

Undergraduate Student Student-Staff Panel Meeting

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| 11.11.2015 | Time: 1.00pm | Location: T/0.31 |
| Meeting called by | Matthew Jones | |
| Chair: | Matthew Jones | |
| Secretary: | Vanessa Yau | |
| Apologies: | Elliot Howells, James Kirk, Frank Langbein, Xantia Salamanca Robins, Maclej Caputa | |
| Attendees: | Megan Jevin, Gregory Butterworth, Aidan Cammies, Freddie Saunders, Iwan Francis, Benjamin Wilson, Chloe Chippindale, Ivonna Prince, Daniel Harborne, Ian Cooper, Alia Abdelmoty, Yukun Lai, Kirill Sidorov, Matthew Strangis, Laurence Semmens, Linda Davies, Helen Phillips, Matthew John. | |

Agenda item: Minutes of previous meeting Matters Arising

- **#LibraryTips**

The #LibraryTips campaign has ended. A video is now available on the cardiffunilib YouTube channel which has been used in induction sessions with good feedback. The Library service extends their thanks to those who got involved in the campaign.

- **Protocol for setting assignments for consistently clear instructions**

Instructions are now available to staff on Learning Central for setting up assignments.

Action: Helen Phillips to continue identifying what issues students and staff are experiencing regarding setting assignments.

- **Request for Module schedules to be provided**

Helen Phillips commented that she is piloting module schedules in her MSc and 1st year modules which could be used as exemplars for other staff.

- **Creation of module review panel with module lecturers and reps to discuss changes to modules**

Helen Phillips remarked that a panel could be set up and would have to take place in Semester 1 week 10/11 to review modules. She also commented that volunteers are wanted and to forward any ideas about who should contribute to this panel to her.

Action: Student reps and staff to make suggestions to Helen Phillips.

- **Creation of rep alliance so reps can compare notes/progress/change**

Student Rep Facebook group created with almost all representatives across year groups recorded as members. Proposed rep-only meeting following SSP meeting did not take place.

Agenda item: Other Matters Arising

None.

Agenda item: Update from School Chair on the College Forums

N/A – next meeting scheduled for 2nd December 2015.

Agenda item: Teaching & Assessment

Teaching – quality, variety of teaching methods, course content

- **Consistency of lecture notes across modules**

A large proportion of Year 2 students would like to see more complete lecture notes consistently across modules to help students during self-study periods and following illness. Students have requested that lecturers highlight any additional further study required in addition to studying lecture notes, e.g. reading list, videos. A separate meeting was proposed to discuss what can be done about these issues and to be reported back for the next SSP meeting.

Action: Matthew Jones to coordinate with Helen Phillips to invite reps and staff to contribute to this discussion. Matthew to extend an invite to the Student Voice team regarding these meetings.

Assessment – variety of methods, organization and deadlines of assessment, feedback – time, quality etc.

- **Year 2 coursework scheduling**

BIS students commented that Year 2 coursework deadlines were too tightly scheduled. The matter has already resolved with module leaders to the students' satisfaction and will be taken into consideration for next year.

Helen Phillips commented that coursework deadlines were initially too tightly scheduled and Year 2 may be affected due to new staff this year however in future the coursework deadlines will be recorded in SIMS.

Agenda item: Academic Support

a. Personal Tutoring System:

Year 2 students commented that they have not seen their personal tutors this year, similarly there is a proportion of students who do not attend personal tutor meetings.

Action: Tutors to stress the role of the personal tutor at the beginning of each year with the understanding that they are the person to provide references for students, especially in years 2 and 3. Helen Phillips to look for time in the timetable for an allocated tutor meeting time.

b. Project/dissertation supervisors:

No issues raised.

c. Employability & Skills development:

No issues raised.

d. Placement students:

No issues raised.

e. General:

No issues raised.

