

School of Computer Science
Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 9, 2018
1:00 – 2:30PM, MCKN 310

Present – Faculty: L. Antonie, D. Calvert, R. Chaturvedi, D. Chiu, D. Flatla, D. Gillis, G. Grewal, A. Hamilton-Wright, S. Kremer, X. Li, P. Matsakis (Interim Director), D. Nikitenko, C. Obimbo, S. Scott, F. Song, F. Wang, M. Wineberg, M. Wirth, Y. Xiang; **Staff:** C. Hosker, J. Ilic, K. Johnston, G. Klotz, S. Mousseau (Recording Secretary), D. Rea

Regrets – Faculty: R. Dara, J. McCuaig, B. Nonnecke, J. Sawada, D. Stacey; **Staff:** D. Byart, L. Zweep; **Student Representatives:** J. Fraser, P. Houlding

P. Matsakis thanked all of the faculty, staff, and committees for their hard work in 2017; special thanks to the Assistant Director, M. Wirth, and to the Associate Directors, J. Sawada and G. Grewal. P. Matsakis then welcomed our newest faculty member, D. Flatla, who arrived just a few weeks ago, and S. Tom, our new Social Media Intern, who will be helping L. Zweep part time. S. Tom is a third-year Software Engineering student.

1. Approval of Agenda

Motion: That the agenda for Jan 9, 2018 be approved (D. Calvert/D. Chiu)
In favour: All. Abstentions: None. **MOTION PASSED**

2. Approval of Minutes from Nov 28, 2017

Motion: That the minutes from Nov 28, 2017 be approved (A. Hamilton-Wright/S. Scott)
In favour: All but one. Abstentions: One. **MOTION PASSED**

3. Interim Director's Remarks – Pascal

Courses

○ SAS Accommodations

As our numbers increase, so do the requests from students registered with SAS (Student Accessibility Services). You may not be able to accommodate all requests, but please do your best. Speak to the student's advisor and don't ignore or minimize the request. Ignored requests will come back to P. Matsakis.

- **Midterm Exams**

The number of multi-section courses are increasing: CIS*1500, CIS*1910, CIS*2030, CIS2430, CIS*2500, CIS*2520, and CIS*2750 are all multi-sectioned. How do we proceed with midterms? There are two options. We can either have the students write slightly different exams and have them set during lecture times, or we can book a room for a joint midterm.

They both have their downsides. In the former option, students might complain that the midterm was easier for the other section. The latter option needs to be done approximately 3 months before the beginning of the semester, and the midterm will usually take place in an evening or on a Saturday. Trying to schedule this kind of combined midterm is difficult once the semester starts as you need to get all of the students across all sections to agree.

- **TA's & GSA's**

Faculty members should now have met with their TA's and filled out the proper paperwork. Please remember to keep track of your TA's hours. It is unacceptable to go over the 140 scheduled hours. If you know that your TA will need to go over their hours, you must inform P. Matsakis and C. Hosker.

In addition, Formal Performance Evaluations can now be completed with TA's. This is helpful if a faculty member is having a difficult time with a TA. The evaluation should happen midway through the agreed upon hours and the TA needs to be provided with feedback and a timeline to improve. We cannot wait until the end of a semester to provide this kind of feedback. By conducting the Formal Performance Evaluation, and allowing the TA the opportunity to improve, it allows us the opportunity to make note if the TA fails to improve. With this on file, we can choose not to hire him or her in the future.

A Formal Performance Evaluation is also helpful when the TA is really great. This presents the opportunity to nominate the student for an award. If this is the case, please let R. Dara, the Chair of the Awards and Scholarships Committee, know.

S. Scott asked if there was a better rating than "Satisfactory". C. Hosker and P. Matsakis confirmed that there is not, so having the Formal Performance Evaluation with all of the pertinent information is key.

M. Wirth asked if there is a form for the Formal Performance Evaluation. P. Matsakis confirmed that there is a form and it is available on the Wiki.

Faculty

- **Director's Position**

The Search Committee was formed in Nov 2017. The search was internal then, and the deadline was Dec 1st. At that point, a few people recused themselves from the Committee due to conflict of interest. The recomposed Committee consists of M. Wells, R. Dara, P. Matsakis, S. Scott, C. Hosker, D. Rose, J. Fryxell, and G. Taylor.

The Committee met and decided to look for external candidates. The new deadline is Feb 15th.

S. Kremer asked if internal candidates need to reapply. P. Matsakis responded that the Dean met with all of the internal candidates and he is not sure what was said, but anyone still interested may want to resubmit an application. The requirements have changed and therefore an updated application would be good.

D. Calvert confirmed that any internal applicants will need to reapply.

- **CL Position**

The Cybersecurity program leader, Ali Dehghantanha, will join us in August. He was meant to come in March, but it was pushed to August.

