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FACULTY OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING, MATHEMATICS AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

MINUTES BITOC MEETING

Date: Thursday April 29th, 2021
Location: Microsoft Teams (online meeting)
Time: 12:40-14:00

Present: Luís Ferreira Pires (chairman), Maria Iacob (programme director), Marloes van Grinsven (programme coordinator MSc), Jos van Hillegersberg, Marten van Sinderen, Adina Aldea, Thomas Hogema, Bernard Verheijen, Gustas Matijosius, Deepika Jangamguravepalli Bramhanandareddy, Willem Schooltink (education Inter-Actief), Rosan Maas (candidate board Inter-Actief)

Absent: Joyce van Baaren (programme coordinator BSc)

1. Opening and Agenda

Luís opens the meeting at 12:43.

Point 6 "Master EER 2021-2022" will be discussed before point 5 "Development w.r.t. the separation from TCS: the future of M4, M6 and M12". The order of the agenda points in the minutes will remain unchanged though.

2. Announcements & correspondence

a. Pre-enrollments
The number of pre-enrollments has again increased. The Dutch students have not yet signed up in great numbers, though their deadline is only just closing in, so we will probably see them soon, according to Maria. Due to the growth in student numbers, it is inevitable that BIT will at some point separate modules from TCS completely. An agenda point is included to discuss the future plans for a separation, because Maria would very much appreciate to get input from the BITOC.

b. SEQ evaluations Q3
Maria has received the evaluations of modules 3 and 7, and especially for module 3 there is bad news. The students grade the module no higher than a 3.8, which is very worrying. As the SEQ evaluations of Q3 will be discussed next meeting, Maria will not go into this any further today.

AP Mirande Include SEQ evaluations Q3 and CEEP evaluations Q2+Q3 in the agenda for May

c. Minors
Minors are currently completely full, although not all students have found a spot yet and the deadline has passed by now. Maria says she has been trying to get more students accepted for minors and will continue to do so.

d. New attendees
Rosan Maas has joined the meeting for the first time. She is the Candidate Officer of Educational Affairs and will hopefully be Willem's successor at Inter-*Actief* next year.

3. Minutes and Action Points

- **Minutes 25-02-2021**
Page 4: Change the heading of point 6: CEEP Q1 and SEQ Q2.

- **141: Produce documentation to request participation of BIT in Math teaching minor:**
This action point has been pending for some time. Maria finished the documentation, submitted it and it was rejected. The requirements for being allowed to participate in such a minor are incredibly hard, and require, amongst others, 60 ECs of Math in the whole programme. Maria says BIT could try to become eligible for the '*Informatica*' (Computer Science) teaching minor, but she will stop trying for the Math teaching minor. According to Marloes, BIT is already eligible for teaching Computer Science. This action point is concluded.

- **143: Research Bachelor to Master retention rate:**
Maria has not made any progress on this action point, but she does know that 20% of the Bachelor BIT students continue their studies at the Master TCS programme. Luís comments that it would be good to ask some of the students who made the switch to TCS about their reasons by talking to them about this. Marten says that the student members may also be able to provide useful insight or contacts. The action point remains in progress.

- **144: Implementation of the PC-BIT bylaws:**
Luís has looked into which documents specify the composition of the BITOC. The rules are defined in the Faculty Rules & Regulations (*'Faculteitsreglement'*) and state that an equal number of staff members and students are members of a programme committee. From this same document it is clear which attendees are members and which are not. The *Faculteitsreglement* is old (26th February 2018) and still in Dutch, so Luís asks Maria to talk to Stephan Maathuis about this. The action point is concluded.

4. By-laws

The version sent to the BITOC was not the latest one. Luís has sent a new version that is up to date. The only change with respect to the former version is in article 2, which now accurately specifies who are members of the BITOC and who are not, in accordance with the Faculty document "*Faculteitsreglement EWI*".