Agenda item: Organisation and Management

a. Module choices

No issues raised.

b. Administration

No issues raised.

c. Communication

No issues raised.

Agenda item: Learning Resources

a. IT:

No issues raised.

b. Library:

New reading materials available online. The library has resourced a 1 year subscription for lecture materials for computer science which will be extended if there is a continued demand. The university also has a subscription to Wiley textbooks, also available through LibrarySearch.

Whiteboards are available for use in the group study rooms in Trevithick library - students can borrow pens and erasers from the main desk and are encouraged to use the large quiet study room (in Trevithick library) for self study.

Action: Student reps to circulate news about the new materials and available space in Trevithick Library.

Agenda item: External Examiners Reports

The external examiners reports positively reflect that there are no issues with course content and material.

Agenda item: Results of Students Surveys and Student feedback exercises

a. National Student Survey

The NSS response has been positive overall; however, the response rate was lower than the University would wish. It was noted that the response rate was at a similar level to that of other Russell Group universities (60-70%).

b. Welcome to Cardiff

No issues raised.

c. Study at Cardiff

No issues raised.

d. Placement Learning and Study Away surveys

Overall positive responses, student reps to inform Helen Phillips if/when 2014-2015 placement students have completed the surveys.

Agenda item: Year One items

• JCR capacity and temperature:

Students noted that the JCR is regularly at full capacity throughout the day and that the room is often very warm. It was noted that the windows at the rear of the JCR remain closed through the day due to building work nearby.

Action: Matthew Jones to bring the issue forward in the College Forum.

- **Communication of timetable changes:**

Year 1 representatives remarked that MyTimetable application has been very well received amongst the students. Students have requested that the application only identify labs and tutorials relevant to the student/student group (instead of showing all labs, tutorials for each module).

It was noted that MyTimetable is a new university wide application and that the school has put group numbers on lab sessions on the timetable.

- **Supplementary video materials**

Daniel Harborne recommended that online video resources be added as supplementary learning resources since students have found them useful to get a broader understanding of the subject material. Helen Phillips remarked that lecturers are encouraged to link to such external resources but it is an individual preference.

- **National Software Academy: Coursework deadlines and weighting**

All Semester 1 modules deadlines fall within 2 working days of each other. Students have found it difficult to prioritise the coursework, particularly given the Computational Thinking in JavaScript module is worth more marks than the others. Ian Cooper responded agreeing that the teaching staff are aware of the issue and will stagger the deadlines for future modules starting next semester.

Students expressed concern that the coursework for the JavaScript module comprised a large proportion (60%) of the marks for the module for one item of work.

Ian Cooper responded that students have had many opportunities to discuss the coursework with staff and get informative feedback up to the submission date. He also commented that breaking up the coursework into smaller chunks would mean each deliverable would be composed of simpler tasks and that multiple deadlines may have enhanced the problems.

Actions:

NSA teaching staff to stagger deadlines for future modules and continue adapting module schedules based on student feedback for next year's intake of students.

Ian Cooper to report back to NSA staff that the feedback given on the weighting of the coursework should be taken into consideration for the module for next year.

- **National Software Academy: module scheduling**

Students have commented that the teaching for the JavaScript module was rushed; as a result there was a greater pressure on students to focus on the coursework instead of the project which spans all modules. Ian Cooper responded that the feedback students have given is being used constructively in changing the module schedule and workload balance for next year's intake.

Action: None, action already in progress.

The students have also expressed a need for time between projects to complete coursework instead of back-to-back projects. They suggested a learning week between projects to consolidate knowledge and complete coursework.

Action: Module leader to introduce some time between projects into the module schedule for next year's intake.

- **NSA: Project Feedback**

Students found the feedback for the first and second projects very useful and would like to have feedback on their latest project. Staff noted that the latest projects are still being reviewed and staff would return project feedback in the near future.

Action: Lecturers to return project feedback shortly.

