

**School of Computer Science
Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 28 2017
1:00 – 2:30PM, MCKN 318**

Present – Faculty: L. Antonie, D. Calvert, D. Chiu, R. Dara, D. Gillis, A. Hamilton-Wright, S. Kremer, P. Matsakis (Interim Director), D. Nikitenko, B. Nonnecke, C. Obimbo, J. Sawada, S. Scott, F. Song, M. Wineberg; **Staff:** D. Byart, C. Hosker, J. Ilic, K. Johnston, G. Klotz, S. Mousseau (Recording Secretary), D. Rea; **Student Representatives:** J. Fraser, P. Houlding

Regrets – Faculty: R. Chaturvedi, G. Grewal, X. Li, J. McCuaig, D. Stacey, F. Wang, M. Wirth, Y. Xiang; **Staff:** L. Zweep

1. Approval of Agenda

Motion: That the agenda for Nov 28 be approved (A. Hamilton-Wright/C. Obimbo)
In favour: All. Abstentions: None. **MOTION PASSED**

2. Approval of Minutes from Oct 31, 2017

Motion: That the minutes from Oct 31 be approved (S. Scott/A. Hamilton-Wright)
In favour: All but one. Abstentions: One. **MOTION PASSED**

3. Interim Director's Remarks – Pascal

Open Houses

Fall Preview Day happened on Sunday November 5th, and Science and Engineering Sunday on Sunday November 12th. G. Klotz attended Science and Engineering Sunday with A. Hamilton-Wright, and students P. Houlding and J. Uskoski gave moving talks about how great it is to attend the School of Computer Science; they spoke about the collaborative and supportive environment and suggested it was very much like a family. P. Matsakis gave a big thank you to those two students for their kind words and efforts at that event.

Shame on Us

There was a memorial event on Saturday November 18th for Ian Pavlinic, the student who passed away this summer. Unfortunately, no faculty members from SoCS attended the memorial. There were some students who attended. P. Matsakis presented apologies to those who knew and cared for Ian and attended the event.

Dec 6, 1989

There will be a memorial on Wednesday December 6th from 1:45 to 2:15 for the women killed in the massacre in Montreal at L'École Polytechnique. P. Matsakis encouraged faculty members to attend the ceremony, which is an action against violence against women.

Course Evaluations

Faculty members have the right to choose whether their evaluations are on-line or in-class. SoCS data show that the number of respondents is usually about 1.5 times higher when in-class, but that the number of written comments is almost 3 times higher when on-line. P. Matsakis argued that these comments are important, as evaluations are not helpful without comments. J. Sawada agreed. B. Nonnecke pointed out that the functionality of the on-line evaluation system is limited because we do not know how the student who wrote a particular comment answered the questions.

Exams

Make-up exams should be different from or scheduled after the regular exam.

TAs & GSAs

TAs and GSAs are covered by the Collective Agreement between the University of Guelph and the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 3913. A new Agreement was ratified last winter. The AODA orientation/training (1 hour) is required for first time TAs/GSAs. The supervisor and TA/GSA must meet (1 hour) within the first five days of the TA/GSA contract and fill out the assignment form. Three hours must be put aside for invigilating exams, even if the course does not have a final exam (additional invigilators may be needed for other exams). It is up to the supervisor and TA/GSA to make sure the 140 hours are not exceeded.

There is also new information in the CUPE agreement about performance evaluations for TAs/GSAs. An informal evaluation can happen at any point during the agreement, but there is also a suggested formal performance evaluation after 70 hours and again at the end of the semester. This can be at the TA's/GSA's request (once per semester) or at the supervisor's request (with five days of notice).

There is a rating system for TAs/GSAs. If there is no formal evaluation held, the rating will default to *satisfactory*. If a performance evaluation is held and the rating is less than *satisfactory*, the TA/GSA must improve or there can be consequences. This is not reflected in the student's academic record, but can be used when TAs/GSAs are being hired and allocated. Please see the SoCS Wiki site for the evaluation form and guidelines.

