

**School of Computer Science
Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 26th, 2019
1:00-2:30pm, REYN 1101**

Present –

Faculty: L. Antonie, D. Calvert, R. Dara, D. Gillis, M. Gong (Director), A. Hamilton-Wright, S. Kremer, X. Lin, J. McCuaig, D. Nikitenko, C. Obimbo, J. Sawada, F. Song, D. Stacey, F. Wang, Y. Xiang;

Staff: T. Archbold, D. Byart, C. Hosker, K. Johnston, G. Klotz, J. Lange, K. Gardiner (recording secretary), A. Nejedly, D. Rea;

Student Representatives: S. Modi;

Regrets –

Faculty: R. Chaturvedi, D. Chiu, A. Dehghantanha, D. Flatla, G. Grewal, H. Khan, P. Matsakis, S Scott, M. Wineberg, M. Wirth;

Staff: None.

Student Representatives: J. Fraser;

1. Approval of Agenda for November 26th, 2019

Motion: That the agenda for November 26, 2019 be approved

(A. Hamilton-Wright, C. Obimbo)

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

2. Dave Calvert (See Appendix A)

- **Remove 2750 as prerequisite**

*The prerequisite sequence for the software engineering courses is difficult to manage for Co-op students if they fail or drop CIS*2750. The proposal is to remove the CIS*2750 prerequisite from CIS*3750. This will allow students who drop or fail CIS*2750 to continue taking courses in the next semester while they retake CIS*2750. We will add the CIS*2750 prerequisite to CIS*3760 to prevent movement into the more senior courses.*

S. Kremer shared that he doesn't think is a good idea; students who don't take 2750 may not be suitable for a Co-op. D. Calvert explained that we are unable to control that scenario. He also noted that while he shares similar concerns, this was the only sensible compromise agreed upon by the committee. He also noted that if we add a summer semester, everything in semester two will be shuffled around which may in turn affect this. For example, the students currently have two opportunities to pass 2750 (fall and winter) but if a summer semester is introduced it may change this.

S. Modi noted he agrees with this change. D. Rea commented that there is a lot of group work available for students to do that isn't programming and he does not believe that the programming aspect of the course itself is what students find so challenging.

Motion: That CIS*2750 be removed as a prerequisite for CIS*3750 and add it as a prerequisite to CIS*3760.

(D. Calvert, D. Stacey)

In Favour: 13. Opposed: S. Kremer. Abstentions: None. **MOTION PASSED.**

- **Reducing lab lengths from CIS*2910 and CIS*1910**

A suggestion was made that the labs in both discrete math courses could be reduced from two hours per week to one hour. They are currently (3-2) courses in the calendar. The existing two hour labs are seen as unnecessarily long for these courses. This will also help with scheduling labs which has become increasingly difficult with increased undergraduate enrolments.

D. Calvert suggested that 2 hours per lab may not be necessary and with the increasing number of students, labs are becoming more difficult to schedule. C. Obimbo requested that the wording of the motion be changed from "not necessary" to reflect that this change is being made due to increased numbers. D. Calvert agreed to change the wording to "a reluctant change". C. Obimbo noted that he would rather have two hour labs than more students arriving for office hours.

Motion: Change both CIS*1910 and CIS*2910 to have one hour labs (3-1) in the calendar.
(D. Calvert, C. Obimbo)

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

- **Introduce a 3000 level special topics course.**

*A request was made to consider the introduction of a 3000 level special topics course that is similar to CIS*4450 or CIS*4500. The course would be at the third year level so it would be less demanding than the existing fourth year courses. It would allow the introduction and testing of new 3000 level courses that may later be introduced as regular courses.*

D. Calvert noted this request from a faculty member could be used as a trial course for faculty to test new courses before making them permanent. He also explained that these would be taught on a volunteer basis, dependant on student and faculty interest. Y. Xiang questioned how teaching credits would be assigned to this.

Motion: Add a third year special topics to the calendar
(D. Calvert, A. Hamilton-Wright)

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

- **Reorganize the General Program**

Change the course requirements for the General Program so they provide a more applied selection of courses and allow students to complete the degree within three years.

D. Calvert explained that the general program is not well subscribed to, which is OK as we haven't so much promoted it as it's been an after thought. The motion to redesign it would give it more of a purpose and allow us to offer courses that can lead to jobs and allow people to complete the degree in three years. He explained that we would remove CIS*2910 and replace with with CIS*2170 and CIS*1050. In doing so, students could complete their first two years and depending on they do in CIS*2750 during semester 4, can decide to graduate earlier by selecting electives from the right column. Essentially, with adding some additional electives, students can graduate from the CS program without having to pass CIS*2750.

S. Kremer noted he was not in favour of the idea, as he felt that CIS*2750 represents a minimum competency course evaluation and removing it could affect our reputation. He asked if we could compromise by calling it something that isn't "Computer Science". D. Calvert explained that that would require creatin a whole new general degree.

J. McCuaig pointed out that it could be dangerous to assume that students are starting in the honours program.

Motion: Adopt the new course requirements for the General Program.

