Larry Davis opened the first Education Meeting of the spring’04 semester at 3:10pm. Larry turned the floor over to Howard Elman to present the first agenda topic.

Howard first gave a summary of a new “Certificate Program” which was approved by the university administration two years ago for CMPS in Scientific Computing. Information on this program was previously distributed to the faculty.

**Summary of current proposal:** The certificate program is primarily for students in the physical sciences vs. computer science majors with the aim of increasing computational skills and exposure to methods of computational modeling. One component of the program is a new course in computer systems, AMSC 462. The faculty staffing for the course would come equally from three sources:

1. CSCAMM
2. The Department of Physics
3. The CS Numerical Analysis Field Committee

Beginning with the 2004-2005 academic year, responsibility to staff AMSC 462 would rotate among these three areas.

Bill Dorland, a Professor in Physics and CSCAMM, developed the syllabus for this course. The syllabus is similar to the new version of CMSC 311, which will be taught by Bill Arbaugh this spring. As long as the syllabi of AMSC 462 and CMSC 311 remain similar, these courses should be cross-listed in years when a CS faculty member teaches the course. During that semester up to 20 seats must be reserved for certificate students who register for AMSC 462. These students will not be required to have taken CMSC 250, currently a prerequisite for CMSC 311. They will only be required to meet the usual AMSC 462 prerequisites. Based on this proposed schedule, this cross listing of courses would likely occur once every six to nine years.

Howard then opened the floor for discussion. Faculty members voiced the following concerns:

1. There should not be two similar courses with different prerequisites. It is not clear how students will handle the course content without the prerequisites listed for CMSC 311. Students who are members of the Education Committee also voiced concern that the course as outlined would be very difficult for non-CS majors or students with so few CS prerequisites.

2. There was also concern that the syllabus was one-sided. Some faculty felt that it needed to be broadened.

There was a suggestion made that AMSC 462 should be redesigned to broaden its content and that it should be done in conjunction with a faculty member from Computer Science. The course should be listed jointly so that the CS department would have some control over its content now and in the future. AMSC 462 should be kept separate from CMSC
311. Pete Stewart agreed to work with Bill Dorland and Howard Elman to reconfigure
the AMSC 462 syllabus. An issue still remains regarding what the prerequisites will be
for the redesigned course.

Howard said he would go back to the Dean and the committee and say that the
department faculty feels that it must be redesigned and will help in doing so.

Larry then began the discussion on the second meeting topic by asking “What has the
University stipulated as the minimum number of office hours per week? There were
several responses to the question although it was thought that the minimum number was 4
hours per week. The exact wording of the University rule was not known.

Some faculty felt that office hours were not necessary since many students send email
messages if they have questions. The students who are members of the Education
Committee said that they too use email vs. standard office hours due to convenience.
However, office hours may be better for shy students or students who do not
communicate as well via email.

Larry summarized this discussion by saying:

1. All email should be answered even if the answer is to suggest that an appointment
   for the student to come and discuss the issue would be the best way to address the
   student’s questions or concerns.

2. Faculty should provide an opportunity for students to visit their offices and doors
   should be open during the office hours period. Office hours should also be
   staggered so that students have a reasonable chance of seeing the faculty member.
   As an example, having office hours at the same time on Tuesdays and Thursdays
   won’t help some students because if they have a class on Tuesday at the set time,
   they probably have the same class on Thursday. Larry asked that teaching faculty
   be aware of these issues and try to accommodate students as much as possible.

The meeting was adjourned at 4pm.