S. Scott asked if this applied to both UTAs and GTAs. P. Matsakis responded that it does.

P. Houlding explained that there was some concern amongst the undergraduate students that there were more postings for GTA positions than UTA positions and that the postings were pulled down early. C. Hosker responded that the postings were up for the required two weeks and came down on November 26. P. Matsakis explained that the number of GTA positions is based on guaranteed funding for graduate students.

Director's Position

The search committee has been formed and is comprised of M. Wells (Dean), G. Grewal, P. Matsakis, D. Stacey, J. Fraser, C. Hosker, J. Fryxell, and G. Taylor. The first meeting is scheduled for November 29th. The deadline for applications is December 1st.

CL Faculty Position

P. Matsakis shared that there were twenty applications received for the two-year Assistant Professor position in cybersecurity. The number may seem low, but was to be expected given the specifics of the position. The next meeting for the search committee is on Wednesday November 29th. Interviews will be held in January.

Requests to the Dean

P. Matsakis put forth several requests to the new Dean, M. Wells. Most of them were presented in February 2017 to the Interim Dean and Provost, but were not satisfied. The list includes two new tenure-track faculty members, a half-time program counsellor, a full-time lab manager/academic integrity officer, and lab renovations for THRN 2418.

New faculty members are required to provide a better student/faculty ratio. The University of Guelph has the highest (i.e., worst) ratio according to the 2015 Maclean's University Rankings, and the School's ratio is one of the highest compared to other units within the University. Originally, the School requested 2 contractually-limited teaching-focused and 3 tenure-track faculty members, based on a student enrolment of 240/250. We were allotted 2 CL and 1 TT positions, and promised that our intake of students would be reduced by 50. Unfortunately, this did not happen, and we do not yet know what the plan is regarding our intake of students for next fall.

The number of students is increasing, student stress is increasing, and so is the number of academic misconduct cases. Currently, the academic integrity officer (AIO) is a graduate student hired as a GSA; once they understand their job, the semester is done, and we need to hire and train someone new. This cannot go on. A full time lab manager who also works as an AIO will help to alleviate the work required by the faculty (especially the Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies and the members of the Academic Integrity Committee).

We will have two lab spaces in the renovated Reynolds building, but we will still require the lab spaces that we are currently using across campus. This includes THRN 2418, which is

very noisy and must be renovated. We first thought we could renovate THRN 2418 along with Reynolds, but had to abandon the idea. The new plan is to renovate THRN 2418 during the first half of the summer semester.

The first meeting between P. Matsakis and M. Wells on December 5th will focus on THRN 2418 and the second meeting on December 12th will comprise of all other topics. The first SoCS meeting with M. Wells is on December 7th at 3PM.

CIS*1200

Business has replaced the elective CIS*1200 for their students with MCS*2020. As a result, enrollment in CIS*1200 has dropped from 417 students in W17 to 147 students in W18. SoCS needs to look at how to bring in more revenue. Possible solutions include offering something more interesting and relevant to art students, creating a course on web or e-commerce design, creating a course tiered towards data and programming in python or similar, and surveying other colleges to see what sort of service course is needed.

S. Kremer asked if we have known this for a while as they should have provided some notice. P. Matsakis responded he was not aware of the change. G. Klotz mentioned that the school was notified before P. Matsakis became the Interim Director.

D. Calvert mentioned that G. Klotz and he have been talking about merging CIS*1000 and CIS*1200. P. Matsakis asked if maybe there were courses that would be more appealing to first year students. D. Calvert responded that a bit of research would need to be done as in the past what faculty considered interesting, first year students did not necessarily find as interesting.

S. Scott asked after the cost associated with running a course versus the amount we receive per student. C. Hosker confirmed that the amount received by the School per student is \$75. D. Calvert mentioned that more than 100 students are required to pay for the running of a course.

