The third meeting of this academic year was held on Friday, November 10, 2000 beginning at 1:05pm. Larry Davis opened the meeting and asked Ben Bederson to present the first topic of the agenda, "Discussion on Human-Computer Interaction as a new MS degree course of study located within UMIACS". Ben summarized the contents of the proposal (materials had been distributed to members earlier in the week) as follows:

The intent of this MS degree is to focus on primarily full-time students. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the program, it would attract a mixture of students with undergraduate degrees from a variety of disciplines. The program requirements would be composed of courses and a thesis. Up to 40 students per year would be admitted with the first year having an enrollment of approximately 20 students. The program would be offered beginning Fall'02 at the earliest.

The need for an HCI masters program is supported in recent reports, one of which was jointly published by NSF and DARPA. Corporate and government organizations have expressed a need for skilled designers who understand the possibilities of how computer technology can be used within a variety of disciplines. It also seems that there is a strong student interest in an HCI program of study given the number of inquiries received from "non-traditional students" by faculty in computer science, psychology, art, information studies, and education departments. The interest and challenge in establishing HCI programs is not just at MD but at universities across the country.

The impact of this new program on CS is considered to be somewhat limited. One new section of 434 would need to be added, 2-3 new courses would need to be introduced, no office space would be provided for these graduate students, there would be the need for a new technology lab which might be located outside of the AV Williams Bldg, and there are already 6 existing faculty members who have been identified as potential instructors. The CMPS Dean and Provost are supportive of this proposal and it is felt that resources will be provided by the campus if the student interest can be documented. This is seen as a positive for CS rather than taking away resources within the department.

The university will be asked to provide 4 new faculty lines and one full-time administrator line. The first step in this approval process is to get the support of the faculty which will give more wait to the university request.

The one remaining discussion point was why this new program is being located in UMIACS vs. CS. Strong sentiments were voiced for the location of the program in both units. Bederson explained that given the interdisciplinary participation of existing faculty members, some of whom wanted the program located within their departments, this discussion and decision goes beyond the UMIACS/CS units. This is a rather delicate issue. If this was moved out of UMIACS and into CS, there may be very strong objections from the other faculty members who were involved in the formulation of this proposal.

A motion was made and seconded that a straw poll should be taken among the CS faculty on the proposal as it was presented: "HCI as a new MS degree course of study located in UMIACS". There were 19 members in favor of the proposal, 2 opposed, and 10 abstentions.
There was insufficient time remaining to discuss the second agenda topic, "CS PhD requirements" which was to be presented by Samir Khuller. The topic was tabled for discussion at the next meeting that is yet to be scheduled.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55pm.