

**School of Computer Science
Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday October 25th, 2022
1:00pm – 2:00pm
Microsoft Teams**

Present –

Faculty: N. Bruce, R. Chaturvedi, R. Dara, D. Flatla, D. Gillis, M. Gong (Director), A. Hamilton-Wright, H. Khan, S. Kremer, X. Lin, J. McCuaig, D. Nikitenko, C. Obimbo, J. Sawada, S. Scott, D. Stacey, F. Wang, Y. Yan;

Staff: S. Brennan, D. Byart, J. DeFreitas (recording secretary), C. Hosker, J. Hughes, K. Johnston, G. Klotz, J. Lange, P. Patel, D. Rea, T. Waite;

Student Representatives: A. Kohut, T. Trinh;

Guest: R. Khamkeuang

Regrets –

Faculty: L. Antonie, D. Calvert, A. Dehghantanha, G. Grewal, P. Matsakis, F. Song, M. Wineberg, M. Wirth;

Staff: none;

Student Representatives: none;

1. Approval of Agenda for October 25th, 2022

Motion: That the agenda for October 26th, 2022 be approved.

(N. Bruce, D. Nikitenko,)

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

2. Announcements

No announcements.

3. Approval of Minutes from September 27th, 2022

Motion: That the minutes from September 27th, 2022 be approved.

(N. Bruce, S. Scott)

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

4. Stefan Kremer and Jennifer Hughes -Updates from the PCMS Committee

S. Kremer has replaced Y. Xiang on the PCMS Committee. He reported on the Committee meeting with G. Chapman on September 19th as well as October 3rd and 17th. A division date of 2024 was suggested by external consultant with a need for an interim Dean to develop a strategic plan for the new college. J. Dutcher will lobby for this position.

S. Kremer suggested, in preparation for this, that a new college name be proposed as well as qualifications for the new Dean.

M. Gong reminded about the name proposed by F. Wang in earlier email discussions, which was College of Computational and Physical Sciences and asked for feedback. S. Kremer reported that J. Dutcher suggested a name of College of Quantitative Sciences. M. Gong also asked if there was a timeline for implementing plans for the new college. S. Kremer replied that while no timeline has been established, members of PCMS want to move the process along so that Engineering doesn't move ahead of the rest of the college in securing resources.

R. Dara inquired about the budget and if Admin will merge SOCS with another college to save money. S. Kremer doubted this would occur as they would open Article 24 which would offer costly buyouts.

5. Rozita Dara- Updates from OUF and CWiC - (Appendix A)

P. Patel presented information on the Ontario Universities Fair October 1st and 2nd. The UOG booth was very well attended with lineups to ask about computing related majors. She noted that the Viewbook, which contains all the degree program information, has listed our cutoff range as 85-90% and debated if this will encourage more applicants vs. damage our reputation.

P. Patel also provided updates from the Celebration for Canadian Women in Computer Science Conference, October 21-22nd. She noted a lot of interest in the MCTI program.

R. Dara added that OUF there was a lot of interest in Human Computer Interaction, data science and cybersecurity. She highlighted S. Scott's role on the panel and proposed bringing the conference to UOG.

S. Scott noted in chat that studies have shown there are less women applicants when cutoff rates are high even if the student has a high GPA, because high cutoff gives them the impression that the programs are too competitive.

M. Gong relayed some views that were shared at the Chairs meeting regarding attracting women to CS, one of which was de-emphasizing prior programming experience for introductory courses.

6. Minglun Gong

Updates From Dean's Council Meeting on October 20th

M. Gong communicated the outcome of the budget discussions which will try to reduce the University deficit from 15 million in the original plan, to 7 million. As such, the Provost's office has frozen all positions for Faculty and Staff hires, including permanent positions. He informed that each unit will have to plan to accommodate this 2.5% cut.

M. Gong explained the origin of the deficit as a result of the Province's tuition cuts which reduced our funding by 14 million. The University's plan is to recruit more international students, which CEPS is succeeding at achieving.

