

**School of Computer Science
Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday November 2, 2021
1:00pm – 2:30pm
Microsoft Teams**

Present –

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

Staff: D. Byart, J. DeFreitas (recording secretary), C. Hosker, J. Hughes, G. Klotz, J. Lange, S. Brennan, A. Nguyen, D. Rea;

Student Representatives: S. Adi;

Regrets –

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

Staff: K. Johnston, L. Zalewski;

Student Representatives: A. Kohut;

1. Approval of Agenda for November 2, 2021

Motion: That the agenda for November 2, 2021 be approved.

(C. Obimbo, D. Flatla)

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

2. Jazmyn Hughes, Faculty Liason, Student Accessibility Services

- **Presentation about SAS (Appendix A)**

J. Hughes described the goal of SAS which is to help students who experience disabilities with a full and equitable participation in academic life. After sharing a bit about herself and her background, J. Hughes provided an overview of SAS, some important policies, accommodations for tests and exams and some COVID considerations (see Appendix A).

J. Hughes outlined the increase in need for services with 3000 students currently registered. She provided links in the chat to the applicable legislation <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-accessible-education-students-disabilities> and <https://www.aoda.ca/the-act/> as well as the University policies and procedures <https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-accommodation-students-disabilities-policy/>.

J. Hughes stressed that academic integrity and learning outcomes are maintained for all students with accommodations with no reduction in the academic standard. She clarified that students must have documentation and a diagnosis to receive accommodations. She also emphasized the need for course outlines to specify the format of exams so that students can schedule to attend the SAS Exam Centre in advance of the semester cutoff date, as there is limited space.

A Hamilton-Wright asked about accommodations for students with COVID and J. Hughes clarified that any student not registered with SAS can be accommodated through Academic Consideration and provided a link <https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-consideration-appeals-petitions/>

3. Announcements

No announcements.

4. Approval of minutes from October 19, 2021

Motion: That the minutes from October 19, 2021 be approved.

(D. Gillis, Y. Xiang)

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

5. Dan Gillis

- **UofG United Way Campaign**

D. Gillis reported, as the Co-Chair for the U of G United Way campaign, that this year's campus-wide goal is \$620,000. The SoCS goal remains at \$4000, of which \$3178 has been raised to date. E-pledges by payroll deduction can be arranged and events such as 50/50 draw are in process. D. Gillis encouraged everyone to participate in this or any charity this season.

6. Dana Rea

- **Update on Rm 1101 AV equipment**

D. Rea reported on the status of the equipment in classroom #1101. A complete replacement of the control system, audio amplifier and wiring has been decided as the continual maintenance is no longer viable. He described the scheduling of new replacement will be an issue due to supply chain delays but there is the option of re-using an existing controller from the Science Complex. This will allow the projectors to be used at the start of W22 but the drawback is that it will be constrained to 1 video feed. He advised that if a decision is made to purchase a new controller, it will be installed in Summer 22.

M. Gong responded that he did not see a great need for a second video feed but acknowledged that other instructors may require it, so they are asked to advise D. Rea. He advised that an alternate plan should be made for those teaching there in January who require AV, in the event that the equipment is not ready for the start of the semester. If Zoom presentations, which are used by Xiaodong, are not adequate, M. Gong advised instructors to contact G. Klotz to schedule another classroom elsewhere on campus.

D. Rea suggested Rm 3321 and Rm 0002 as possible alternatives.

7. Minglun Gong

- **W22 Course delivery planning**

M. Gong briefed about new information from the Provost which stated on October 15th that instructors are allowed to choose a blended approach, which offers some components remotely. For example, lectures can be delivered online if mandatory labs are scheduled as face-to-face. The key is that at least one major course component must be offered face-to-face.

M. Gong outlined a second Provost's memo of October 27th which stated that instructors wishing to deliver fully remote lectures must obtain approval from Occupational Health. He added that the Dean also believes that there is concern for requiring TAs to deliver labs in person whereas faculty members deliver lectures remotely. M. Gong also acknowledged the concern by parents and students for the lack of in-person faculty interaction. He hence strongly encouraged faculty members to deliver lectures in person, at least once per week.

M. Gong emphasized that he did argue for more choice for faculty on the format, as many SoCS members have raised pedagogical reasons on why their lectures are better received online. He therefore will support requests for online delivery as long as there is a F2F component. Discussion followed.

