School of Computer Science

SoCS Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 8, 2016
1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
Reynolds Room 219

Attended: D. Calvert, D. Chiu, R. Dara, B. Gardner, D. Gillis, G. Grewal, S. Kremer (Director), P. Matsakis, B. Nonnecke, C. Obimbo, J. Sawada, D. Stacey, F. Wang, M. Wineberg, M. Wirth, Y. Xiang, D. Byart (Undergraduate Program Assistant), S. Cantlon (Recording Secretary), K. Johnston (Systems Analyst), G. Klotz (Program Counsellor), L. Zweep (Recruitment Officer).

Absent: X. Li (on leave), J. McCuaig (on leave), F. Song.

1. **Approval of Agenda**
   <u>Motion:</u> C. Obimbo and G. Grewal
   <u>**Motion carried unanimously**</u>

2. **Approval of Minutes from February 9, 2016 and February 23, 2016.**
   Deferred to the next meeting.

3. **Business Arising**

   a) <u>IT Review Update</u>
   S. Kremer noted that the IT Review is being restarted and he expects there will be new appointments made for people to meet with the new reviewer in May. Some people may already have appointments booked.

4. **Director's Remarks – S. Kremer**

   a) <u>CPES Budget Meeting with Provost</u>
   S. Kremer wanted to make a comment on the budget meeting that the Provost, Charlotte Yates, held. It was attended by himself, R. Dara, D. Gillis, C. Obimbo, and S. Cantlon. One of the interesting things at the meeting was the announcement that the University has a surplus. One of the things that will be coming up is a new review, they are not wanting to use the word U-PIF as C. Yates has been significantly distancing herself from that name. For U-PIF, it was hard to get the information that was needed, it was hard to provide the information, and after looking at what information was submitted, she didn't know how they decided what proposals got the funding, which is what we thought. So coming up soon will be an opportunity to make proposals to spend a portion of the surplus. The University will still be very cautious with this spending surplus as there are still risks that they face (such as tuition), and some of these things are only known a short time in advance. In these cases, shortly after the budget is announced, they learn their financial fate.

b) <u>Graduate Program Assistant Hiring Update</u>
S. Kremer said that there is good news for the Graduate Program Assistant hire. The position is about to go up on the HR site very soon. They normally do this Wednesday and Friday. It is a desperately needed resource that needs to be reconstituted.

5. **Foundational Science Task Force – J. Sawada**
J. Sawada was asked to report back on a meeting that F. Song and he attended. This was the first meeting that he attended. It was mostly complaints about how to deal with large classes and how you give back mid-term exams.

The numbers he was asked to give back was that last year, there were 476 new students admitted to Engineering and 220 to CS. Those numbers were not only new students but also transfers. The message he is supposed to report back for Fall 2016 is that Engineering is expected to get 375 students and CS will get 150 students. This is based on new offers, and there will also be transfers. The message is this is initial enrollment and that we shouldn't expect more and it should be softened going forward.

Admissions isn't setting the targets. They send 425 offer letters out and expect the get 375 acceptances. Going forward, the College and the School are to set the numbers. For us, the target is 150. It was commented that it isn't possible as it was 250.

J. Sawada noted that he was told that going forward that number is supposed to soften. This is the target set by the Registrar and that it is the number of people they would like to come in. This fall we had 220 incoming students according to the Registrar. The target for Fall 2016 is 150 acceptances, and they sent more offers. We don't know how many offers go out and how many will actually accept. The target is 150 accepted and there will be transfers.

A faculty member noted that number doesn't sound right. The number of people that have applied has gone up by 18%, so he expects that 280 students will be coming in. J. Sawada said that people applying and students coming in are different numbers.

J. Sawada reported that the Dean said 150 is the target and how many offers go out is unknown. It was noted by a faculty member that the Registrar doesn't release those numbers and we shouldn't believe anyone.