<u>The by-laws are approved by the BITOC.</u>

5. Developments w.r.t. the separation from TCS: the future of M4, M6 and M12

The growth in student numbers inevitably requires the programmes of BIT and TCS to adapt. Over the past years, module 1 and 2 have already been separated, and now the decision has also been taken to separate module 4. The proposal to completely separate BIT from TCS came from the TCS programme, unsurprisingly to Maria. EEMCS has allocated funds to hire five more lecturers, which are probably to be assigned mostly to the BIT programme. Some discussion between Maria and Arend Rensink has occurred regarding which module coordinators will, in the future, manage BIT modules and which will stay with TCS. Module 6 may be split up starting 2021-2022. This is less urgent, because the increased number of students in September 2021 will only affect modules of the second year in 2022-2023.

Regarding the M12 Research Topics, there is already a capacity problem now. The module coordinator has indicated the 120 students that are currently participating are hardly manageable. Maria says that a new track has been provided by the SCS group this year to help increase capacity somewhat and to provide more BIT topic choices. Interestingly though, BIT students mostly go for technical TCS-like topics. By splitting up the module, the BIT programme could give priority to BIT topics for tracks. According to Maria, it is also an option to only separate management regarding M12, so the split is invisible to participating students. Another option is to let students do actual graduation projects at companies, like what happens in the IEM Bachelor. According to Luís, the Bachelor students do not have enough time in M12 to perform an elaborated graduation project. Luís mentions the history of M12 and how this situation came to be. Years ago, with very

few BIT students, the programme opted to collaborate with CS. This opened up a lot of possibilities, but it also created problems, including the scalability and the fact that a lot of BIT students tend to lean towards TCS during their Research Topics course. Luís believes that although he does not have an easy answer to the current problems, the sustainability of working like this will be subject to ongoing discussion. Thomas adds to the discussion that Maria could inquire at Bachelor programmes with a larger number of students how they organize the graduation module.

AP Maria   Inquire larger study programmes about how their Bachelor graduation module is organized.

Regarding the capacity problems at several points in the programme, Luís says that even BIT Inc. is becoming a problem with respect to the number of students, as companies must be found for all these students, and that is not even a shared module with another programme.

Marten asks if he is correct in understanding that Arend is recruiting new teachers and is, at the same time, claiming teachers for his programme. If so, can't we do the same? Maria says it is absolutely her intention to claim teachers for BIT too, as we have similar problems as TCS.

Maria says the discussion about this topic is still open, and she would like to further discuss this next time. This also gives BITOC members time to think about this matter.

AP Mirande   Include BIT-TCS separation on the agenda for May 2021.

6. Master EER 2021-2022

According to Marloes, there are not that many changes in the EER this time. A change in the cum laude regulations has been discussed at some previous BITOC meetings already. Most other changes are based on changes in the Bachelor EER or differences between the Bachelor EER and Master EER. In section B, some statements were added regarding challenge-based learning, and an entry requirement was added for Research Topics.

Section A

Luís asks about the clause that states that the Admission Board can deviate from the regulations (page 11, A2.7, paragraph 7) and wonders why this was introduced. According to Marloes, the reason is that this gives the Admission Board more freedom to look at individual students' cases. Luís believes that this implementation is fine, but he wants to clarify that with respect to the law, this responsibility lies with the programme director and is thus, by means of this clause, delegated to the Admission Board.

Luís says he thinks article A4.2 is confusing. It states that "exams and tests can have the following various forms" and then it refers to a footnote. According to both Marten and Luís, it would be better to include the various types in paragraph 1. Luís says that this (ed. the pandemic) is a disaster situation, and not the norm. We should not change the norm to fit a very unusual situation like this. There should be an escape rule, but this should be generalized, according to him.

Another point that is widely controversial is the clause that specifies the assessment plan may be changed during the course of the study unit (page 16, A4.2, paragraph 4). Marten proposes to delete paragraph 4 entirely. In exceptional cases, the escape rule would be to address the examination board. All student members second this proposal. Luís will address the advice to remove this paragraph in his letter.

