Student Staff Consultative Committee Meeting

The 4/2009 Student Staff Consultative Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, 18th of August 2009 in room 203/Building 72 at 1.00 pm.

Minutes

Present:  A/Professor Lindsay Kleeman  (Chair)
          Ms Ros Rimington
          Dr. Andrew Price

Apologies:
          Prof Arthur Lowery
          A/Professor Grahame Holmes

Students Present:
          Andrew Bonavia (Level 3 / 4 BTE),
          Ashleigh Sun (Level 3 BE)
          Wendy Ni (Level 5 BSc/BE)
          Sarah Fitzpatrick (Level 3 BE)
          Praneel Pradhan (Level 3 BCom/Mechatronics)
          Rory Paltridge (Level 4 BCSE)
          Manish Pahwa (Level 2 BCom/BE)

Minutes

Level 3/4:

The mechatronics representative commented that the notes in TRC4800 were illegible and difficult to follow. Also complaints were made about the late change of prerequisites for TRC4800 and how this affected some elective choices. This unit is managed and taught by the Department of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering and the comment will be referred to the Mechatronics Coordinator.

The suitability of ECE3093 Optimisation estimation and numerical methods as a core unit was questioned, with the suggestion that this unit be made an elective. The student’s opinion was that the material was not relevant to all students and this was discussed within the committee. Whilst no firm view was reached by all representatives, the matter will be considered when the course structure is reviewed next. The academics present expressed the opinion (which was accepted by most students) that not all course subject material was directly and immediately used by students but would be seen to be relevant later in engineering careers.

ECE3051, ECE4024, ECE4074 and ECE4075 were reported as running well. In ECE4075 there was a request for a fix in a software installation in 103/35 to be propagated to other labs that use DE2 boards. This will be actioned by the LK.

In ECE4042 Communication Theory, complaints were aired about the mass market tutorial style being adopted in the Engineering examination halls. Students prefer the smaller more personal attention offered in other units running smaller separate
tutorials. This boils down to a resources question and student feedback during the unit evaluations would be helpful in affecting change. The chair will convey this opinion to the unit coordinator for ECE4042.

In ECE3022, students who missed the first lecture complained that they missed out on hardcopy of the lab notes. Softcopy was made available but these were subsequently removed from Blackboard since the hardcopy was meant to be used in the lab sessions to encourage reading of the notes before the labs and better conduct during the lab. This will be discussed with the unit coordinator. Also some comments were made about lecture sequencing with respect to lab experiments and some labs being conducted before the relevant lectures. This was unavoidable due to the limited number of sets of lab equipment.

As at every meeting at the start of semester, student complaints were made about the timetable that is centrally controlled. Unit changes were made near to semester start to solve clashes in response to student feedback. This may have impacted on some student elective choices. Discussion then centred on timetabling difficulties. The point was made that the late changes removing clashes were in fact beneficial to students and were preferable to the lack of action.

TRC3500 lectures was felt to be disjointed and only relevant to the specific details of the labs by a student representative.

ECE3091 was discussed with regard to the hovercraft design project. There was a request that the length of the test track be specified now, however AP argued that since this was the first time this design was attempted he was waiting to see how well the design could perform before fixing the test length.

**Level 2**

In ECE2031 the sequencing of lecture material and its overlap with ENG1030 was discussed. More time was felt should have been devoted to the new 2nd order circuit material and this covered after the revision of first year phasors and Thevenin/Norton equivalent circuits. The lab notes were reported as being published on the day of some labs making it difficult to complete the preliminary work before the lab session.

ECE2021 was reported as containing Maths that students were seeing for the first time, such as surface integrals. The material was felt to be covered too quickly considering that there was no Match unit that included this work prior to the EM unit.

The meeting concluded at 1:50 pm.

**Next scheduled meeting: Week 8 semester 2 2009**