J. Sawada said the Dean asked him to pass along that the numbers would be softening.

A faculty member pointed out that when the Dean visited the School, he said that he thought the increase was by 18%. S. Kremer said that if the admission entrance average goes up to 92%, then you bring in just the top students. A faculty member pointed out that considering everyone else is shrinking, we are the only ones producing numbers and we are the Golden Goose.

No one is letting us make the decision. The Dean seems to have set the target of 150. Engineering is not targeting to grow. A faculty member said to be sceptical until we get bums in seats. We were told before that we are not growing. We were told by the Registrar that we wouldn't get growth but come September, we had 100 extra students.

J. Sawada said this was the message from the Dean and he was using his expertise and his experience, and that's his target. A faculty member suggested going to B. Pettigrew, however he is retired.

It was questioned where did he get 150? That is the Registrar's number that they got from the Dean. It was questioned where did the Dean get it? A faculty member thought we were supposed to be a part of that process and they want to know for next meeting where that comes from.

A faculty member pointed out that we have been down this road before and getting numbers from the Registrar is impossible. They wouldn't believe anything coming from anyone else but the Registrar. If these were the real planning numbers, he would say fantastic but we have been burned before.

We also get 10 transfers per year.

Another faculty noted the growth plans that we have put forward before, which we are in an attempt to wrangle more positions, have projected ever-growing expansion. S. Kremer said that the plans have us levelling off in existing programs and the new programs coming in would grow for a few years and then level off but there is foreseeable future growth.

The faculty said on one hand he agrees with the faculty member about 150 but on the other hand, that would fly in the plan that we are trying to sell to upper management. The left hand is not talking to right hand.

Another faculty member asked that when they talk about these numbers, is there talk about retention? As these numbers get larger, you get weaker students in program, and are they only looking at first year? What about second, third? That will have to be looked at.

J. Sawada noted that the one meeting he went to was about how to return mid-terms to students. For 5 minutes, they only talked about the Engineering and SoCS numbers.

A faculty asked if they care about 2nd, 3rd, 4th year. S. Kremer said that the University does advertise that we have a good retention rate. At some level, they care about it. He doesn't remember that people have said a peep about 2750 or 2910 or 2030 where the DFD rate is high. Noting in the past, they used to come once in a while to see why so many people were failing these courses.

The faculty said that on the flip side, do they come and say why do people fly through. He talked to the Catalyst Centre. He was worried that as the enrolment goes up, quality goes down and we will became the Walmart of CS. How do you manage a class when 130 should fail out of 300 but you cannot actually do that? J. Sawada said that hopefully we are only taking the best.

A faculty member said that they cannot believe that after having said overall enrollment are down, they will look a gift horse in the mouth. S. Kremer said that it is worse than that, and they have to maintain numbers across the University. But everyone, except for CS, Engineering and Accounting, is down. So if everyone is in the negatives, we will have to do more.

The faculty member said that they think they are being sold a bill of goods that is faulty as we have seen that before. This year was 245. Comfortably say 280 this year. He said 18% more than last year. They loose if they take less students, less money for College and for us.

A faculty member noted that Arts numbers are dropping like a rock.

Another faculty said that he would prefer 150 quality people. We don't know the pass fail rate for last few years. S. Kremer noted that it's actually good. It is difficult to calculate because if a student drops a course, they don't take the full complement so they aren't in second year the next year, looks like almost 100%. You have to look at how many students have taken 1-10 courses, then next year 10-20 courses, then the next years the numbers go down.

It was asked how many students we have right now? We have almost 700. We have a very high faculty to student ratio, which is the worst on-campus. The only people worse than us are York.

It was noted that the numbers get more frightening if we end up with 290 students.

S. Kremer thanked J. Sawada for the talk and noted that we have to remember not to shoot the messenger.

6. **Undergraduate Curriculum Committee – C. Obimbo**
   C. Obimbo noted that one of things that they have been working on is Mobile Computing. A lot of work has been done but they still need to work on the portfolio so he won't report much on that today, hopefully next time.