Article A5.3 describes the way in which the weighted average is calculated. According to Thomas, the phrasing could be improved. Marten adds that the footnote could be changed to state the weighted average is proportional to the number

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of credits, instead of 'based on'. Thomas also notes that a footnote could be added for the Research Topics, which says that it is not part of the final project. Marloes says that it may not be possible to add the Research Topics footnote this year, but that it could be done next year. Marloes says she will propose it, but it might not be in time for this year. Thomas says it would be alright for this iteration.

Section B

Luís believes it is good that the double degree is defined here, but he wonders whether using an appendix for this is the most convenient way. If there will be a lot of these programmes, will Marloes add them all in appendices? Marloes says she believes having the document outlined like this makes it most clear for students.

Luís says Marloes will receive an extra course description, which is to be discussed during the next BITOC meeting and can then be added to the EER. He asks whether Marloes is able to add the course later, which she confirms.

Thomas has a question regarding the information provision to Master students: has the bi-yearly information meeting implemented by now? Marloes answers that for this semester, it is planned halfway through May and one has already taken place in November. Furthermore, a separate Canvas page is being built to provide information to those who need it at one central location.

<u>The BITOC approves the Master EER 2021-2022 with inclusion of the discussed changes.</u>

AP Luís   Send the advice letter regarding the Master EER 2021-2022

7. Online education after the pandemic

Gustas was wondering what parts of the tools and possibilities that have been developed for the pandemic can still be used after the pandemic. Will it be possible to follow education online still, either partially or fully? Maria says exceptional cases will again need an individually set up study plan after the pandemic. This concerns students with medical problems not allowing them to be on campus, for example. Maria firmly believes that full online education will never happen at the UT and should not be a starting point for future policy. However, parts of the online education have shown to be very effective and appreciated, which could possibly continue after the pandemic. Nevertheless, face to face contact for some education forms are very dear to teachers and students alike, according to Maria, so you can expect things like tutorials to take place physically as soon as possible.

According to Jos, he already got questions from students expecting the exam to be online while it was physical. Jos believes that in the future, the university should be clear about exams beings online/offline to prevent having a debate about online/physical exams every time an exam is announced. It is important to stress that if you allow some to take it online and others have to take it physically, it will never be completely fair, according to Jos.

8. AOB & questions

Jos mailed the BITOC about the Thesis Awards from ERCIS. A student can be nominated in October and the winner can go to the ERCIS conference. Furthermore, for the opening of the Academic Year a BIT student has been nominated for best Master thesis, so let's hope he wins!

Gustas asks Maria whether an update on the minor situation could be provided next meeting. Luís asks if this is a UT-wide problem, which Maria confirms. According to Luís, the UT should take responsibility.

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AP Maria   Give an update on the minor situation at the meeting in May.

9. Closure

Luís closes the meeting at 14:05.

The next BITOC meeting will take place on May 27th.

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10. Action Points list

The finalised actions points are in the style 'strikethrough'. Since multiple action points were found in duplicate in the minutes, two action points are merged to one action point list for clarity.

Nr.	Date	Subject	Leader	Status/deadline
141.	~~2021-01-28~~	~~Produce documentation to request participation of BIT in the Math teaching minor~~	~~Maria & Tirzah~~	~~Done.~~
143.	2021-02-18	Research why the Bachelor to Master retention rate is so low and why students leave the UT altogether.	Maria	In progress.
144.	~~2021-02-18~~	~~Look into the implementation of a definition for 'BITOC members' in the PC-BIT bylaws.~~	~~Luís~~	~~Done.~~
145.	2021-04-29	Include SEQ evaluations Q3 and CEEP evaluations Q2+Q3 in the agenda for May	Mirande	New action point.
146.	2021-04-29	Give an update on the minor situation at the meeting in May	Maria	New action point
147.	2021-04-29	Inquire larger study programmes about how their Bachelor graduation module is organized	Maria	New action point.
148.	2021-04-29	Include BIT-TCS separation on the agenda for May 2021	Mirande	New action point.

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149.	2021-04-29	Send the advice letter regarding the Master EER 2021-2022	Luís	New action point