



**NUS Students' Computing Club**  
THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE

**Dean's Dialogue Session**  
*On 21<sup>st</sup> January 2009*

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### **Part 1: ON THE 60-MODULAR CREDIT (MC) LIMIT IMPOSED ON LEVEL-1000 MODULES**

**I was not aware that there has been a limitation of 60-MC imposed on Level 1000 modules! What is the faculty's view on this?**

1. The University policy states that number of Level 1000 modules to be counted towards fulfilment of graduation requirements is limited to 60MC. Hence, we advise you to plan your modules tactfully, working around the existing limitation. We do understand that it may be difficult for poly students as most of the modules you are exempted for are packed at level 1. With regards to this, we will take this matter up with the board of Undergraduate Studies and negotiate with them.

*\*Note: Please refer to <http://www.nus.edu.sg/registrar/edu/UG/DegReq.html> for more information.*

**I was matriculated before the year of implementation. Will I be affected?**

2. No, this policy will only affect students admitted from AY 2007/08. *Please do note that there is a difference between admission and matriculation.*

**I am a student of AY 07/08, and was told that we will not be affected. Is this true?**

3. Currently, we are not able to give you a definite answer. However, rest assured we will clarify this issue as soon as possible.

**For some of us poly students, we are exempted from certain Level 2000 modules. However, these exempted modules are counted as Level 1000 modules instead. It's not fair.**

4. We are aware of this problem and have since started negotiation.

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## **Part 2: ON DEGREE PROGRAMME REQUIREMENTS**

**Computer Science: Why computing science majors are not allowed to take Life Science modules as unrestricted electives (UEs)?**

5. The Bachelor of Computing (Honours) in Computer Science is recognised by ABET Inc., which accredited the programme as of equivalent to institutions in the United States (US). In the US, students majoring in computer science are required to read life science modules as part of their breadth. Hence, with the accreditation, we are also required to do the same.

**Information Systems (IS): Currently, there are two specializations offered to IS majors.**

**(Information Security and the Services Science, Management and Engineering Specialisation) Can I do the both of them, given that there's no overlapping in the modules taken, and I have enough MCs to take the modules required?**

6. Technically speaking, if it is still within University guidelines and policies, it is possible to do both of the specializations. However, we still do have to check this up to be able to give you a definite answer.

**Computational Biology: Why is the Comp. Biology (CB) major allocated so much less unrestricted elective MCs than the other majors?**

7. It is because the programme deals with two disciplines – Biology and Computing. Hence, CB students are required to read more cores than the others. As a result, there are not much free MCs to fit in more UEs. For this request, it is unlikely that much can be done about it.

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### **Part 3: ON THE MODULAR PREFERENCE EXERCISE**

**In my opinion, I thought that the MPE was a success. Will there be another one this semester? Are there going to be any changes or improvements made? I felt that it was held too late, which is part of the reason not many participated in the exercise.**

8. The announcement for the MPE was late last semester and as a result, MPE was delayed. There should be another MPE this semester. However, we have yet to fix a date for it. Thank you for sharing that with us, we will definitely take your suggestions into account when deciding on the date of the exercise.

**In the current system, the faculty does the planning of modules offered each semester. However, I have observed that there are many instances in which a module is offered only in one semester, causing much inconvenience for us during module planning. Is it possible if we can indicate our choices of modules we wish to take for the semester during MPE and the faculty plans the modules to be offered from there on?**

9. This is not entirely impossible. However, we are afraid that it might cause more confusion. We will discuss this more in depth, and see the feasibility of this idea.

**If this is implemented, then does that mean that unpopular courses will be less likely to be offered?**

10. That may not be the case. We will deliberate on this.

**Can cross-faculty modules be included in the exercise?**

11. It would be difficult as we have no control over modules of other faculties. We hope you can understand this problem we are facing. Nevertheless, we will try to negotiate and see if we can include cross-faculty modules.

**Not all exam dates for the modules offered were settled during the MPE period, and the system takes last year's date instead. As a result, I cannot bid for them due to clashing of exam dates even though there no clashes; I am able to bid for the modules in CORS exercise.**

12. For that, we will have to check on the details, and make the changes to the system if necessary.

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### **Part 4: ON FACULTY MODULES, CORS BIDDING**

**I think the faculty should release some recommended timetable schedule for module planning to students, so that we have a better idea how to plan our modules.**

13. This is currently on the way. We will release sample schedules of what past students have taken, to aid students in planning their modules wisely. Hopefully, we will be able to release them by end February. However, please do not rely too heavily on these schedules, these sample schedules are only a guide for you.

**Why are some modules only offered in certain semesters only?**

14. We have limitations in manpower. For example, for CS2231, there are at most 1 or 2 professors that are able to teach it, however, they are needed to teach other modules also. Currently, we are trying to reduce Level 5000 modules so that the professors can teach more undergrad courses, however, that is difficult on our part and takes time too, as there are many administrative matters to take into consideration. Nonetheless, we are working towards it.