   C. Obimbo talked about the following items:

   a) HCI (ISHB name change and a course overhaul)
      ▪ Instigated by Sofie Lachapelle - Acting Associate Dean (Academic) College of Arts
      ▪ ISHB was originally a multi-disciplinary major but has recently become solely Computer Science and Psychology-focused.
      ▪ Instigated by Sofie Lachapelle - Acting Associate Dean (Academic) College of Arts
      ▪ Problems with ISHB as is now:
         - Not many recognize the name ISHB in industry. Difficult to get a job.
         - HCI is better known.
         - Students had to take courses from ANTH and SOC, which had stringent prerequisites, which the students didn't have.
         - Thus it was hardly feasible to complete the degree.
      ▪ Changes
         - Name change – to make it more recognizable.
         - Courses have been carefully chosen to ensure that the completion of the degree is "tractable".
         - It's valuable and there is demand in industry.
         - Motion: The name change and course overhaul be accepted as proposed.

It was noted that one of the earlier proposals had new courses that we had to offer. C. Obimbo said that there would be no new courses, they removed 1910 and replaced with 3000 and 2170. B. Nonnecke noted that doesn't mean it won't happen but it isn't in the initial plan.

Motion: C. Obimbo, B. Nonnecke

Motion that the name and course overhaul be accepted as proposed.

There were discussions on this before the motion was voted on:

A faculty member asked if the name HCI is too restrictive? There could be other directions that we move to. Their concern is that name change is a little restrictive for program that isn't a disciplinary between CS and Psychology. A name change like Comp Psych has so much more flexibility. B. Nonnecke responded that 99% of the students wouldn't get jobs in user experience or interaction. C. Obimbo responded that we are taking something people know in industry.

It was suggested again that a name of Comp Psych might be better. C. Obimbo said we could look at that in the future, but we need something we know will employ people. Maybe we could then look at it further and look at the job market.

It was suggested that the name should have the feel of CompSci and Psych, it should be a name that is more general, and more flexibility in designing the program in the future.

S. Kremer noted there is a neuro science initiative going forward in the future, this isn't trying to encompasses all CS, but focus on human computer interaction or interface. So these courses offered here are CS focused. What the other faculty member is suggesting is initiative that others are looking at. He thinks it is good the way it is.

 Result: Motion carried (one abstention).

b) CIS*1500
   ▪ The total numbers won't change for CIS*1500 but the SoE is requesting that approx. 200 students who would have taken it in the Fall, take it in Winter instead.
   ▪ This is due to their programming of course.

S. Kremer commented that in other units he has seen the Chair just gets an email and they say its ok. We have taken it a step further to see if people want to vote on it or should we just bring it as a source of information. We get about a dozen per year.

M. Wirth said it is not like this. The issue is not that it is a problem putting 200 people in the class. The problem is the mix of people and making it 400 students may not be a good thing. Could we have two sections?

A faculty member commented that a lot of time, they won't let you control registration by degree program.

A faculty member said that you can schedule it so Engineering can take one and others have to take it another semester.

M. Wirth noted that it doesn't help us if we only get 150 students in but if we don't, it might be better for us.

It was asked if we would we end up teaching more? M. Wirth noted possibly, if we need larger class size, it's hard to get by.

Winter 2018 is the semester in which this would take effect.

M. Wirth asked if they are going to pay for the extra resources, extra resource, extra TAs?

It was noted by a faculty member they are looking for a course to take out of their schedule and it is easier for them to pass it along to us. This is not unusual for Engineering to ask us to solve their problems. M. Wirth noted that they may also come back and say they don't like our class time.

It was asked if there is nothing we can do from stopping them? M. Wirth said no, they have to tell us.

S. Kremer noted that they have to consult with us, then it goes to the committee and at that point it goes to BUGS and we can go to BUGS and say we have a big concern and we don't want to support it.

A faculty member said because we already offer it that semester, it is difficult to tell them no. M. Wirth said lets ask them for an extra instructor – sessional or instructor. He said that they have a problem with the class size and they hate doing 1500 anyway. They are normally mature, upper level students and are more engaged in it. J. Sawada noted that a lot of students are first year, but that he doesn't know the exact number.

