

School of Computer Science

SoCS Council Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, March 22, 2016

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Reynolds Room 219

Attended: D. Chiu, B. Gardner, D. Gillis, G. Grewal, S. Kremer (Director), P. Matsakis, C. Obimbo, J. Sawada, F. Wang, Y. Xiang, S. Cantlon (Recording Secretary), K. Johnston (Systems Analyst), L. Zweep (Recruitment Officer).

Absent: D. Calvert, R. Dara, X. Li (on leave), J. McCuaig (on leave), B. Nonnecke, F. Song, D. Stacey, M. Wineberg, M. Wirth, D. Byart (Undergraduate Program Assistant), G. Klotz (Program Counsellor).

1. Approval of Agenda – Pascal and Fei

There was a friendly amendment to add 5. Update on Roboticon – L. Zweep and 6. Update on PhD Committee – Y. Xiang.

Motion: P. Matsakis and F. Song

Motion carried unanimously

2. Approval of Minutes from February 9, 2016 and February 23, 2016.

Motion: C. Obimbo and P. Matsakis

Motion carried unanimously

3. Business Arising

a) Foundational Science Task Force

Last meeting, J. Sawada gave us some information on the numbers that lead to an interesting discussion. Subsequently to that, S. Kremer got additional information. The system is changing and we used to get no information. More recently that has been changing when we got application numbers. Now, we are seeing the real numbers with the actual cut offs instead of only a range. The cutoffs for BCH.CS are up 2% from 82% to 84%, for BCH.CS:C they are up 1% from 88% to 89%, for BCH.SENG and BCH.SENG:C, they stayed the same at 82%. To S. Kremer, that looks like they are trying to reduce the number of offers for Computer Science while allowing BCH.SENG to stay with the same cut offs, which implies growth. The students can apply for up to 10 universities. then the University sets its cut off and makes offers based on those cut offs and everyone above that gets an offer, in addition to a few exceptional circumstances. Then the students accept, and there is more than one round of offers as the University tries to meet its targets.

With the cut offs for BCH.CS, some interesting things happened with the change from 82% to 84% that caused the number of offers to go from 161 to 35. The number of offers went

down tremendously. On the coop side, the offers went from 108 down to 91. So we had obviously a lot of good students applying to coop. If we want to look at a trend based on two data points, we have lots of good students interested in CS.

The BCH.SENG numbers are rather inexplicable to him. The BCH.SENG:C offers went from 74 to 111, which is more than 18%. For the non-coop, where the cutoff stayed the same, the offers went from 91 down to 10. The only explanation to him is that they forgot a zero for the number of 10 and it should be 100 as that would make sense when compared to the other trends.

In 2015, there were 434 offers, and this year there are 247 offers, which is drastically smaller but he is suspicious of the 10 that should be 100.

This is the information that he has. There is also a trend now to share more data and also more talk that it be done more consultatory with the unit, where the unit means College not the School. He hasn't been asked about the numbers for this fall. He believes that the Dean and Karen Gordon (ADA) had discussions with the Registrar's Office about these numbers.

A faculty member noted that seeing how the entrance averages for the coop are so high, seems suggest that those students should be the superior students. He hasn't paid attention to that but he could go back to his grades. It would be hard to reconcile that when 50% will drop or fail CIS*2750 this round. Maybe the numbers don't mean as much coming out of the high schools as we thought.

It was asked if this is a new *Glasnost* policy that the Registrar is handling out information in a timely fashion. S. Kremer said its probably based on a lot of complaining as we have said we needed these numbers for a variety of reasons, such as classrooms need to be booked. There was a lot of complaining about lack of information being provided and they can maybe win points with providing that easy bit of information about entrance averages.

