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## EECS STUDENT STAFF LIAISON COMMITTEE

Minutes from meeting held on 15 November 2021 13:00-14:00, Microsoft Teams

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### Present

| Name                               | Initials | Department | Role                           |
|------------------------------------|----------|------------|--------------------------------|
| Antra Tripathi                     | AT       | EECS       | MSc Computer Science Student   |
| Dola Aina                          | DA       | EECS       | Student Support Officer        |
| Maanasa Naga<br>Venkatasri Malladi | MM       | SEMS       | MSc Sustainable Energy Systems |
| Chloe Eilish Smith                 | CS       | SEMS       | MSc Sustainable Energy Systems |
| Yue Chen                           | YC       | EECS       | Director of Education          |
| Nadia Zhaman                       | NZ       | EECS       | Student Support Officer (PG)   |
| Neha Bai Thakur                    | NT       | EECS       | MSc Computer Science           |
| Olena Hrynenko                     | OH       | EECS       | MSc Computer Science           |
| Pranshu Srivastava                 | PS       | EECS       | MSc Electronic Engineering     |
| Qianni Zhang                       | QZ       | EECS       | PG Director                    |
| Soren Riis                         | SR       | EECS       | Senior Tutor                   |
| Uttkarsh Raj                       | UR       | EECS       | MSc Computer Science           |
| Rosa Chandler                      | RC       | EECS       | Student Support Administrator  |

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### Preliminary Items

#### Welcome and Introductions

- TT and YC clarified the purpose of this meeting is for students to provide feedback on their course (positive and negative) to give us a better understanding as a department of what changes need to be implemented, what is working well, and to allow us to raise issues with relevant MO's/departments.

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## Modules

### *ECS763 Natural Language Processing*

- UR agreed that the course pacing is too fast and shared feedback from other students on the course suggesting that more academic support was needed.
- AT added to this by explaining the pre-recorded lectures are uploaded to QM+ on a Monday and the tutorial is scheduled for Wednesdays. The intensive content covered in the lectures means that 2 days is not ample time to digest the information before the tutorial, however all student reps agreed that the content is high quality, so rather than compromise on the content, it would be preferable to have more time between the lecture and tutorial for this module.
- PS expressed that the average number of slides he is accustomed to from other modules is around 50, whereas NLP covers 170-180 per week.
- QZ voiced concerns around timetabling changes at this point in term, suggesting that slowing down the pace of the lectures may be more beneficial.

## General Feedback

- PS gave positive feedback for *ECS7020 Principles of Machine Learning* and *ECS765 Big Data Mining*, saying the teaching and assessment for these modules was good. However, many of his classmates agree that the course pacing for *ECS764 Applied Statistics* and *ECS763 Natural Language Processing* is too fast, meaning students without a strong background knowledge struggle to grasp concepts. QZ acknowledged this point and added that this may also reflect the nature of the subject; having to cover lots of topics in a short timeframe.
- AT commented that lecturers should repeat questions asked in class for those who are joining online, as the voices are not picked up on the microphone.

## Deadlines

- PS expressed that there is too much consistency in deadlines which puts added pressure on students.
- YC said that it is expected that most modules have a submission deadline in the second half of the semester, given that it takes time to learn content to be assessed on. MO's should be giving ample time for assignments and there should be no clashes in submission deadlines, however if students do find that all of their submission deadlines fall in the same week, please flag with the department. MO's will also extend deadlines if certain software needed to complete assignments aren't available to use for a period of time.

### **Online lectures**

- SR acknowledged students' concerns around pre-recorded lectures (no interactivity, no opportunity for Q&A afterwards). OH asked if there is an opportunity for drop-in sessions for additional support in Semester B. SR advised that face-to-face Teams meetings can often be as beneficial. QZ added that many staff members are still using their office hours to meet in person.
- UR asked if arrangements for in-person classes will change for next term. QZ confirmed that large lectures will continue to be held online for the foreseeable due to coronavirus measures. YC added to this by saying it is difficult to schedule larger classes/lectures as many students are still choosing not to attend, and the central QM policy is that large gatherings of people should be avoided if possible. If government recommendations change and the pandemic improves, this may change next year.

### **Additional support**

- OH asked if there are any available workshops or resources to help students with time-management. YC mentioned the library has many resources available and contacting Academic Advisor's for 1:1 advice would be most beneficial. QZ added that collaborating with your groups in-class can also be really useful to cover a large amount of topics.
- AT expressed that technical/Computer Science students would benefit from additional materials/support in areas such as "How to write a research paper" and "Ethics". She added that there is no prerequisite for coding knowledge with this course, so many students without a coding background are struggling.

### **SEMS Students feedback\*\***

- MM expressed that an increase in contact hours per week would be beneficial as well as more face-to-face learning opportunities, as pre-recorded lectures aren't interactive.
- CS added to this by expressing other student's concerns around lack of contact hours. Many students opted for the MSc as opposed to research so they could access the teaching and guidance, however it feels very self-driven and like there is very little support available.
- CS highlighted an issue whereby students cannot be heard over lecture/seminar recordings, so lecturers should remember to repeat questions for those joining online.
- YC agreed we would pass this feedback along to SEMS.

**\*\*these students are not from EECS.**

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## **Feedback on ITL building**

- Complaints about lack of heating in ITL building: YC said her understanding was that ventilation and lack of heating is to help limit the spread of coronavirus; if we do not have these measures in place, we would need to limit numbers of students in ITL which would not be ideal.
- Students voiced that although ventilation needs to be in place, there should be adequate heating as there is no apparent link between temperature and the spread of the virus.
- YC agreed to raise this with Estates and confirm if anything can be done about this.

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## **Date of next meeting**

TBC