M. Wirth said maybe we should get them pay for another instructor so then we can get someone to teach one of our courses. We should go back and ask for Engineering to pay for a second instructor, for a second section. In order to do this, we need the equivalent to another sessional. We will also need more TAs. In the fall, the smallest section is 200 and they under scheduled us again. He asked for 900 and they gave us 800. The smallest is 200 and we can teach 400. Teaching 400 isn't the best method.

A faculty member noted in past we talked about a replacement for 1500 for non-majors. He knows we aren't doing that but will this create a new problem? M. Wirth said that they want us to teach them C. The faculty member said won't we be looking for Engineering to go into another course, if we want to get non-CS and Engineering

into another course, then in future we can just re-label it. M. Wirth said it is better to re-design a new course for CS and then have the others stay in CIS*1500.

It was decided that we should ask Engineering for the resource. S. Kremer will ask for that.

c) <u>CIS*1200</u>
  - C. Obimbo noted that this is for consultation and blessings, and there are not going to be more students.
  - CIS*1200 Applied Human Nutrition is that their students who won't change in number continue to take this course.
  - Reason for consultation: They will have a new program in AHN – one old one accredited and the other not.
  - This is due to they having to do this as instructed by the College of Dieticians.

They will be offering two streams, both will require CIS*1200 as they have in the past. No additional changes, or time change but they need to consult with us. A faculty member commented that it is DE and no one cares.

d) <u>Update of Calendar descriptions</u>
  - J. Sawada had done quite a bit of work to remove the obsolete courses like 1900, 4600 etc, from the old Curriculum description.
  - This was presented to council and has been voted on.
  - Proper forms have been filled and Greg & the Curriculum Committee has ensured that the sentences are complete and grammatically correct.
  - Need to move this to the Program Committee – so it goes to BUGS.

C. Obimbo noted that he sent an email to everyone. They only made complete sentences and made sure they were correct. Then it was sent to faculty. This was voted for in SoCS Council and he is just letting them know it is going to go to BUGS.

e) <u>CIS*3110 & CIS*3490 (Prereqs)</u>
  - The proposal is to substitute CIS*2520" Data Structures" in place of the current CIS*2500 or the obsolete CIS*2650 and to change the recommendation of CIS*2030 or ENG*2410 to a hard prerequisite
  - *Add CIS*3490 as a required course for the Software Engineering Major. Remove a .5 credit CIS elective at the 3000 level from the Software Engineering Major. In the calendar description of CIS*3490 replace: Prerequisite(s): (CIS*1900 or CIS*2910), (CIS*2420 or CIS*2520) with Prerequisite(s): (CIS*1910 or (ENG*1500 and CIS*2910), CIS*2520 pending consultation with and a favourable response from the Engineering Curriculum Committee.*
  - *In the calendar description of CIS*3110 replace: Prerequisite(s): (CIS*2500 or CIS*2650). Recommended (CIS*2030 or ENGG*2410). with Prerequisite(s): CIS*2520, (CIS*2030 or ENGG*2410) pending consultation with and a favourable response from the Engineering Curriculum Committee.*

C. Obimbo noted that this was brought to Council and already voted on and now he is sending it to the Engineering Curriculum Committee.

A faculty member asked if we have been consulted on 2520? C. Obimbo stated that we have not and we are bringing it to them today, he just found out.

They asked what if they say no because a lot of Engineers are taking it in the spring. That's what someone told them, and they aren't sure they could take it as it stands. Do we have approval that we can change the order of when they take the courses? Another faculty noted that the last time he talked to them, they said they could do it. It changes depending on who you talk to over there.

A faculty member said this would be better for them to have Data Structures. Most have and some don't and most will take it in the summer. They are following the course of studies and she doesn't think its right. If we can rectify, it will be great for the students.

7. **Any other business.**
   There was none.

Meeting Adjourned