SOCIS

SoCS provides funding to SOCIS for several events. This includes several years of support for the CS Games, CUSEC, and most recently CAN-CWIC. P. Matsakis shared that there have also been several independent requests for funding to attend conferences, etc. As a result, P. Matsakis recommends we put a set number of funding into the hands of SOCIS and they prioritize and decide on the allocation of the funds rather than the School handling the requests.

Budget

P. Matsakis mentioned that the School owes the College about \$0.5M, and that he was reminded about this debt (contracted long ago) on a regular basis. The message seems to be that the School should try to make more money, e.g., through DE courses, and save more money. There are of course ways to make us “save” money, e.g., by not giving us the budget for two tenure-track faculty positions, a lab manager / academic integrity officer position, etc. We could also save money by decreasing the number of UTAs, getting rid of outreach events like the Go Code Girl event, not providing any funding to SOCIS, etc. None of these “saving” solutions is acceptable, and P. Matsakis indicated that he will ask the College to erase the School’s debt.

4. Associate Director’s Remarks, Graduate Studies – Joe

Committees

The Curriculum Committee is currently working on completing the Data Management learning module and updating the Graduate Calendar course listings.

The Admissions Committee is currently working on processing each prospective graduate student’s request for admission within a week of being received. It would be a great help to the Committee if when a faculty member submits a student for consideration, they include background correspondence and detailed communication that has occurred between themselves and the prospective student.

In addition, J. Sawada reminded faculty members that the first steps in paperwork for a PhD defense should be 8 weeks prior to the anticipated defense date. Please allow for this time when scheduling a defense. Please also allow for four weeks for the external and examination committee to review the thesis.

Grad Number Trends

With the start of the W18 semester, we have 8 new masters students starting. This would bring our total of graduate students to 56. With one PhD student defending on Friday December 1st, that leaves two still in the older program. One of those students will go on to defend in W18.

Grad Transfer Funds

The College currently receives \$10,000 per PhD student and \$6,000 per masters student from the provincial government. We receive all but \$500 of those funds from the College. Previously, 100% of these funds went directly to the new admission, but we are now at liberty to distribute as we see fit. There is no guarantee this policy will remain in effect. The current plan is to provide a portion of those funds yearly to non-scholarship admissions based on academic averages. For instance, a PhD student with an under 80% average would

receive \$7,000 and a PhD student with over 80% average would receive \$9,000. A masters student with an under 80% average would receive \$4,000 while a masters student with over 80% average would receive \$5,000. However, students awarded with a scholarship would receive less; they would instead receive a top up of funds each year. This plan is flexible and all funds available to each student will be considered when awarding money. On top of this, faculty are encouraged to contribute their own GRA.

S. Kremer expressed concern that reducing the allotted funds to NSERC students would price ourselves out of the market as those students can basically choose which school they want to attend. J. Sawada responded that in such cases, the College is still matching funds to remain competitive.

5. Computing Infrastructure Committee – Kyle

Semester Update

The labs have been generally functional over the F17 semester. They are heavily occupied, but working. There were a few major issues. Waiting on new server infrastructure has impacted CIS*1500 and CIS*2030. It has also limited our ability to provide additional services.

Purchasing

We were due to move our servers over to CCS, but due to issues with CCS missing target deadlines of F17 and W18, as well as a breakdown in communication between SoCS and CCS, we will be purchasing our own equipment. We are currently collecting quotes, but the aim is to have the purchase completed within the next one to two months. The hardware should arrive mid-winter semester. This will include a new file server. Our current server has 1.5TB of space whereas the new one will have 60TB.

Requests

If anyone has any requests for IT for W18, please submit your request ASAP as time is running out for setting up and implementing anything new. K. Johnson also asked that people remember to RSVP to the Christmas lunch invitation.

6. Any Other Business

N/A

Meeting adjourned at 2:15PM