



**Clayton School of Information Technology  
(Computer Science and Software Engineering)**

**Staff/Student Meeting No. 2 2006**

The second Staff/Student meeting for the Clayton School of Information Technology (Computer Science and Software Engineering students only) was held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2006 at 1pm in the Staff Lounge room 146/75, Clayton campus.

**Present:**

Professor David Abramson, Dr David Albrecht, Mrs Nandita Bhattacharjee, Mrs Karen Fenwick, Associate Professor Maria Garcia de la Banda, Mr Charles Greif, Dr Carlo Kopp, Dr Kevin Korb, Miss Michelle Leclair, Dr Jon McCormack, Dr Bernd Meyer, Professor Christine Mingins, Dr Ann Nicholson, Associate Professor Andrew Paplinski, Dr Ronald Pose, Dr Andrew Prentice (School of Mathematical Sciences) Dr Sita Ramakrishnan, Dr Sid Ray, Dr Peter Tischer.

Jeffrey Parsons (1<sup>st</sup> year CompSci), Daniel Heath (2<sup>nd</sup> year CompSci), Kefu Li (2<sup>nd</sup> year CompSci), Chitra Appalanaidu (3<sup>rd</sup> year CompSci), Erica Foley (3<sup>rd</sup> year CompSci), Hao Zhou (3<sup>rd</sup> year CompSci), Dmitri Nikulin (1<sup>st</sup> year SoftEng), Kalpana Soni (4<sup>th</sup> year SoftEng), Mathieu Tozer (BA/BCompSci), Kirsten Frederiksen (BL/BCompSci), Nicholas Meinhold (BSc/BCompSci), Ben Porter (CompSci Honours), Huddia Amiri (CompSci Honours),

**Apologies:**

Associate Professor John Hurst, Chung Tue Nguyen (SoftEng Honours), Jesse Trapp (M.I.T.S),

**Welcome:**

The meeting was chaired by the Associate Head of School, Dr Ann Nicholson who opened the meeting and welcomed the student representatives.

Actioned items from the last meeting were discussed. In particular:

- There was still no official answer as to whether HEAT was available to students.
- Any problems with Scientific Linux to be sent through to tech@help.

**1<sup>st</sup> YEAR:**

Students reported that the Logic software crashes a lot less which was a good thing.

Representatives reported that the use of MUSO and Courseware Pages running parallel was becoming a bit of an issue, students were unsure of where to go for information.

Students complained that in their FIT1001 mid-semester test, that although they were given a 5 minute warning to finish, it ended up being about 30 seconds. Mrs Nandita

Bhattacharjee acknowledged that the students did get about 3 minutes but this was because she had to finish. Nandita stated that she has a large class and that logistics was an issue, but she will address the problem.

Associate Professor Andrew Paplinski stated that he was shocked at how little attendance there are at lectures. Various staff members at the meeting made the point that attendance at lectures was not obligatory. Nandita stressed the point that if any students had any problems that they need to see their lecturer.

There were no comments on Math's.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> YEAR:**

2<sup>nd</sup> year representatives reported that CSE2201 software was difficult to use in a technical sense.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> YEAR:**

Students reported that they wanted to see past exam papers earlier, especially for CSE3324. Lecturer for CSE3324 (Ron Pose) explained that the unit had been taught by numerous academics and that the papers had to be checked before being released. Dr Kevin Korb stated that university regulations require that past exam papers have to be available to students. Various staff members at the meeting said that they don't release their exam papers.

3<sup>rd</sup> year students enquired as to whether the internship unit was still running (FIT3500?) An ex-faculty member was managing it, and since his departure, no-one has taken it on. Dr Sid Ray stated that there was still a lot of demand for internships.

Students enquired about the Unix Tools newsgroup site not being active. The lecturer for Unix Tools (Ron Pose) stated that he only found out about it the day before the meeting, and that he would advertise it in his lecture at least for the students to use.

3<sup>rd</sup> year students enrolled in CSE3308 wanted their assignments back. The lecturer for CSE3308 stated that Assignment 1 didn't affect Assignment 2 in any way. Ann reminded academics of the two week feedback rule and that if any academics were having a resource issue that they should let her know.

Students complained that it took an extremely long time to print PDF documents over 10 pages in the Building 19 labs. This problem then raised the issue of the HEAT system being unreliable. Associate Professor Maria Garcia de la Banda said that students should go to the ITS Helpdesk as a first point of contact for problems with labs, as ITS runs them. Maria also pointed out that the status of helpdesk calls was not available to anyone but ITS. Ann asked as to whether information on who to call if there were any problems in the labs, was advertised on the lab walls? Students said that there was information, but nothing happens when you log a call.

Representatives reported that the lab doors in building 19 had been fixed which was a good thing, as they used to slam.

Maria explained that there was currently a Tech Services review, and that most of the technical staff didn't even have PD's yet, she asked for students to be patient until this was resolved.

Students reported that assignment 2 for CSE3305 was more approachable than assignment 1. 3<sup>rd</sup> year students state that they understand the concepts of CSE3305, but don't know how to apply them. There was also a problem with the CSE3305 tutorials, representatives said that the lecture material is changing, but the tutorial material hadn't caught up. Students made it clear though, that they had no problem with their tutor, just the tutorial material. The lecturer (Kevin Korb) indicated that time and resource constraints meant that he hadn't been able to put the work into tutorial material as well as updating the lectures.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> YEAR:**

4<sup>th</sup> year SE representatives reported that they weren't getting anything out of the compulsory studio projects seminars. Dr Sita Ramakrishnan, Software Engineering course coordinator stated that of 4<sup>th</sup> year students, attendance is necessary, and that poor attendance last year made it compulsory. As honours students were required to attend seminars, then 4<sup>th</sup> year students should as well. The seminars provided lots of diverse topics, so students should be learning. 4<sup>th</sup> year students wanted to know whether asking questions in seminars was compulsory, and whether you received extra marks for doing so? Dr Ramakrishnan advised that this wasn't the case.

Representatives complained about the fact that there was no break between the end of semester and the exam period, some students had assignments due on the Friday and then an exam on the Monday. Dr Ann Nicholson advised that no new material should be given out in Week 13, just revision. Assignments sometimes had to be due in Week 13, because if they were due in Week 12, then lecturers couldn't assess on any material given in Week 12.

(Meeting followup: the University has now also decreed that no assignment shall be due in Week 12.)

Students reported that they didn't feel they were getting sufficient feedback on what to hand in and when in regards to their Projects. Dr Ann Nicholson suggested regular supervisor meetings.

#### **HONOURS:**

It was reiterated that seminar attendance was compulsory. Some students found it hard to attend the regular Monday 2pm seminars. Dr Ann Nicholson stated that many seminars are scheduled outside of semester, and that students could even attend seminars at Caulfield.

Honours representatives preferred lectures every week instead of one six hour block which was too draining, it was too much to give and too much to take. Students reported that the Friday block class affects their other regular classes, and their outside work.

Honours students said that they weren't getting responses from HEAT. Associate Professor Maria Garcia de la Banda explained that tech@help and HEAT were the same in that you will always get an automatic reply, but this doesn't necessarily mean that anyone is assigned to the job.

Representatives reported that Boromir crashes with large files, and asked if they could have local accounts. Mr Charles Greif asked if students use memory sticks to save large files.

Meeting closed at 2.00pm