D. Flatla elaborated on a poll given to his CIS*4300 students about delivery of CIS*4030 in W22. The question "can you attend in-person in W22" had a 50% yes and 50% no response. The second question "do you want to attend in-person" had a 70% no and 30% yes response from 24 respondents. This was concurred by D. Gillis and A. Hamilton-Wright who both agreed that the students' opinions are not being considered by the administration. S. Adi added that students have told her that they would prefer not to come to campus unless there is 100% in-person format.

S. Kremer updated on the MOU from UGFA that there was progress for the F21 agreement but the W22 will be governed by the original Collective Agreement.

M. Gong responded to D. Gillis' question about absentee students in F2F class by re-affirming that instructors cannot be forced to deliver a hybrid format, even if a large portion of the

students cannot attend in person. Students will need to choose another course if they cannot attend F2F.

- **Update on Search Committee**

M. Gong reported that the Search Committee for the new Faculty position is now formed. The 3 nominated members are: N. Bruce, A. Dehghantanha, and X. Lin. M. Gong appointed two members: S. Krewal and Dr. Lei Lei from School of Engineering. He thanked the supports from these members. He confirmed that the committee has finalized the ad, and it has been submitted to the Dean's office for approval.

M. Gong identified the new position as a CARE-AI hire, which means that hiring can be done at the Associate Professor level, if there are strong candidates. The application deadline has been set to December 15th.

- **Discussion on Alumni Survey (Appendix B)**

As a continuation of the Alumni Survey presentation of October 19th, M. Gong explored some of the comments of participants and reiterated that the overall response to CS programs was very positive with 4:1 respondents satisfied vs unsatisfied. He acknowledged several concerns and counter arguments to teaching more languages. A revision of the program to address some of the issues identified may allow for additional resources, if added to the CPR self study report.

M. Gong stated that after conferring with Associate Directors, they identified CIS*3190 as a potential avenue for introducing more languages. He indicated that although students have exposure to modern languages in upper years, he thought that a course highlighting different features in modern languages and their applications can be beneficial for students. He opened the floor for discussion.

D. Rea anticipated that it could take several years to build infrastructure for a curriculum change. M. Gong responded to S. Kremer in chat that indeed the School's purpose is not to teach skills as a college would but teaching fundamentals. D. Gillis wondered if there should be a broader study completed before making decisions, as only a small percentage of alumni participated.

M. Gong agreed but added that if the School or Curriculum Committee felt that there was room for improvement of the curriculum, that this was a good time to undertake the changes needed by using the existing survey as justification. Members were asked to consider it and more discussion will be held with the Curriculum Committee.

M. Gong acknowledged additional concerns from alumni regarding the software design courses being repetitive and considered the potential for adding focus to each course. He requested input from instructors, especially the software engineering instructors, on the idea.

D. Gillis argued that repetition is necessary for mastery of skills but was open to the idea of creating a visual map of the curriculum for the 5 software design courses, to inform students of what each entails.

D. Stacey affirmed that a map of software engineering courses, based on how students were learning various techniques, was completed, and it detailed the different methodologies for software design. She concurred that the repetition is necessary for learning the material. M. Gong agreed that a visual outline would help the students understand the need for repetition.

J. Lange advised against removing AOAs since they assist the student to think outside the box and doing so will limit the abilities of the graduates and thus, their employability. M. Gong validated that need but identified some concerns raised in the survey about difficulty with coordination between units.

Another possible direction to address survey comments was explored by M. Gong and that was the set up of an Industry Advisory Board. Based on discussion with A. Dehghantanha and A. Nguyen, who have experience with this, M. Gong briefed about difficulties setting up a board that is applicable across the whole Computer Science program. M. Gong considered asking for input from alumni in the field but this will depend on the School's decision on the matter.

The final direction considered by M. Gong is a summer academic term and flexible Co-Op placement, which was discussed in the previous self study report. He indicated that there is support for offering more courses in the summer so that students can accept Co-op placements in Fall/Winter terms and take courses in Summer terms, providing the flexibility to complete their program. He reiterated the need for more resources but was in favour of making the request for resources to revise the program.

D. Gillis raised the subject of 0.75 credit courses being treated as 0.5 credit and asked for evaluation of the equity of these courses. M. Gong responded that he and the Dean have similar concerns and that his goal is to make teaching equitable. Discussion with the Curriculum Committee on this issue was endorsed by M. Gong.

8. Any other business

No other business. Meeting adjourned at 2:32pm.