Student Staff Consultative Committee Meeting

The 2/2018 Student Staff Consultative Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, 12:30 pm 14th August 2018 in 201/35 16 Alliance Lane.

Minutes

Staff:  A/Professor Lindsay Kleeman (Chair, Department Director of Teaching)  
Professor Malin Premaratne (Deputy Head of Department)  
Ros Rimington (Academic Programs Manager)  
Geoff Binns (Resource Manager)

Students Representatives:

Rory Sutherland (Society of Monash Electrical Engineers representative) - apology

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<tr>
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Minutes

The chair (LK) thanked the student reps who participated in the Engineers Australia accreditation interviews in May. The final report from EA is due in a few weeks and this will be discussed at the next SSCM meeting. As a result of talking to the accreditation panel, areas ECSE plan to improve on are:

- Better introduction for 2nd year students to the feedback pathways available in ECSE, such as this committee, Moodle, emailing unit coordinators, consulting academic staff and the Academic Programs Manager.
- Improving documentation of the assessment of FYPs with a new mark sheet for assessors.
- Greater involvement of our Industry Liaison Committee with development of the course curriculum.

The chair also reported on a meeting with Amy and Rory regarding comments received from students. LK gave a brief summary of these for the meeting:

- Students would like clearer requirements for assessments and marking rubrics. Units mentioned were ECE4081, ECE4045 and TRC3500.
- Some unit guides are missing details on assessments, such as submission dates. Referring student to Moodle was not sufficient. The director of teaching is asking unit coordinators to fix this issue when approving unit guides.
- ECE3091 would benefit from tutorial style sessions on design and best coding practices, with examples. To be discussed with the unit coordinator.

Level 2:
Topics raise in level 2 included feedback on the following unit:

ECE2131: Some demonstrators had gaps in their knowledge about the labs. Also the exam solutions for 2017 posted on Moodle contained errors. These were corrected later on Moodle, but concerns were expressed about the quality of the exam marking if the solutions were not correct. Ros pointed out that when exams are first submitted, draft solutions are also generated quickly at the time and later refined. Exam marking procedures are rigorous, with solutions and marking schemes double checked on two campuses. Also failed papers are double checked as a requirement. Results are reviewed in the Board of Examiners meetings and students have the opportunity to review their own papers. The chair added that Monash policies will result in unit coordinators emailing the whole class with feedback after the final exams have been marked on the performance of whole cohort of students in each exam question.

Levels 3 and 4:

TRC3500 – Some students felt that the lectures were not relevant since the labs formed the core learning in the unit. Tutorial material was preferred instead of formal lectures. In response, the chair suggested that the lecture material could be important in introducing key concepts required in the lab and learning outcomes of the unit and formed a theoretical basis for the experiments in the labs. The exam needs to cover most of the learning outcomes, particularly if lab work is assessed in groups. There was considerable discussion about the different ways groups can be formed, from lecturer defined to students defined.

ECE3073 was discussed in relation to TRC3500 and it was noted by that there was some overlap in material, mainly limited to the ADC material. Students felt that both
units were still important. The labs were noted as particularly useful in ECE3073 and again tutorials were suggested as an improvement. The weighting given to labs in the assessment could be increased.

ECE4055 was complimented as a great unit and one student described it as “perfect”. The chair commented that this unit achieved very high SETU scores and was well resourced by the Dept.

Two week labs were commented on as the preferred model for all units since they allow formative feedback in the first session with help from demonstrators, and this can be followed up during the week before the final assessment in the second week.

ECE4081: A student rep commented that there were insufficient demonstrators qualified to answer electronics questions and that the demonstrator selection and training should be improved.

ECE4146: A student rep commented that the labs are fantastic and the students really appreciate the lecturer Mike Biggar being involved in the labs so much.

ECE4132: Students report that James is going very well and is much appreciated. They even like the punctuality during the recorded lectures where he starts right on the appointed time of the recording starting. A request was made for 3 demonstrators in the lab rather than the 2.

Level 5: ENG5001 – a comment was made that the lecturer was just reading the slides and not adding value for students who can read the notes themselves. The labs were good and the material considered relevant. The exam was lengthy and should have allowed calculators since it would have saved a lot of time. The material overlaps to a minor extent with other units such as ECE5883 and ECE5884. However since ENG5001 is core for all disciplines (not just electrical) this cannot be changed simply.

ECE5882 – student rep commented that tutorials would be nice.

ECE4122 – students would like more library copies of the text book. Ros is following this up with the library.

ECE4099 – students said that it was a great unit, and they particularly like the lecturer being involved in the tutorials.

Next scheduled meeting: Week 10 Semester 2 2018