Students commented that some form of draft review of essay based coursework would be appreciated. Ian Cooper proposed for his module that students would submit code snippets and get feedback by discussing in small groups the learning objectives for the code submitted.

Action: Project feedback will be delivered in a variety of ways including through small group reflection as noted above.

- **NSA: Coursework submission**

Students commented that the expected submission format of coursework is too complex. Ian Cooper remarked that the requirements for the next portfolio submission would be relaxed, with suggestions for structuring content.

Action: None, action already taken

- **NSA: Industry engagement and lunch sessions**

Very positive student feedback regarding industry engagement in projects and talks. Students commented that they are keen to engage in more talks and would like to see more theory delivered as optional 20 minute lunch and learn sessions.

Action: Ian Cooper to report this feedback to NSA staff with the intent to continue bringing in industry specialists for talks and to establish more topic-based theory sessions as requested.

| Agenda item: | Year Two items |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Example of good practice: <p>Year 2 students have commented that the lecture materials for Database Systems have been very helpful and they appreciate the quality of the material put forward for the course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lecture Capture <p>Students have requested lecture capture videos for all students. Lecture capture is still in the process of being rolled across university as part of the refurbishment of lecture rooms. The functionality is therefore available in the newer rooms however there is no requirement for the school to deliver lecture capture and the lecture capture facilities are only available in some rooms. This is an ongoing process and is intended to be in place across the university within 2 years.</p> <p>Action: School to continue to put pressure on university to continue upgrading facilities to speed up the process.</p> | |

- **Reading week**

Gregory Butterworth brought forward the suggestion of introducing a reading week in Week 7 so students can consolidate taught material and work on lab exercises and reading material. It was suggested that introductory lectures in week 1 could be replaced with week 2 material.

Kirill Sidorov commented that if reading week were to be introduced, teaching would probably have to continue into week 12 and the exam period would have to be delayed a week which is not feasible as it is a university wide decision. Kirill further offered trialing reading week with the 3rd year Multimedia module.

Action: Matthew Jones to bring forward suggestion of reading week to College Forum.

Agenda item: Year Three items

- **CM3110 Security – content for BIS Students**

A number of BIS students have raised concerns about the content for the CM3110 Security module. The main issue raised is that the course content changed significantly early in the year and BIS students have found it difficult to complete the programming element (previously theory) for the coursework. The issue has been raised within the school and a satisfactory outcome has been reached.

- **CM3104 Large Scale Databases – examinable material**

A number of Year 3 students have commented that clarification is needed regarding examinable material for the CM3104 module. Students have requested that lecturers state what material is needed solely to complete coursework or as supplementary examples. Helen Phillips commented that the lecturers are aware of the issue and will clarify examinable material in upcoming lectures and provide sample type exam questions towards the end of the semester.

Agenda item: Subject Based Societies and Extra-curricular Activities

- **ComSci Society**

Next calendar date: Christmas meal at Revolution Cardiff, December 1st. Tracey Lavis has circulated an invitation to staff.

- **Computing Club**

Next club event on 28th November (Hackathon) followed by upcoming field trip.

Action: Kirill to spread the word via email and student reps to spread word via Facebook to encourage more students to participate in the club and activities.

- **STEM Ambassador Programme**

There are a series of events in schools and within Cardiff University coming up in the next few months including an event to celebrate Ada Lovelace's work on 14th December. The recruitment process for more STEM ambassadors will start again in February.

Agenda item: Reports of good practice

None, already mentioned in previous sections.

Agenda item: Any other business

- **Student Rep Photos**

Helen Phillips has requested photos of the student reps for a noticeboard on the COMSC corridor.

Action: Student reps to email Helen with photo.

- **New imaging and video facilities**

Kirill Sidorov remarked that students and staff were thankful for the investment the university has made towards refurbishing the imaging and video facilities so they are consistent across the lecture theatres.

Agenda item: **Date and time of next meeting**

Semester 2, week 1 or 2.