Education Committee Meeting Minutes
Friday, March 4, 2005

Larry Davis convened the meeting at 2pm. Francois presented information on a HCI course, Information Visualization, CMSC 734. The course will be offered once per year. It will not displace any existing HCI course and the intent is that it will become part of the regular HCI offerings. Currently there are two graduate courses that are offered once per year and one regular UG course taught each semester.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the course proposal. All were in favor with no opposition or abstentions noted.

Larry Davis presented the second course proposed on the agenda in Dave Mount's and Leila DeFloriani's absence. This proposal was for a new graduate course, Geometric and Solid Modeling, CMSC 741 which Leila and Dave Mount worked on together to develop its curriculum. This course will compliment a course that Dave has been teaching and will round out course offerings.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the course proposal. All were in favor with no opposition or abstentions noted.

The third agenda item was a proposal to change the prerequisite of CMSC 250 to CMSC 131 vs. CMSC 132. Jan Plane presented the information. It seems this was discussed a year or more ago within the committee who developed the new course sequence but the correct information was not conveyed in the PCC documents at the time. This proposal reflects the manner in which the Department has actually been operating for the past year and we need to correct the information listed with the campus.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the change in the prerequisite. All were in favor of the change with no opposition or abstentions.

The next agenda topic had two parts and was presented by Dana Nau. The first part of the proposal requested a change so that the prerequisite of CMSC 421 be CMSC 330 and CMSC 351. CMSC 420 is no longer an option as a prerequisite. This proposal did not require further discussion since it had been handled during the last academic year.

The second part of the proposal concerned the reactivation this year of CMSC 620 which had a prerequisite of CMSC 421. Because this course has much of what was taught in CMSC 421, the AI field committee wants the prerequisite to be CMSC 330 and 351. It was pointed out that this proposal did not require a vote because it was voted on during the prior year. However, there was further discussion regarding the rationale of offering the course to both UG and Graduate students. Dana said that Graduate students were given more advanced assignments and projects. A question was raised as to whether the course should count towards graduation? Dana's response was that students can not

apply both towards graduation requirements.

There was a vote regarding the offering of CMSC 620 to both UG and Graduate Students. The concern expressed by many members of the committee was reflected in the vote:

11 for CMSC 620;   6 against CMSC 620;   23 abstentions

The motion failed.

Larry Davis then introduced the topic of adding a "minor" to the Departments UG program. The rationale for such a change is that student numbers are dropping and the Department needs to adjust to the realities of the current situation. Many campus programs offer students the option of earning a "minor". CS has not done so because of large student numbers and we did not need any additional students competing to register for classes. Now that there is space within our courses, the Department should be open to teaching students outside of the CS discipline. We would be looking at a 24 credit minor and would need to form a committee to develop a proposal to be voted on by the members and then submitted to the PCC. Our work must be into the campus PCC by December 2005 if we are to offer this to students beginning in academic year 2006. If interested in being on the committee, please submit your names to Larry within the next week; otherwise, he will appoint a committee.

The discussion then moved onto a suggestion that there be a professional Masters Program with no department financial support or desk space provided to the accepted students. The thought was that this would generate more money for the Department. However, currently tuition revenue does not directly flow back to departments. There are also costs associated with establishing such a program. Concern was voiced that this type of program could strain the Department's resources, financial and others.

As an example Stanford University has such a program but students can not enter the PhD program. David Jacobs said that NYU has a "Masters Program" without any restrictions and it seems to work well. It actually helps faculty members check on students' performance prior to admitting them to the PhD program. Several faculty members felt that if the Department did offer a Professional Masters Program, students should be permitted to apply to the PhD Program.

Larry voiced concern that several years down the road, that our existing graduate program might not supply a sufficient number of students to faculty members to assist them with their research programs. The Department needs to be open to new ideas for the future.

A question was then raised about what other universities/CS programs are doing about lower UG student numbers since this is a country wide issue not only one being experienced by the CS program at UMD. It was suggested that a committee be formed to survey this situation and provide some suggestions regarding recruitment.

Larry mentioned that some faculty members were having problems reading pdf files. He has asked Brad to work with the individual faculty members to resolve the issue. Please send your names to Brad so that he can check-out your computer software and see what solution can be found. People do not want to save the file first and then open them, so a solution that will permit the file to be opened on the first try is needed.

People on the third floor have been experiencing problems with the copier. At the same time Brad has been looking at replacing Department printers with a new model that will have many more features such as scanning capability and printing for secure files. Since the printers will function as a copier, the question was raised as to what features would be needed on a copier if the new printers provided these new options? There are issues of cost associated with purchasing or leasing new printers and copiers so it's important to understand the needs and usage of the equipment so that the best decision can be made for the majority. There was discussion about large and small printing jobs and whether they should be done on a printer or a copier. However, there was no agreement on what type of jobs should be on what piece of equipment and there was no resolution regarding the specific needs of the 3rd floor. Following the end of the meeting, specific information was received on equipment requirements for the 3rd floor.

Larry adjourned the meeting at 3pm.