Curriculum Committee
Minutes

January 18, 2006

Attendees: Tom Doeppner (Vice Chair), Chad Jenkins, Claire Kenyon, Steve Reiss, John Savage (Chair)
Absent: Franco Preparata

1. Approval of Minutes of December 12 Meeting
   The minutes were discussed.

2. Approval of Today’s Agenda
   Today’s agenda was approved.

3. Approval of Course Proposals

   (a) **CS 176 Introduction to Distributed Computing**
   We discussed Maurice Herlihy’s proposal to retitle his course *Introduction to Multiprocessor Synchronization*. Maurice says “As a field, distributed computing encompasses multiprocessor synchronization, and the course has always covered multiprocessor synchronization, but over the years it has displaced other topics to the extent that a more specific description would more helpful to students shopping for courses.”
   We approve his proposal but we suggest, although do not require, that he might want to add the word “theory” to his title so that students have a better understanding of the content of his course.

   Notes added after meeting:
   i. Maurice has said that while his course does satisfy a theory requirement, it isn’t theoretical enough to add theory to its title. The new title and catalog description follow.
ii. **CS 176 Introduction to Multiprocessor Synchronization**

This course examines the theory and practice of multiprocessor synchronization. Subjects covered include multiprocessor architecture, mutual exclusion, wait-free and lock-free synchronization, spin locks, monitors, load balancing, concurrent data structures, and transactional synchronization.

(b) **CS 179 Introduction to Embedded Systems Software**

The committee received a proposal with the above number and title from Steve Reiss and Ugur Cetintemel. Steve argued that the title should be changed to *Introduction to Embedded and Real-Time Software*, a title that he was sure that Ugur would accept. He also argued for an enrollment limitation of 30 so that he could assign projects for which equipment is limited. One of the projects requires the programming of used pinball machines, which are in limited supply.

Because the course would be taught in the spring Tom suggested that we give it an even number. We agreed to assign it the number **CS 160**.

Finally, on the course proposal at Steve’s request we approve changes in the prerequisites in the three places to read **CS32 or CS36 or permission of the instructor**.

(c) **CS254 Advanced Probabilistic Methods in Computer Science**

The committee received a proposal from Eli Upfal. We approve the request subject to correcting spelling errors in a number of places.

(d) **CS257 Nanocomputing**

The committee received a proposal from John Savage for a new course with the above title and number. The proposal was approved subject to the minor changes in the wording of the catalog description and the listing of CS 155 and CS157 as recommended courses.

(e) **CS122 Document Engineering**

The committee received a proposal from David Durand, adjunct faculty member. We discussed the role of adjuncts and decided that we understand it to be to teach courses that the Department wants to have taught. David has taught this course as a special topics course to light enrollments in the past. Last fall because only one student signed up for it, David did not teach it. Based on this evidence we are not persuaded that a demand exists for David to teach this course.

We examined the course proposal and decided that although several of the proposed topics, such as web searching and searching XML databases, are
interesting, David’s proposed coverage would be more superficial than we think appropriate. Also, we believe that these topics may be covered by regular courses. Finally, his bibliography seems a bit dated, suggesting that he is not as current as we would want.

4. Committee Meeting Times

We decided to meet on Tuesdays at 9:15am. This is a time when all who were present are available and it is not a time when Franco is teaching.

5. Semester Planning

We agreed that we should try to make a recommendation for revised AB and ScB concentration requirements by the middle of February.

We will take up the separate question of whether to offer a CS 19, a one-semester introduction to computer science for students who arrive with advanced preparation in computer science or who have completed CS4.