

**University of Cambridge Computer Laboratory
Teaching Committee**

Chairman: Dr Neil Dodgson

Secretary: Mrs Fiona Billingsley

Minutes of the meeting of the Teaching Committee held on Tuesday 28th November 2006 in GC22 in the William Gates Building

Present:	Dr Neil Dodgson	Dr Ann Copestake	Dr Sean Holden
	Dr Frank King	Christine Northeast	Prof Andy Pitts
	Dr Ian Wassell	Mrs Fiona Billingsley	

1. Apologies for Absence

None received

2. Sabbatical Leave and Substitute Teaching

It was noted that Alistair Beresford has accepted an appointment to the Computer Laboratory on an EPSRC Academic Fellowship (Roberts Fellowship). He will therefore not require payment as a guest lecturer for his lectures on C and C++ next term.

3. Review of Course Feedback

None

4. Review of Staff-Student Consultative Committee Minutes

It was noted that at the first meeting of the Staff-Student Consultative Committee, positive feedback was received regarding the new student hangout area. Sean reported that he'd received mixed responses from the student representatives as to why the students aren't using the online lecture course feedback forms and how the students could be encouraged to provide feedback. No definite conclusion was reached.

An issue raised was regarding supervisors giving students solution notes to past exam questions. A student representative alleged that a fellow student had been given solution notes by his/her Director of Studies, and that this wasn't fair as not all Director of Studies and supervisors will provide students with solution notes. It was noted that it is departmental policy that solution notes should not be given to students and that this policy is documented on the Lab's website. The Student Administration Office has taken steps to remind supervisors of the policy. Sean recommended that the student arrange to meet with the Course Director, Ken Moody, to discuss his complaint further. Ken has since met with the student and was able to encourage him to set up a student wiki as a resource for students to share ideas.

The committee thanked Sean for the wonderful job he is doing as Chair of the Staff & Student Consultative Committee.

5. Revision of the Tripos and Diploma

Neil reported that the Faculty Board for Mathematics has agreed to discontinue the Part IA Maths with Computer Science option starting 2008-09. It is hoped that they will agree to the Computer Laboratory borrowing two of their maths papers for use in a new departmental Part IA maths option.

6. Development of the new MPhil in Computer Science

None

7. Liaison with the MPhil in CSTIT

Ann reported that an MPhil in CSTIT Open Day will be held on 16 February with the intension of attracting more UK students to the course. The program will include lunch, a 30 minute introductory talk, student demonstrations and the opportunity for visitors to talk to staff, current MPhil students and PhD students who did the MPhil. A mail-out with information about the Open Day is planned shortly. Should members of the department have contacts at other UK universities that information could be sent to, please give details to Lise.

It was noted that the recent information session for current MPhil students on applying to do a PhD at Cambridge, went well.

8. Proposals for new courses, significant changes to courses, and removal of courses

None

9. Policy on Solution Notes

The Committee unanimously reaffirmed the department's policy on solution notes which is published on the website at <http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/UoCCL/teaching/supervision.html>

10. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were approved and signed.

11. Any matters arising not already dealt with

With regard to Item 8, Neil reported that he had since spoken with Peter Sewell who clarified that his fellowship is until 2007. As such, he is not required to undertake any teaching, and that he is lecturing Semantics in Programming Languages as a goodwill gesture.

With regard to Item 12, Frank reported that there had not been much improvement in the number of students who were able to complete the first hardware lab exercise in the allotted 3 hours session. The Committee agreed that the first tick exercise should be a trivial exercise. It was suggested that the first exercise could be made into a two-session tick and that ticks 6 & 7 could be merged into one tick. It was also suggested that during one of the Digital Electronics lectures, the lecturer could spend some time demonstrating how to build a bread board to familiarise the students prior to the first hardware practical. Neil and Ian are to discuss this and Neil is then to e-mail the relevant people with regard to reworking the hardware exercises.

Neil reported that on Monday 4 December, Microsoft Research is hosting 250 sixth-form students. The students will also be visiting the Computer Laboratory and Neil and Peter will be involved with talking to the students and encouraging them to apply to read Computer Science.

12. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on 30th January 2007.