OXFORD UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE FOR GRADUATES

Meeting held on Friday 31st May at 12.30 p.m, Room 105

MINUTES

Present: Prof. Luke Ong (Chair), Mrs Julie Sheppard, Adrian Duncan, Andrew Paverd, Tianlin Yu, Miriam Backens, Omer Gunes, Alex Merry, Vincent Nimal, Joao Pinto de Sousa, Nikola Yolov, Krzysztof Bar, Hugo Nava, Shoshannah Holdom

Apologies: David Quick, Pengyu Wang, Lo Tsui

1. Minutes of Meeting held on 19th February 2013

The minutes were approved.

- Matters arising

  CoGS email list: Mrs Sheppard consulted with IT support and found that there was no way to add postdoctoral researchers automatically to the CoGS email list for their first year of employment only. Mrs Sheppard has therefore devised a manual system. The PA to the Administrators will notify her of new RAs joining the department, who will be added to the CoGS list manually. Mrs Sheppard will monitor and remove individuals after one year.

  DPhil webpages: Mrs Sheppard has begun work on revising these webpages and has invited feedback. JCCG agreed that it would be useful to have one page where all forms, regulations, the handbook and so on are accessible.

  Mailing lists: The action on Mr Nava to discuss mailing lists with Mrs Sheppard, with a view to opening CoGS events to other members of the department and thus tie in with the Social Committee, would be carried over.

  ACTION: Mr Nava/Mrs Sheppard

  Office moves: At the previous meeting, JCCG had requested that sufficient notice be given before office moves take place. The Buildings Manager has since confirmed that those affected by office moves are always notified at least one week in advance.

2. Matters raised by Graduate Representatives

Mr Merry reported that the IT support team was investigating why some students’ machines had been running slowly of late.
Mr Gunes and Mr Nava reported on a recent event held at the Said Business School designed to encourage dialogue between Computer Scientists and students from the SBS. The aim was to explore collaborating on start-ups and other business ventures. The event went well and was attended by about nine Computer Scientists and 25-30 Business students. Two Computer Science have since been contacted by the SBS to develop ideas further. The SBS appear keen to run this kind of event again in the future.

Mr Gunes commented on the attempt break-in to the department over the bank holiday weekend and asked about the security of the building. It was noted that since this incident, new, highly secure windows were being installed throughout the building. JCCG were reminded to be vigilant about individuals attempting to tail-gate on entry to the building and to challenge anyone unfamiliar who tried to enter.

Mr Nava reported that the Library Committee wished to compile a catalogue of the best books relevant to each research group. The aim is to identify each group’s top five standard references that are of use to students. Prof. Ong suggested consulting with a Faculty member from each research theme to draw up a suitable list to be passed to the Library.

**ACTION: HN**

3. Director of Graduate Studies Report

Prof. Ong reported on the new MPLS Graduate Training Committee, a sub-committee of the Graduate School Committee, which will consult with and advise departments on cohort-based training for doctoral students. Together with the MPLS Graduate Academic Programme, this Committee aims to make training programmes more readily accessible across the Division.

Prof. Ong also reported on a number of changes to the examination of theses, as approved by Education Committee:

1. With effect from October 2013, the maximum number of terms for an extension beyond four years has been reduced from nine to six. Students may appeal to Education Committee if they wish to be granted more time.

2. Again, with effect from October 2013, the options available to DPhil examiners will be as follows:
   a. Examiners may accept a thesis with no corrections
   b. Examiners may accept a thesis subject to minor corrections, for which the deadline is one month from when the student receives the detailed list of corrections.
   c. Examiners may accept a thesis subject to major corrections, for which the deadline is six months from when the student receives the detailed list of corrections.
   d. Approval of the thesis is not recommended – revision and resubmission is required within two years. If this is an MPLS thesis, a 2000 word report summarising the changes made in the revised thesis must accompany the resubmission.

Mr Gunes asked to what extent it was necessary to have published papers by the time of submission and viva. Prof. Ong commented that while it was helpful to have one or two publications, the final
DPhil examination would not hinge on this. It was noted that it would be difficult for examiners to fail students who had good publications in the area of their thesis, but that it was certainly the case that students had passed without having published.

4. Improvements to DPhil webpages

This was discussed under item 1.

5. Election of new President, Secretary and Treasurer

The above roles need to be filled for the next academic year, the duties of which were clarified as follows: the President is the overall graduate representative and attends a range of departmental and divisional meetings to represent the views of the Computer Science graduate body; the Secretary is primarily responsible for drawing up the CoGS coffee rota and ensuring that the organisation of other activities is shared out appropriately; the Treasurer is responsible for monitoring the CoGS budget. Mr Bar volunteered to be President and Ms Backens the Treasurer. The role of Secretary was not agreed at the meeting. Mr Duncan volunteered to take on some degree of responsibility, to be defined in due course. Mr Gunes volunteered to be the graduate representative on the departmental Social Committee and to be responsible for other interdepartmental events, such as that hosted recently by the Business School.

6. Any Other Business

Mrs Sheppard reminded the Committee of the 10 checkpoints stipulated by the UK Borders Agency that all students holding Tier 4 visas must meet over the course of a year. JCCG were asked to passed this message to other students.

Prof. Ong thanked Mr Merry and Mr Yu, who will be leaving at the end of the academic year, for their participation in the Committee.