We had 20 applications for the CL position by the posted deadline. While the Committee was nervous about the quality, three candidates were found suitable and were shortlisted. The public presentations will be held from 10:30AM to 12:00PM on Wed Jan 17th, Thu Jan 18th, and Fri Jan 19th. S. Mousseau will send out an invite to all of the faculty, staff, and graduate students.

- **T&P Guidelines**

The proposed new T&P guidelines that were approved by the School in Oct 2017 were reviewed by Herb Kunze (UGFA's Vice-President) at the Dean's request. P. Matsakis met with the Dean and H. Kunze on Mon Jan 8th to discuss H. Kunze's feedback. The SoCS T&P Committee will review H. Kunze's feedback and propose changes. The changes will then be discussed and approved by the Council.

Space

- **THRN 2418**

P. Matsakis met with the Dean on Dec 5th, 2017 to discuss the Thornborough Room 2418 renovation. The process is underway, and a quote should be received shortly. The renovation should be completed by the end of June at the latest. K. Johnston and D. Rea confirmed that the timeline worked for IT.

- **Reynolds**

The building site is visited every other week and photos are usually taken. The photos shared at the Council meeting showed the progress on each floor. The third floor is the most advanced where the priming of drywall is happening this week. So far, no one is concerned about meeting the deadline.

Money

- **Debt**

The School's debt has been split in half as a result of the delayed starts to D. Flatla and A. Dehghantanha. May 1st is the new year for the budget, but we have not seen a budget yet. This morning, the purchase of 17 new Mac's was approved.

- **DE Courses**

P. Matsakis posed the question, how many students do we need to make money with a DE course? More than he thought before looking into it. See corresponding slides. Each student brings about \$75, but since we have more course sections than faculty members can teach, each DE course requires us to hire a sessional instructor, and we also have to hire TA's for the course. For example, we're now losing money with CIS*1200 in the winter semester because it is no longer a prerequisite for the business program and the numbers have dropped.

- **Making and Saving**

The short-term solution to this problem is canceling all non-profitable offerings: the S18 offering of CIS*1000, the W19 offering of CIS*2050, and the S19 offerings of CIS*1000 and CIS*2520.

Long term, we will be merging CIS*1000 and CIS*1200 into a single course; we will also be offering a new, attractive DE course; lastly, we will be removing CIS*2050 and CIS*2520 DE from the course catalog.

D. Calvert added that CIS*1000 and CIS*1200 teach about the same material and that the course descriptions are very similar. Originally, CIS*1000 did not contain any programming, but now both courses have Java programming as part of the course material. It is probably most expedient to merge CIS*1000 into CIS*1200. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee will look into the issue and provide an update.

5. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee – David

For Information

The discrete math courses CIS*1910 and CIS*2910, which are currently offered during semesters 2 and 3, will be moved to semesters 1 and 2, respectively. This has already been agreed to by the School, and Software Engineering is happy with the change. The Committee will now submit the paperwork.

The calendar currently lists three specializations for the School of Computer Science: *Computer Science*, *Computing*, and *Computing & Information Science*. The Committee would like to try and rationalize the categories, but it depends on what level of approval is needed. If we need provincial approval, it might not be worth the effort.

Lastly, the calendar description for CIS*1910 Discrete Structures in Computing contains the phrase "Boolean, algebra." The comma will be removed.

Motions

1. **Motion:** Require students in both the Computer Science and Software Engineering majors to take MATH*1160 Linear Algebra in their second semester.
(Calvert/Obimbo)

Students appear to want more structure in first year. Adding this requirement would help.

S. Scott asked if MATH has the capacity to accommodate the request. D. Calvert responded that procedure dictates that the Council discuss and vote before approaching MATH.

M. Wineberg asked if it would be an issue that Software Engineering students tend to have weaker math skills. Would having a required math class scare them away? D. Calvert responded that it's worth the risk.

D. Flatla asked for clarification on semesters and whether the students would forget what they had learned by the time they took, e.g., a graphics course in fourth year. D. Calvert stated that the graphics course can be taken in third year. C. Obimbo contributed that there is another math class offered.

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

2. **Motion:** Delete the following low-enrolment senior courses

CIS*3000 Social Implications of Computing
CIS*4780 Computational Intelligence
CIS*4410 Trends in Distributed Systems
CIS*4430 Information Organization and Retrieval

and develop replacement courses with topics that are more timely and relevant.
(Calvert/Wirth)

S. Kremer expressed concern that CIS*4780 is cross-listed as a graduate course. D. Calvert said that removing it from the undergrad calendar would make it a graduate issue.

