

Minutes for the Staff Student Liaison Committee Meeting

1.30 pm, 16 December 1998 in G22

Present: Steve Maddock (Chairman), Tony Chilton, Emma Burnley, Guy Brown, Matt Fairtlough, Julian Briggs, Alex Collins (1st year Computer Science Rep), Nick Farrell (1st year Software Engineering rep), Steve Eaton (2nd year Computer Science rep), Mark Greenwood (2nd year Software Engineering rep), Jim Lyall (3rd year Computer Systems Engineering rep), Peter Edwards (3rd year Computer Science rep), Dimitrios Kourkoulis (MSc Data Communications rep), Graziella Li-Ship (MSc Information Systems rep)

Apologies: Mark Hunt, Sam Chapman, Tim Eavery, Edgar Rivera-Ramon, Steve Renals, Gordon Manson, Janek Mikulin

Minutes: Vanessa Allsop

1. Minutes of last meeting

Action

The minutes of the last meeting were approved with comments made under matters arising from minutes.

2. Matters arising from minutes

5. Usage of the Dept network

The action was for all Reps to canvas student opinion on what they thought of the network guide and what they would like to see in it.

The reps reported that in general the guide was OK but suggested one improvement would be to have a glossary on the Dept web site to help find information quickly. Steve Maddock asked Support to look into this.

Support

6. Printing Facilities

George Wilson is still to sort out why there is a problem using ghostview for Network printing.

GW

7. Lecture notes/CD-Rom

Mark Greenwood reported that students would not benefit from more Unix software on the CD-Rom. There is a problem with case sensitivity of HTML files when transferring from the PC to Unix systems. Steve Maddock asked Support to look into this.

Support

9. Prerequisites for modules

This matter has been discussed at Teachcom and they agreed to make a stronger statement regarding the prerequisite for COM325.

11. Assignment marking/feedback

There was concern over inconsistencies in the marking of COM237. Some students were getting full marks even though they appeared not to have done what was requested. Steve Maddock will talk to Gordon Manson about this. Teachcom will also discuss the matter of assignment marking.

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3. Chairman's statement

Steve Maddock had gathered data on the usage of the labs, reporting that only a few people are using the labs late at night. This was in reference to the Lewin lab having new opening hours (which is discussed later in the meeting).

He also emphasised that students do not have a right to complain about problems if they have not had a responsible attitude themselves ie. missing lectures or tutorials or leaving work until the last minute. Students and staff have to work together.

4. COM105 Software Specification - syllabus

Students felt they needed extra training to learn LATEX and CADiZ and a lab session would be useful. They also requested more documentation on these. Matt Fairtlough said he did produce documentation, and there was a detailed guide on the web, but he realised there was a problem and will introduce support help for learning CADiZ and LATEX earlier on in the module next year.

5. Web site for first year undergraduates

The Committee agreed it was a good idea to set up a web site of useful information for undergraduate students run by students and for students. But year Tutors will monitor the site. Julian Briggs will look into setting up a site where reps and Tutors can add material.

JB

Nick Farrell and Alex Collins volunteered to oversee 1st year input. Mark Greenwood volunteered to oversee 2nd year input and a volunteer is still needed for MSc and third years.

SCM

Steve Maddock will talk to relevant committees about the web site although it is not envisaged that there will be any problems with it.

6. A student workroom

Tony Chilton will look into putting a computer in room G12c which could be used for group work, Maxi Project work and even demonstrations for UCAS Open Days. Students would have to run the booking system though. This PC would not be available for student group work on UCAS Open days.

AJC

7. Opening hours for Regent Court Lewin lab

Steve Maddock asked if there was an argument for extending the opening hours of the lab. Guy Brown suggested spreading course

assignments more evenly over the year, but students felt that they were already fairly well spread out. The problem arose when the hand-in deadline was extended which then had a knock on effect on handing in other assignments. Steve Maddock said that unless a deadline change had been approved by Teachcom the hand-in date should not be moved.

Steve Maddock emphasised that the staff student committee was not just a meeting twice a semester but was to be at work all year via email, sorting problems as they arise.

Another general point regarding easing lab congestion towards the end of the semester was to have staged assignments rather than one big assignment. Steve Maddock will also ask year Tutors to look at when they are scheduling machine intensive assignments.

SM

8. AOB

COM201, COM237 and COM101

The structure of material supporting Tony Cowling's assignment requires improvement as there were a number of errors. Tony rectify the problem for the next time the module runs. He also admitted he underestimated the time taken to do the COM201 assignment. Again this will be attended to.

Gordon Manson agreed there were problems with errors in course material for COM237 and that he should have prepared more for the lectures. This will be rectified for the next time the module runs.

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The committee suggested that for a new module (eg COM237) the course material should be checked by another lecturer to make sure that it is accurate.

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COM101: students reported that there was an error in the code supporting the assignment. Again they request that material be checked by another lecturer before it is handed out.

Locking workstations

The committee agreed that locking workstations for any length of time should be prohibited. If stations are locked, it should be reported to Support (the Technicians).

9. Date of next meeting

3 March 1998, 1-3 pm in G22

ALL