4. Director's Remarks – S. Kremer

a) Ombudsman Office

There was information coming out of the Council of Chairs meeting about the way a complaint can be handled. Complaints can now be made to the Ombudsman office as of January as the University falls under them as they are provincially run. The Ombudsman will first ask if the individual has tried to resolve the problem with the University through the proper channels. For example, if a student claims there wasn't due consideration and they want to get back into a program, the Ombudsman should ask the student if the University has an established process for grade appeals and ask if they went through that process first. The processing of complaints might not be so smooth as this is new and the Ombudsman may not know who to contact. In practice, you might get a call from the Ombudsman. If this happens, you should then contact the University Office of Legal Council, Mary Murphy, so they are aware of what is happening and can respond accordingly. Ultimately, the Ombudsman cannot compel the University to do something but a public report can be scathing. If you get contacted by the Ombudsman, you should contact Mary Murphy for a response.

It was asked if other Chairs have had this happen. S. Kremer thinks that there is one case that has come to their attention. This is new as of January.

b) S16 TA Positions

TA positions have been posted for the summer term. If you know of any good students, you should encourage them to apply. There are a small amount of positions as this is the summer semester when there typically aren't a lot of positions. The CUPE rules for assigning these positions will apply.

c) Faculty Hiring

Faculty candidates will come to campus the week of April 11 and April 18. At that point, they will have six different candidates. S. Kremer will provide a schedule about the dates/times and information about the talks.

It was asked what the research areas are for the candidates. S. Kremer said that they were looking for the candidates to have the ability to teach undergraduate SENG classes and to do interdisciplinary PhD research so the candidates all fall into that. Some may have more experience in one of these areas than the other and vice versa.

It was asked how many candidates are there for each position. Are there three applicants for each of the two positions? S. Kremer said that they are interviewing all six for the same two positions and the committee can rank them.

d) Other Hiring News

There is other hiring news, S. Kremer got an urgent request from the Dean regarding the Provost wanting to know how many resources we are short compared to last years numbers. If we have 220-240 this fall, 200-240 next fall, and the same the next, if we stay that steady state, what will we need. Based on the short turn around that he was given, S. Kremer worked with M. Wirth to come up with the courses that we would need to split in order to reduce the class size in the and then they looked at offering courses every year, instead of every other year. They also added one more senior level course that is fairly generic. It could possibly be the course that we talked about in Mobile Major proposal, as that course is open for all students to take.

The purpose of that was to count how many teaching tasks we will have coming up because we will have to split the courses shortly. Working on the assumption that our faculty will teach 2.5 undergraduate courses per year, 1/7 faculty are on sabbatical, and then there are things like some teaching relief for Grad Coordinator, Director, and that type of thing. As well, there was the assumption there are no sessional instructors, except for CIS*1000 and CIS*1200, which have always been serviced by long-term sessional employees.

Under those assumptions, we are short 6 more faculty beyond the two that were are currently hiring..

In addition to the Faculty positions, S. Kremer requested 30 additional TA positions, additional space for graduate students for the new faculty that we are hiring, additional offices for the faculty that we are hiring, additional lab space for the additional courses we

are offering, and a lab coordinator position that could help manage the labs and develop material for that.

S. Kremer noted that he doesn't know what will come of this. The fact that they are asking for this information seems promising. It seems like the Dean can make the pitch to the Provost. The really nice thing about this request is based on the assumption that we maintain the same number of incoming students as we did last year. I.e. no additional growth beyond the flow-through. There is a bit of attrition and that will be built into that. The nice thing is they are talking about additional faculty without us doing a lot of work.

It was noted that S. Kremer talked about senior courses but what about junior courses? The faculty member is teaching CIS*2910 and the room is 300. So because they are in the same room, he assumes the numbers are the same but they have two people teaching that course. S. Kremer said they are looking at the courses that are almost at capacity. The difficult ones are the ones with the lab component. Those are the ones on the radar now. If we get the faculty, we could have a more thorough conversation about how to effectively use these resources.

S. Kremer noted that we are struggling with CIS*2750 and it is really huge, especially based on a .75 credit course. There are a lot of places that we just need more people.

A faculty member said that some courses may need to be split, but how many? S. Kremer noted that he and M. Wirth did this very quickly and he believes that four courses are being split and four courses that were being offered every other year are changed to being offered every year. He would have to go back and look at the actual numbers. He noted that it would be hard for us to get everything we are asking for, like NSERC you ask for a lot but you don't get that full amount and you have to do the best with what you get.

