Graduate Students' Forum

Minutes: 8 November 2012

Attending: SB   Simon Baker (MPhil)
DB   Daniel Bates (CompArch)
SMB   Sandro Bauer (NLIP)
JC   Jon Crowcroft
LG   Lise Gough (GEM)
VI   Vaiva Imbrasaite (Rainbow)
RK   Ramana Kumar (PLS) [Secretary]
AR   Andy Rice (GRDC)
DT   Daniel Thomas (DTG)
IT   Ivo Timoteo (AI&B)
MG   Matthew Grosvenor (SRG)
KS   Kumar Sharad (Security)

1. Apologies

Andreas Koltes (with DB kindly standing in).

2. Membership of the Forum

  i.   Election of Secretary.

        RK nominated, and elected unopposed.

  ii.   Election of Staff Student Consultative Forum Representative.

        DT nominated, and elected unopposed.

3. Minutes of last meeting

Approved.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

  i.   Table football.

        We now have one.

  ii.   Kitchen utilities.

        There is a lack of utensils, which DB has restocked but some are still missing or possibly being taken.

        Action: MG to check status of utensils (is there a lack?) and ask Building Services whether they might be being taken for the café.

  iii. PhD lunches.

        Thanks to Malte Schwarzkopf for organising one last year. Worth trying again, perhaps with more advertising. People said it was good to talk to people in the lab whom they had never met before.

iv. Grad students' day out

Thanks to Omar Choudary for organising one. It was lots of fun; similar feedback as for the PhD lunch. It's important to ensure the date of such an event avoids clashing with other events.

5. Correspondence

i. School of Technology research survey.

Response rate 82%. General results: supervisor was best aspect of graduate education, dissatisfaction with colleges.

Action: LG to get Computer Laboratory-specific results for the survey.

Suggestion: put information about things to look for when evaluating colleges on the Computer Laboratory website (with a link to university-wide information).

Action: Everyone to find out how and what people from outside Cambridge found out about college choices when applying. Also, how many students did not get either their first or second choice? (Was that question in the survey already?)

Action: MG to check the survey for October-start bias.

6. Student feedback

(a) MPhil (SB)

i. Some MPhil students are not happy with the paper submission system, and would prefer an electronic submission option. The main issue is having to turn up in person to hand in. They are also interested in an explanation for the current system. AR suggested one explanation: that electronic submission would be difficult to set up.

Action: LG to investigate with CARET whether electronic submission is possible and to take the suggestion to the Advanced Taught Courses Management Committee for consideration.

ii. There is some concern amongst MPhil students about deadline clashes, that is, many pieces of work all due at roughly the same time.

(b) CompArch (DB, standing in for AK)

Nothing to report.

(c) Security (KS)

Nothing to report.

(d) AI & Bioinformatics (IT)

i. Reports of ventilation and temperature issues. VI suggested contacting Building Services.

ii. Some people would like chairs with armrests. DT suggested contacting Building Services. AR also suggested contacting Piete Brooks (or going via the CL website)

who can organise a Health and Safety Risk Assessment.

(e) SRG (MG)

    i.   Feedback that the government makes taking internships, intermitting, etc. too diffi-cult. JC and VI pointed out that there is a new document available online explaining internships.

(f) GEM (LG)

Nothing to report.

(g) NLIP (SMB)

    i.   Feedback that there are not enough exercise opportunities or spaces at the CL. AR pointed out that there are weekly aerobics and pilates and other classes. For table tennis, although it would be desirable, there is no space.

    ii.   Feedback about internships, similar to 6(e)i.

(h) PLS (RK)

    i.   Request for ways to find and reach people throughout the lab. All agreed that in person contact (face time) is the most effective. IT asked how to find out who is in your year. This information is on the website, but varies by group. RK asked about an IRC channel for the building. DT pointed out that there is the #cl channel on the SRCF IRC network, and that it is listed somewhere on the CL website.

    Action: LG and DT to improve PhD information on the CL website and publicise #cl more widely. Also see 6(i)i.

(i) DTG (DT)

    i.   The policy on machines/resources is that you start with minimal resources and may ask for more. More people should be made aware of this policy, so they are willing to ask for more as required.

    ii.   The DTG fridge door is broken. A new one is on order but is taking a long time to arrive.

    Action: DT to look into this as necessary.

(j) Rainbow (VI)

Nothing to report.

(k) GRDC (AR)

Nothing to report.

7. Departmental announcements

None.

8. Date of next meeting

December.

Poll for date: https://dudle.inf.tu-dresden.de/gsf/

9. Any other business

(a) Staff Student Consultative Forum (DT)

    i.   Future agendas should have a standing item for DT to report back about the SSCoF.
Action: RK to ensure the next one does.

    ii.   Query about sustainable fish in the café. They have been asked about it.
Action: DT to report back next meeting.

    iii.   Query about diversity at the CL.
AR suggested contacting the Outreach officers.

    iv.   Query about promoting free software within the CL.
DT welcomes suggestions on how to do this specifically.

    v.   Query about locks on PhD office doors (with deposit).

    vi.   Suggestion for more ergonomic chairs to be provided by default.

    vii.   Suggestion to promote competition amongst food providers at the CL.

(b) Research Development (AR)

There is a pool of money available for Research Development for which departments can make bids. An example of how this is used is language classes. AR has bid for £3000 for discretionary spending by the GSF. This could be used for the next PhD talk over lunch, and for the Christmas Quiz event. A Go Ape style event is probably beyond the scope of this money.

Action: Call for someone to run the PhD talk over lunch.

Action: VI to find people to run the Christmas Quiz (perhaps someone from the Happy Hour crew and someone from the MPhil) and contact LG and AR when done.