**Why are there no entrepreneurship modules in SoC? It is so hard for us to bid for these modules!**

15. We are starting to introduce entrepreneurship modules. There is one such module this year, though unfortunately, it is of Level 4000. We have also recently hired a professor in this area of expertise (Prof. Juzar Motiwalla), and he has set up a special interest group (SIG) on it. For Technopreneurship minors, you can also choose to do a start-up and we will give you MCs for that too.

**I feel that there should be an online degree check system like the engineering students.**

16. Currently, we already have a similar system in place, and it is open during CORS bidding period.

**However, we are not able to see if the registered modules fulfil our degree requirement.**

17. We will look into that.

**The workload of project component is increasing however wattage for them has not changed at all.**

**I feel that the time we spent on doing project is not equivalent to the wattage given to it.**

18. Currently, we are dealing with this issue, and will talk to the individual professors if the need arise. However, we also need to make sure that what we are teaching is sufficient and can give you a better understanding on the modules. Hence, for some cases, it may be hard for us to dilute the syllabus further.

**Wouldn't projects be a better grading tool than exams, since we are spending so much time on it?**

19. Normally, students will be given roughly the same marks for their projects; the bell curve may be flat as a result. Hence, written exams are still often emphasized to allow us to differentiate the better students from the poorer ones. However, we will still take this into consideration, and discuss about this in further details.



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**For students intending to get a minor, can we use points from the programme account to bid for our modules?**

20. We are not aware of such a matter; we will look into it, and approach the CORS team if necessary.

**Since MPE is already in place, we will normally have a lot excess points in our programme account. Is it possible to allocate more points to the general account? Sometimes, bidding for those modules goes up so high that we cannot afford.**

21. The allocation of bidding points is decided by the CORS team.

**Often, there are not enough vacancies for IS modules. As a result, I need to bid very high for it.**

22. MPE is designed and implemented to solve these problems. Hence, please participate in the next MPE. **(See MPE)**

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### **Part 5: LECTURES / WEBCAST / IVLE**

**Why are some webcasts posted so late? Can we have them uploaded sooner, for example, 2 hrs after the lecture?**

23. After the lecture is over, the file will be sent to the lab technicians. They will then need to manually key in some of the details, such as the details of the course. However, the lab technicians may be busy with other activities sometimes, hence delaying the uploading. The delay may also be caused by technical glitches with the file. For instance, the lecturer may forget to on the microphone during the recording of the webcast. We do have a backup copy for the sound, however, and we need to time to retrieve the data and add it to the webcast.

Nevertheless, we will try our best to post it up within a day, but it may be difficult to do that in 2 hours. We are thus unable to give you a firm guarantee due to unforeseen implications.

**Last semester for one of my modules, all resources were gone from the IVLE just right before the final exams. Can it be made sure that this will not happen again?**

24. Last semester's case was a one-time incident. This should not happen again. You can approach the CORS helpdesk or technical helpdesk if this repeats.

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### **Part 6: MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES**

**I heard that the school's effort to address low hand-phone reception is on the way. How is the progress?**

25. Currently, the infrastructure (cable link, antenna, etc.) are all set up. However, we are still waiting for the major Telcos to finalize negotiations.

**If I take up ATAP/SEP, how much extra S/U will be allocated to me?**

26. Please look at the ATAP/SEP websites ( <http://www.nus.edu.sg/registrar/nusbulletin/SoC/UG/specialprogs.html> ) for more information. For SEP, it depends on how many semesters you will be on this exchange. Usually, an extra 20 MCs will be allocated to you.

**For some of us, we are unable to meet the CAP required for a third class honours, and graduate with a pass. If so, can we graduate in 3 years instead of 4?**

27. This is very unlikely at this time, since it is hard to re-introduce this back. It is also a trend now for universities to convert their 3 year programme to a 4 year one. In addition, given that our programme is accredited as of similar level to US universities, we need to follow their trend too.

The current rule of filing for graduation at the 3<sup>rd</sup> year instead of the 4<sup>th</sup> is only applicable for those that are admitted in 2005 or earlier.

*Please do note that there is a difference between admission and matriculation.*

**We should have more practical hands-on programmes made available such as ATAP. Replacing more degree requirement modules with industry attachment modules near our final year would be more fruitful than studying.**

28. We will discuss this with the curriculum committee about it.

**Currently, there is a 5 hrs per week limit imposed on tutors. Given the amount of work we need to do and what is expected from us, it is not fair for us to be only able to claim that meagre number of hours. I suggest to leave it to the professor of the modules to decide on the limit of the numbers of hours as they would have a better idea of the length of time that each of us should work.**

29. We were hoping that you can strike a balance between studying and teaching, which was the reason why we have imposed a cap on the hours. We will take note of this, and discuss if there is better way to resolve this issue.

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### **APPENDIX**

Computing Club would like to thank the following academic advisory panel for their support of the event:

Professor Ooi Beng Chin, Dean, School of Computing  
Assoc. Professor Khoo Siau Cheng, Vice Dean, Undergraduate Studies, and Club Advisor  
Assoc. Professor Lee Wee Sun, Assistant Dean, Special Programmes  
Dr. Bimlesh Wadhwa, Lecturer and Club Advisor  
Dr. Colin Tan Keng Yan, Lecturer and Club Advisor  
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