A faculty member asked if he took into account the people that are retiring soon? S. Kremer said that he took into account only the one person that has indicated that they are leaving. If anyone else is ready to leave very soon, they should let him know and he can adjust the numbers for the Dean.

Bill – does the 6 count the new two? No. These are additional requests, beyond the current hiring process.

e) New Project Proposals

There is a new version of U-PIF coming up, but it's not like U-PIF. It is basically money for projects. This is money for the base budget. It will be evaluated a different way than U-PIF. The Provost has heard enough complaints about U-PIF. The process for evaluation will be very different. The Provost and Dean have said that the Mobile Major, which is almost done, should be proposed in this framework. Then the resources we get for that should be in addition to the steady state positions we are asking for now.

5. Update on Roboticon – L. Zweep

There were 33 teams participating this year. This is the highest number of teams that they have had. Last year there were 24 teams. The teams came from across Ontario. In total there were 150 students and coaches that come and there was a lot of audience from the

College Royal crowd. This year it was a Star Wars theme. There were 12 volunteers. Lauren read an email she received.

Additionally, there is Campus Day on April 3. On the past Friday, she sent out a call for faculty volunteers. She only heard back from one person. She only needs people for two hours. If they need more information, they can email her.

S. Kremer said that College Royal is very important, as this is where the high school students first hear that we have a CS program. S. Kremer thanked L. Zweep for her work with Roboticon.

6. Update on PhD Committee – Y. Xiang

Y. Xiang provided an update on the recent progress of the PhD Committee and presented on the progress of the regulations numbered 1), 2) and 3).

a) PHD.CSCI Operating Regulations

- Intended users: Advisory & Graduate Committees
- Operations to regulate
 - 1) Appointing graduate faculty
 - 2) Admission requirements
 - 3) Advisory committee
 - 4) Education modules
 - 5) Seminar requirements
 - 6) Qualifying examination
 - 7) Thesis defence

b) Update on PhD Committee Progress

1. Draft Regulation on Appointing Graduate Faculty
2. Draft Regulation on Admission
3. Regulation on Advisory Committee

c) Draft Regulation on Appointing Graduate Faculty

- After distribution of the draft, faculty comments were collected and discussed by PhD Committee, and the draft was revised.
 - a. “Updating” is replaced by “Appointing”.
 - b. Distinction between advisor and co-advisor is removed.
 - c. A cross-reference is made on term and renewability for Special Grad Faculty.
- Upcoming activities
 - 1) The revised draft regulation will be distributed to faculty.
 - 2) Online voting will be setup for faculty approval.

d) Graduate Calendar Description on Special Graduate Faculty

“The roles and responsibilities of the nominee must be defined at the time of nomination, and each revision of the roles and responsibilities must be submitted for approval by the Board of Graduate Studies.”

e) Draft Regulation on Admission

- The draft has been written, discussed, revised, and approved by PhD committee.

- Upcoming activity
 - The draft regulation will be distributed to faculty for comments.

f) Regulation on Advisory Committee

- After distribution as a reference, comments were received from faculty and discussed by PhD Committee.
 - 1) That AD advisor cannot be CL is intentional.
 - Response: No change is needed.
 - 2) Non-symmetric qualification (TT or CL) for SoCS Advisory Committee member is intentional to ensure that the PhD program is sufficiently CS-relevant.
 - Response: No change is needed.
 - 3) Current regulation does not restrict the case where both advisors are inexperienced with PhD training.
 - Response: Bring to SoCS Council for resolution.

There was discussion on Regarding Regulation on Advisory Committee 2):

There was a question regarding the four people on Advisory Committee: SoCS Advisor and AD Advisor and then two other members. Y. Xiang said that the current regulation is now for SoCS members, we did not say anything about the AD Advisor.