D. Calvert discussed the student concerns that CIS*3000 contains information on ethics, but he pointed out that not enough students are taking the course to benefit from the ethical content. There is essentially a week's worth of ethics material. He also indicated that most of the software engineering courses contain material on ethics.

S. Kremer asked if this motion could be tabled until the Graduate Curriculum Committee has met to discuss in which direction the graduate courses are headed. There are opportunities to combine with graduate courses. He asked to hold on the motion for a few months. D. Calvert responded that we could not wait that long. He argued that the courses do not have high enough enrolment to maintain them. The course descriptions could be updated to be clear that they're not offered every year and they can be cross-listed in the graduate catalogue.

D. Calvert postponed the motion in order for more discussion and investigation to be held. He mentioned that faculty members may be contacted to discuss feedback on these courses.

3. Motion: Delete the summer DE offering of CIS*2520 Data Structures.
(Calvert/Wirth)

D. Calvert suggested that if we're trying to save money, it makes sense to remove this course.

D. Flatla asked about the number of students; 115 students in a course seems like a solid number. D. Calvert responded that even with \$75 per student, after we hire a sessional instructor and the TA's we lose money. S. Kremer contributed that apart from the \$75 surcharge that we receive from Open Learning, we make no money based on student enrolment numbers.

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

4. Motion: Replace the Area of Application in the B.Comp. degree with the requirement that students will normally complete a minor in order to graduate.
(Calvert/Wineberg)

Flexibility is not what students want. They want a clear trail of area of application. Making students declare a minor works for them.

A. Hamilton-Wright asked why the word "normally" is used. D. Calvert responded that it is so that Greg can help students in "abnormal" situations.

S. Scott asked if this would leave them with enough options. D. Calvert responded that they will still have some open elective credits available.

D. Flatla asked for clarification on whether a student may move from a minor to a major. D. Calvert responded that we don't normally do that. S. Kremer offered that we do allow students to declare a double major. This is when the word "normally" would be helpful for Greg.

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

5. Motion: Delete CIS*2050 Computers and Society.
(Calvert/Wirth)

This course was created as a service course. It cannot be taken by Software Engineering majors. The numbers are low. D. Calvert mentioned that, again, the students were worried about losing the ethics portion of the course, but otherwise were fine with the deletion.

D. Chiu expressed concern that the students will need to find a new course. D. Calvert responded that they're mainly engineering students and not our own.

P. Matsakis added that we need to optimize resources: we need to cross-list courses and delete low-enrolment courses and non-profitable DE courses, so as to be able to split large classes, offer more 4th-year electives, more graduate courses, more timely and attractive courses, without having to hire more sessional instructors or counting on more faculty hires. D. Calvert added that we have 6-8 TBA courses in 2018-19.

In favour: All but one. Abstentions: One. **MOTION PASSED**

6. Motion: Changes to the required textbooks in all undergraduate courses must be first approved by the SoCS Curriculum Committee.
(Calvert/Hamilton-Wright)

This is already a requirement for first year courses. The Director would like to make it a rule across all undergraduate years. The process should not take long and likely only means email approval.

M. Wirth asked if it was a concern for fourth year courses where there is no required text. D. Calvert said there will be no approval needed for textbooks that are recommended but not required; approval will be needed for required texts only.

D. Chiu expressed concern that the Committee may not be familiar enough with the course material to make a decision. D. Calvert responded that he does not see this being a problem; the main concern is if a book subject matter has nothing to do with a course.

M. Wineberg asked why the issue came up. P. Matsakis responded that it came from a request to change the required textbook in some course, but this was months ago, and he could not remember the specifics.

P. Matsakis added that this is a way to improve consistency and make sure the required text does not change every time a new instructor teaches the course.

In favour: All but four. Abstentions: Four. **MOTION PASSED**

4. Associate Director's Remarks, Undergraduate Studies – Gary

G. Grewal reminded everyone about the email he sent out about M.O.S.S. and courses CIS*1500, CIS*2500, CIS*2750, CIS*3110.

Jesse Francis is our new AIO (Academic Integrity Officer). Please email him and provide him with dates of assignments. Please also arrange to have him come and talk. There were over 100 cases of AI last semester.

D. Rea was originally going to put aside time on Friday to train on Sneakoscope and M.O.S.S. He is now offering to come by and train deskside.

P. Matsakis indicated that he would like G. Grewal to provide more information on the AI cases in the near future. G. Grewal responded that 50 cases came up just prior to the holiday break. The Dean's office will provide stats for a clearer picture.

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.

6. Graduate Curriculum Committee – Stefan

The 3/3 learning module for the PhD is in draft form. It will be sent out today for comments which are due next week. If there isn't much feedback, we will vote at the next Council meeting. Otherwise it will go back to the Committee and resent for feedback.

7. Any Other Business

N/A

Meeting adjourned at 2:30PM