Regarding outreach, M. Gong announced the Fall Preview Day on November 6th and Science and Engineering Sunday on November 13th, and encouraged everyone to support those activities. An International Recruiting Open House will take place virtually on January 14th and students around the world will be invited to attend.

Updates from CS-Can/Info-Can Chairs Meeting on October 22nd

Some ideas discussed at the Chairs Meeting include:

- Supporting EDI (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) to make CS more inclusive
- High enrollment in CS and the challenges that accompany this
- Many Faculty hires in other Universities: York hired 19 faculty and TMU hired 8

M. Gong explored making a case to hire more Faculty for CS based on our student:faculty ratio but CS-CAN needs to gather more data to determine the ideal balance. Currently, SOCS has 35 or 38:1.

D. Gillis in chat shared a link that shows Guelph placed 15th out of 15 for Student/Faculty ratio in MacLeans ranking of Best Comprehensive Universities for 2023.

(<https://www.macleans.ca/education/canadas-best-comprehensive-universities-rankings-2023/>)

M. Gong emphasized from the same report that Guelph is, likely for the 1st time, ranking in the Top 20 in Canada for CS. He thanked all members for their contributions that made this possible.

There were awards presented at the end of the Chair meeting <https://cscan-infocan.ca/awards/> for Lifetime Achievement and Young Researcher among others. There were no recipients from Guelph and M. Gong encouraged his colleagues to nominate each other and students <https://cscan-infocan.ca/nominate/> .

M. Gong encouraged Faculty to attend next year's conference which will be a consolidation of all the individual conferences in different fields and which will be held in Montreal in June. He anticipated that submitting work will make Guelph research more visible.

Discussions on enrollment target and budget cut

A more detailed update on the budget cut and the implications for our School was described by M. Gong. The SOCS budget was discussed with M. Torcoletti and the School is in a good position to reduce the base budget through Faculty replacement. The retirement of Y. Xiang and his replacement with Y. Yan, a junior member, has resulted in some savings. This, along with other Faculty retirements in the near future, should meet the 2.5% cut and thus be able to argue for replacement of existing positions.

M. Gong detailed the issue with the CARE-AI position, which has seen a second candidate decline to join us. He relayed that M. Torcoletti will argue for us to either re-post the position or to earmark those funds for other purposes.

Regarding the enrolment target, M. Gong announced that the previous maximum of 200 students has been surpassed and after summer melt, we are sitting at over 300 students. Moving forward, he detailed that the target will stay at 200 but the university wants to recruit as many as 100 (50%) international students. Impacts on teaching and counselling are expected but also the concern is the reduction of seats for domestic students.

M. Gong assessed whether SOCS could accommodate a higher enrollment, say 220, but with the assurance that the second Program Counsellor Position be made permanent. He asked for input from members about the potential impact the increase in international students will have.

S. Scott commented about the high cost of living for the international students and the ethical dilemma of recruiting students, often from poor nations, to offset our deficit. She declared that she would be increasing her stipend to assist them. With regard to increased enrollment targets, she worried that the University would not follow up with increased staff and full time faculty.

M. Gong concurred and discussion ensued about international students supporting themselves.

J. McCuaig in chat identified that international students are prevented from dropping courses due to their visas and that puts a strain on instructional staff. M. Gong responded that we have to make sure graduates of the program meet the qualifications. He then detailed the admission process for domestic, which is performed in batches, and international, where applicants are admitted right away if they meet the previous cutoff. He acknowledged the issue with that process.

M. Gong wrapped up by sharing his plan for submitting a memo about SoCS' internationalization plan and the resources we will need.

D. Flatla inquired about our School's ability to control who gets in, such as an interview, an entrance test or other creative means to combat the grade inflation plaguing universities. M. Gong confirmed that Guelph does not allow this.

P. Patel, who previously worked in admissions, detailed other programs that use a Background Information Form as an additional tool but also suggested more research into what other schools are doing.

7. Any other business

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