There was discussion on Regarding Regulation on Advisory Committee 3):

Y. Xiang understands why someone would want an advisor that has completed a PhD. It was questioned in the current stream do we say that an advisor has to have graduated a PhD student? Y. Xiang said that it is not a requirement, but the comment is maybe we should do that. We might have faculty that haven't graduated a PhD student and then they want a new student. Y. Xiang says that there has to be two advisors, do we want to say one has to have experience?

A faculty member noted that we have new faculty coming on and they wouldn't have had experience. They may want to find someone else to advise with them who is from another program that is also new and that person might be the right fit. If they are hired on as faculty, they should be competent enough.

Another faculty member commented that the quality of the exam should be the focus. If there is problem with the experience of the supervisor, they always have the option to seek more help over the training period so that a criterion doesn't have a strong criterion to ensure quality. The quality should be based on the exam, not experience of supervisor.

There was another comment that they would like that someone would have experience. This PhD program is different than the previous one because it has a short timeframe. One of the Achilles heels of our old program is that we don't get students out in a timely fashion. It won't be acceptable for this long period of time for the new PhD program. Students will want to get out quickly. If someone doesn't have experience, then this might be hard to get the student out. The faculty member doesn't want to discourage

the Assistant Professors, and they have to work under our principals and you have to team up with someone with experience.

A faculty member said that it would be a hindrance. Without this hindrance, an Assistant Professor would be talking to someone already. They cannot imagine someone coming in thinking they know everything. They will talk to more senior faculty. There is faculty in the OVC that they could work with but this would restrict them from doing so. They want to work with faculty with experience but this would restrict them.

It was suggested to have the requirement be that one of the committee members must have experience, instead of making it be one of the advisors.

P. Matsakis read from the Graduate Calendar:

Departments, programs and schools are expected to provide support in the form of mentoring for faculty newly appointed to the University, especially individuals who do not possess previous experience advising students. As part of the commitment to mentoring, a newly appointed Faculty Member may be required to serve as co-advisor linked in the early part of his/her career with a more experienced Faculty Member. Such decision shall normally not extend beyond three years from the date of appointment, and shall be reviewed by the Dean in his/her annual meeting with the Faculty Member, and the dean shall decide, in consultation with the Faculty Member, when the Faculty Member may commence serving as principal advisor.

He noted that to him, there are higher regulations they can refer to and there are no reasons to further have rules. Y. Xiang said that in a normal program, they have a primary advisor only, but here we have two equal co-advisors, with some special interpretation needed for that regulation.

It was also noted that if the one of the advisors are supposed to be advised, this is a problem that is beyond us. Y. Xiang responded that if you apply that directly, then an inexperienced faculty member must pair with an experienced member. P. Matsakis noted that the Dean would have to look at a new faculty member.

Dan – that's the way it works now. All the advising he has been doing in the past was based on his status and he was a co-advisor.

Y. Xiang said that the catch is that they are now talking about graduate wording that covers both MSc and PhD. But here we are talking about the PhD only. P. Matsakis noted that there is no distinction on the Graduate Studies site. Y. Xiang said that the comment is that PhD has a higher requirement, so not only do you have to supervise MSc students, but you have to supervise PhD students.

A faculty member noted that it sounded like the faculty members were all saying they didn't want this restriction.

Another faculty member noted that we need clarification on this. Does it include currently advising PhD students or supervising at another institution? Y. Xiang said it means to supervise to completion.

Y. Xiang asked S. Kremer how to proceed. S. Kremer noted that he is not hearing a lot of support from the School for adding additional rules. He thinks that one faculty member had a good suggestion about having someone on the committee that has experience or we don't say anything and rely on Graduate Studies, which states that we rely on the Dean.

Y. Xiang said there are two options: one is to do nothing and the other is to add in that someone on the committee has to have experience.

Y. Xiang asked S. Kremer if we want to vote on that or how to proceed? S. Kremer asked Y. Xiang to bring this back to the PhD Committee and to come up with a motion and then come back to the Council.

It was asked if we could do this as an online vote? Y. Xiang said that they would discuss this in the committee and then come up with motion and do an online vote.

7. Any other business.

Meeting Adjourned.