Student Staff Consultative Committee Meeting

The 2/2008 Student Staff Consultative Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, 22nd of April 2008 in room 203/Building 72 at 1.00 pm.

Minutes

Present:  A/Professor L. Kleeman (Chair)
          Professor Arthur Lowery
          Dr. Andrew Price
          Ros Rimington

Students Present:
          Elizabeth Anderson (Level 2 BE),
          Andrew Bonavia (Level 3 / 4 BTE),
          Harjot Bhatti (Level 3 BE)
          Anushi Kulasiri (Level 5 BScBE)
          Aiden Lister (Level 4 Mechatronics)
          Rory Paltridge (Level 3 BCSE)
          Meaghan Soutter (Level 4 BCSE)
          Thomas Tan (Level 4 BSc/BE)
          Xiao Fei SHI (Level 2 BE)

Minutes

Wireless access issues raised at the last meeting were being addressed by a university wide committee in ITS and LK has arranged for a student submission to that committee via Aiden Lister. LK tabled a campus map showing existing access points for information. LK reported on curriculum revision meetings in progress for ECE3093 involving the Associate Dean Teaching, ECSE Department and Mathematics teaching staff. Mechatronics comments at the last meeting have been relayed to the Mechatronics coordinator. LK also asked the committee to check the online minutes on the Departmental Website.

Level 2:
In ECE2011 Signal Processing the introduction to Laplace Transforms was thought to be too brief and discussion revolved around whether the unit ENG2092 Advanced Engineering Maths B that formally covers Laplace transforms should precede ECE2011. Given that the course design is meant to allow for mid year entrance this would not help those students. The meeting discussed the issue whether it was useful to motivate Mathematics with Engineering examples before formal treatment against the reverse order. In the end it LK agreed to discuss the possibility of a better introduction to Laplace Transforms with the ECE2011 lecturer.

The introduction of the help desk 1-2 pm and 5:30-6pm this year was greeted very positively by the student representatives, with the evening session
thought to cater well for student “sleep patterns”. Further positive comments were made by students about the usefulness of the Tablet PC lecture recording pilot study that is being conducted in the Faculty of Engineering.

**Level 3:**
ECE3031 Control Systems lectures were harder to follow recently with a change of lecturer. In particular references to level 2 material were being made too rapidly and obscurely by chapter numbers of textbooks rather than by explaining the material itself. The chair suggested that a simple question in lectures from the students would help resolve some of these issues. The staff on this committee suggested in general that students should ask questions during a lecture where the lecturer clearly does not realise that students are not following the material. The student representatives reported that attendance has dropped due to the difficulty in following the material. LK to follow up.

ECE3092 Systems Engineering and Reliability Analysis – students are requesting solutions to tutorial questions and more complex lecture examples. The complaint made was that lecture material is easy to follow, tutorial questions are significantly more complex and the assignment was very difficult. LK to follow up.

ECE3073 Computer Systems – the new availability of the DE2 FPGA boards outside of formal lab hours in 110/35 is helping students with the lab work and understanding enormously and was highly praised by students. AP agreed that progress in completing labs was significantly improved over last year. LK reported similar benefits in ECE4063 Large Scale Digital Design that uses the same equipment and software in some of the lab work.

ECE3093 Optimisation, Estimation and Numerical Methods – the lecturer was too quiet and assumed too much prior knowledge. Again the staff on this committee noted that students need to communicate their concerns during the lecture and with the lecturer between lectures. The tutor Alan Couchman (a graduate of ECSE) was thought to be extremely helpful and provided good supplementary material online that alleviated the difficulties somewhat.

**Level 4:**
Discussion centred on the Project unit requirements analysis and student requested that better guidelines be provided as to what is expected for this submission. Problems with MUSO assignment submission procedures in ECE4076 were reported. Complaints were made regarding the lack of notes and scope of lecture material in ECE4081. Students were unclear as to the learning objectives in the unit.

*Next scheduled meeting: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2008.*