(D. Calvert, D. Stacey)

In Favour: 12. Opposed: S. Kremer, J. Sawada. **MOTION PASSED.**

- **Delete CIS*1000 Introduction to Computer Applications.**

*The two introductory computing courses, CIS*1000 and CIS*1200, are very similar. They have nearly identical learning objectives and use the same text book. There is little reason to maintain two courses. The intention is to delete CIS*1000 and encourage students who would would have taken it to instead take CIS*1200. The other units on campus who list CIS*1000 in the calendar have been contacted and they acknowledge the change.*

D. Calverted noted this is more of a bookkeeping change.

Motion: Delete CIS*1000 from the calendar.

(D. Calvert, A. Hamilton-Wright)

In Favour: All. **MOTION PASSED.**

S. Kremer asked when these changes would take effect. D. Calvert said it would be the 2020/2021 calendar. He also noted he would be happier if SOE offered their own courses and will make a recommendation to them accordingly. He explained that K. Gordon is looking to introduce a summer semester for CS and SOE; it is easy for CS to do so since so many of our courses are split (which can be moved), meaning we only have to add 3 or 4 new courses to

create a full semester. He noted that this would be good because of the good weather, more space and more chances for students to pass their courses. His concern is rearranging 2nd year courses, which would be beneficial if able to be accomplished (a big change). He also noted that the Co-op program would benefit.

He also noted the consideration of offering data structures in the winter semester to accommodate the large number of students struggling with the course.

D. Calvert mentioned the question of removing CIS*2750 from the minor requirements; he doesn't think this should happen; removing it from the general degree is happening for a specific purpose.

4. Announcements

M. Gong announced that the SoCS Strategic Planning Retreat is scheduled for Thursday, Dec 5th, 2019 in Reynolds 1101.

5. Approval of Minutes from November 12th

A change needs to be made and so these minutes will be tabled to next meeting for approval.

6. Business Arising from Minutes

S. Kremer commented on the future of the Outreach and Recruitment Officer position and stated that he believes we should fight strongly to keep that position within the School of Computer Science, that the person should report to people in the school and that the hiring committee is representative of the school. He noted that at one time, recruitment was managed at the college level and it had negative consequences for CS as such a unique field.

He noted the importance of having the new person physically in the Reynolds Building, interacting with students and clubs (a huge part of the recruitment effort). He noted that allowing to move to a Dean's office position would be a slippery slope. He shared that in his Director's experience, he had to convince the Dean to keep the position in the school, and would be disappointed to see it lost.

S. Modi echoed S. Kremer, noting that L. Zweep worked with the clubs directly and was imperative to student clubs and their success. M. Gong explained that having the position work physically in the building should not be a problem, as is fair representation on the hiring committee, however maintaining the role's current reporting structure may be a challenge.

S. Kremer shared concerns that B. Bradshaw was not acting adequately for the school. D. Gillis agreed, noting that he has not spoken to us about our positions and is worried we will lose the position to engineering.

7. Minglun Gong

- **Consultation on self study report (see Appendix B)**

M. Gong shared that the annual budget has increased 48% from 2014-2019 due to faculty increases. He also shared that there is still a deficit.

M. Gong also reviewed some statistics regarding undergraduate education and ratios. D. Stacey noted that we only have 2 students that entered into the school Fall 2019 in the three year general program.

It was reiterated that SoCS needs two different cut off numbers, one for international students and one for domestic. However M. Gong explained that the University currently has a policy that the cut off average has to be the same for both international and domestic.

M. Gong also explained that the our graduate program is increasing faster than that of our undergraduate and discussed the option of a course based masters. C. Obimbo asked that if we are going to pursue a course based masters, do we have the personnel to teach them or will we be requesting more resources?

D. Gillis spoke to the course based masters, concerned about the tuition revenue being used to hire more sessionals for the undergraduates, and therefore affecting the quality of that program. He also questioned how teaching larger grad courses was supposed to reduce work faculty workload as more work is involved when teaching graduate programs. M. Gong shared his opinion that graduate courses are based on the faculty's speciality and are therefore less work, as faculty would be essentially be able to "wing them". as the faculty know the material inside and out. D. Gillis pointed out that a larger class wouldn't guarantee more TAs which could potentially lead to more grading.

M. Gong also noted that we can decide how many students we would be comfortable taking in a course based masters, and explained that our graduate student numbers per course were actually relatively low compared to fourth year undergrad. D. Gillis expressed a need for caution, hearing from SOE that the course based masters has not been the best thing from them.

R. Dara pointed out that offering diverse graduate courses could bring in more students. C. Obimbo asked for clarification on if this course based masters would be 1 or 2 years; M. Gong responded it was up for debate but right now they are looking at 2 years, with a Coop option.

J. McCuaig wanted to readdress the issue of running the undergraduate program on sessionals and the existing difficulty in hiring sessionals we need now. M. Gong agreed it is harder to find sessionals for high level courses, which is our current need, he would be looking for people to teach first or second year courses. J. McCuaig argued that if sessionals are teaching core courses, students may not be as prepared for upper year courses. She expressed concern that the undergraduate program is being sacrificed. R. Dara pointed out that other Universities are doing this, and perhaps we could look and see what they are doing for guidance.

F. Song asked about hiring sessionals long-term (i.e. repeating teaching like Z. Zhu for CIS*1000).

8. Any other business

No other business. Meeting adjourned 2:33pm.