtual in July, but will be F2F in August. Staff and Faculty are asked to register online for August programming.

## **6. Any other business**

- M. Gong wished everyone a relaxing summer and thanked everyone for their continuing support in this challenging year.
- M. Gong noted that at a College Restructuring Meeting hosted by the external consultants, he highlighted SOCS' strengths in both education and research. He felt our achievements are recognized by both the President and the Provost, who were at the meeting. He also felt that the current direction is heading toward forming a separate college for SoCS and 3 physical sciences departments.
- No other business. Meeting adjourned 1:50pm.