

**Education Meeting
Department of Computer Science
Friday, February 4, 2011**

The meeting was convened at 2:05pm by Prof. Jeff Hollingsworth.

The first topic was changes to existing courses specifically:

- a. CMSC 106 – This course has been structured for non-majors who are interested in the design and analysis of programs in the “C” language. There are sufficient campus units who still want students to learn the language. A question was raised as to whether “C” is the best language to be taught to these students. Although the course is not for CS majors, there will be some students who take the course prior to declaring computer science as their majors.
A motion was made and seconded to accept the changes listed in the document and it was unanimously approved.
- b. CMSC 122 – **(correction to document, insert statement...“Not open to students who have passed or are currently taking CMSC 131. Credit will be granted for only one of the following: CMSC 122 or CMSC 198N.”)**
Students can pass 131 with a C or better, receive AP credit for 131 or pass an exemption exam and advance to the next course.
A motion was made and seconded to accept the discussed changes and it was unanimously approved.

The second topic was Creation of New Courses:

- a. CMSC 424 – **(correction to document, change 422 to 424)** Course title is Introduction to Machine Learning and it was introduced by Prof. Lise Getoor. A graduate level course in machine learning has been offered for several years with interest expressed by UG students to take the course. In response to this demand, Lily Mihalkova, a Research Associate, taught CMSC 498F in Fall 2010. The course was well received so the proposal was made to add the course as a permanent elective.

After much discussion, **changes were suggested to the Prerequisites to read as follows: “CMSC 330 and 351 or permission of the department; STAT 400 is recommended.”** The statistical course was added based on student comments that anyone who had not taken statistics found the course difficult and could not understand the basic concepts. It was agreed that the course would be reviewed after one year to consider any changes needed, especially in the particular listed statistical course. It was also acknowledged that a PCC Proposal would need to be submitted to permit the course to count towards graduation.
A motion was made and seconded to accept the discussed changes and it was unanimously approved.

b. CMSC 474 – Introduction to Computational Game Theory was presented by Prof. Dana Nau. Dana mentioned that he is currently teaching the course as CMSC 474T. It too would be considered as a 400 level elective if the proposal was accepted. It was noted that credit would only be given for this course or ECON 414. It was suggested that the Economics department be contacted regarding the course and the noted stipulation.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the course and the vote was unanimous.

Due to the arrival of Andrea Goodwin who is with the Honor Council, Jeff Hollingsworth asked that she proceed with her presentation. The campus honor code has been in place for over 20 years and a review is currently underway to evaluate how well it is working. There has been a steady increase in the number of referrals. Should a faculty member feel that a student should be referred; a letter and supporting documentation must be submitted. Andrea noted that most cases are resolved informally and that there are few repeat offenders. There are a lot of issues raised due to technology but also across campus mainly due to plagiarism. The majority of referrals are due to sharing code, students taking exams for others and texting during exams. The normal penalty is for a student to receive an “XF” on his/her transcript. The “X” can be removed after 12 months which requires the student to take a course with Andrea and not have any other university issues during that period.

Jeff Hollingsworth promised to send faculty Andrea’s contact information and web links on the honor code. Jeff also asked that the UG Office be informed of any issues. The staff would be happy to review letters before they are sent. Faculty can request that a penalty be more or less severe than receiving an “XF” grade if the faculty member believes that would be appropriate. It is important to report a case immediately; don’t wait until the end of the semester to do so. The general feedback was that the process took too much of a faculty member’s time and needed to be streamlined.

Brandi Adams opened the discussion on UG student Benchmarks for CS majors. Benchmarks are used to determine if students are on track to graduate. Benchmarks set expectations, and if the student is not meeting them, he/she must visit the Dean’s Office to determine how the student can get back on track. The department would like to cut down on the number of times students can repeat a class. **The proposal was amended as follows: insert the word “course” so that the sentence reads...”All CS undergraduates must take a Computer Science course in their first semester as a CS major.” The second change was to add CMSC 106, 131, 132, 216, and 250 to the specific list of courses in the proposal.**

A motion was made and seconded and the proposal passed with the requested changes. The vote was 27 in favor of the proposal and 4 opposed.

A proposal for a concentration in Computer Security was presented by Jeff Hollingsworth. Some employers have requested that students have knowledge of cybersecurity and the proposal reflects the areas that employers say are important. The intent of the department is to identify a track through the current CS curriculum. The

center is being established with the hope of recruiting 2-3 new faculty members who will teach courses in the concentration. UG students and parents are also asking about “sub-specialties” within the UG CS major and this is seen as a way to provide students with the needed instruction to meet the demand. It is necessary for the proposal to be approved now if the course is to be offered next academic year.

The proposal was amended as follows: Skip # 1 as listed on the document. Begin reading #2. Area 1: CMSC 411 should read “or 430”. Area 2: CMSC 420 should read “or 451”.

A motion was made and seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor of the proposal with changes as noted.

Due to the length of the meeting, Jeff Hollingsworth skipped the discussion on best practices in teaching but reminded faculty to hand out a syllabus the first week of class and return graded material promptly. It is also important that faculty be fair when grading and adhere to best teaching practices.

The last topic, “Approval Process for UG Students when Registering for Classes” was presented by Prof. Yiannis Aloimonos with Larry Davis as the moderator. In the past, professors could determine if an exception should be made for a student to enter a class without the listed prerequisites. Professors have the knowledge of what is needed to succeed in a course and it doesn’t seem reasonable for the UG Office to now make such a decision. Under the current procedure, an exception can be made at the Dean’s level with the professor’s signature, not the Assoc Chair’s signature. The UG Office should function as a resource, not as a block to students and professors. Currently, as of the first day of classes, students who do not have prerequisites can receive “stamps”, an exception to the policy regarding registering for a class. If a class is oversubscribed, a student can not bump those who have already registered for the class and have the necessary prerequisites. It was mentioned that if a student did bump another due to the approval of a professor, there could be legal action taken. The only resolution would be for a professor to agree to accept all of the students on the course waitlist as well as the student exception.

Due to lack of time, there was no further discussion and the meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm. The topic will be discussed at the next meeting.