

UG2 Staff Student Liaison Committee Meeting Minutes

17 January 2024, 13:00-14:00, Appleton Tower 8.02

Reps:

Bowen Feng; Mira Kawar; Lydia Koleosho; Arin Mukhopadhyay; Boyao Song

Staff present:

Luo Mai, David Sterratt; Aris Filos-Ratsikas; John Longley; Yuvraj Patel; Rob van Glabbeek

INF2C-CS (Sem 1)

- Content – students were overall happy with the content of the course and the quality of the lectures
- Lab demonstrators – some comments were made on demonstrators' level of skill not being consistent, and no solutions being offered during the labs. Yuvraj commented that supplying model solutions to the demonstrations may have caused the demonstrators to direct students to a single way of solving a problem, instead of directing students to solving it from a different perspective. Yuvraj confirmed that in the future, a senior tutor could be allocated to each slot, and that further training would be provided prior to tutorials starting.
- Piazza – was a good community approach for students, and helped students work together to solve problems.
- Coursework – A lot of students complained that the coursework was quite intense and inaccessible, with no model answers/guides being given. They stated that 1-2 past papers would have been really insightful for understanding the structure of the exam, how to phrase an answer and also to help with timing, and therefore increasing their confidence and reducing the stress in taking the exam. Yuvraj explained that giving out past papers would eventually exhaust the bank of questions they can use in exams, but can understand the provision of some model answers would have been beneficial.
- Coursework 1 – A lot of students struggled with the first coursework, and feel a lot was expected from them, with some students spending more than double the expected time on this. The reps explained that the coursework could have been split up better, to remove the barriers for gaining extra marks later on in the coursework. They also noted that the first lab should have better prepared them for the coursework.
- Coursework 2 – The students found this more manageable, due to the lecturers adding extra classes designed to focus only on the coursework, and also designing the assignment to be slightly easier than coursework 1.
- Gaps in knowledge – some students felt that they lacked a proper foundation due to not being offered computer science at school, so had little background in the topic. They feel that simple accessible videos to describe the foundation before each topic would have been very beneficial.
- Setting up – The reps commented that a lot of time was spent setting things up, with some students struggling with access to DICE. They feel that a tutorial early in the semester would have been really useful for getting them set up for the course.

DMP (Sem 1)

- Content – Overall positive feedback, students liked the course.
- Resources – If students felt like they were struggling, there was a lot of resources that were really helpful, and they particularly liked the study guides, videos and worked examples that were available to them.
- Exam – was nothing like what they expected it to be compared to past papers, and found it quite difficult compared to the rest of the course assignments. General comment made about there being no questions on probability distributions.
- Organisation – The course was delivered very well, everything was clear, released on time, and in an obvious location.
- Feedback – marks were returned in a reasonable time and was very consistent.
- Workload – some students felt like they had too much work at certain points in the semester, with some weeks having both quizzes and assignments.

INF2-FDS (YR)

- Labs – Students really enjoyed the labs and found them helpful.
- Organisation – overall good pace, with it being slower due to it being a year long course. Students appreciated the structured comprehension questions.
- Coursework 1 and Feedback – grading was fair, no complaints.
- Some students thought the course was lacking statistics/maths elements, however David explained that this comes late in the course, following on from DMP material.

INF2-IADS (YR)

- Content – overall students loved the course, have enjoyed the first coursework and thought the marking was fair.
- Resources – students found having previous year lectures really helpful, they were more polished as they were recorded during lockdown, and allowed students to pause and replay. They particularly liked the singing ones! The reps also commented on their being too much reading material, which confused them having to jump between textbooks. They suggested that 2 books would be enough, and being guided on what areas to read up on would be beneficial.
- Tutorials – the reps stated that they found the tutorials quite boring and felt that some of the tutors lacked delivery. Aris confirmed that they will look into making the tutorials more collaborate and possibly some training for the tutors.
- Engagement – John queried regarding the low attendance at lectures. The reps confirmed that they had been too busy with other coursework's, and had caught up with the lectures online.
- Office hours – Aris and John confirmed that they will advertise their office hours to let students know they are available for questions. They also encouraged the use of Piazza.

AOB

A follow-up meeting will be held with the course organisers to review performance and feedback data, reflect on what did and did not work well, identify common issues, potentially coordinate between courses and plan changes for the next academic year.