Southern African Computer Lecturers' Association (SACLA)
15-17 July 2019

MINUTES OF THE HOD MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 15 JULY AT 16:50 AT ALPINE HEATH RESORT NORTHERN DRAKENSBERG

SACLA 2019 Chairperson: Mac van der Merwe, UNISA

Minutes taken by: Helene Kruger-Franck, UNISA

PRESENT:

Mac van der Merwe (UNISA)	Andre Calitz (NMU)
Peter Mkhize (UNISA)	Annelise du Preez (NMU)
Rudi Harmse (NMU)	Karen Bradshaw (Rhodes)
Chris Upfold (Rhodes)	Pieter Potgieter (CUT)
Jan Kroeze (UNISA)	Bobby Tait (UNISA)
Alta van der Merwe (UP)	Stefan Gruner (UP)
Hussein Suleman (UCY)	Estelle Taylor (NWU)
Brenda Scholtz (NMU)	

1. **Welcome**

   Mac van der Merwe welcomed everyone to the 2019 SACLA HoD meeting.

2. **Attendance Register**

   The attendance register was circulated and signed.

3. **Approval of the 2018 HoD Minutes**

   The minutes of the previous HoD meeting, held at SACLA 2018 was accepted as correct approved.

4. **Staffing matters – Appointing competent staff**

   - The issue of appointing competent computer lecturers has been raised. Competent and qualified students are recruited by industries and universities are having difficulty competing with industry salaries. It was also mentioned that competent Black South African students, who have the required qualifications, are not employed by their universities and this is a recurring issue. The reasons might be that some universities only employ new staff members on a contract basis which results in the applicants eventually resigning their position for a permanent position

elsewhere. Mac van der Merwe stated that the recruitment processes take too long and by the time the elected person has been notified, they have already been appointed by another company. Some students might also have difficulty to work away from their home province.

- It was suggested to change the way universities advertise and promote academia. Supervisors should also be approached to suggest suitable candidates and urge their students to apply. Students who study at a university would adapt more easily to work at that university since they are already familiar with the processes and curriculum.

- Programmes such as Grow Your Own Timber should be endorsed by all supervisors.

- Mac van der Merwe requested attendees to forward lists of suitable candidates, especially postgraduate students, to the HOD list.

5. **Staffing matters – University HR Department incompetence**

Discussions took place regarding setbacks and issues with HR Departments, specifically the delay of approving contracts which are affecting the recruitment process.

6. **Continuing student protests**

Nothing to report.

7. **Increasing student numbers**

Andre Calitz stated that many unprepared students, who were lacking specifically in mathematics, were accepted just to reach the required number of registered students, and this is becoming an increasing problem. They are now required to offer additional mathematic courses to unprepared students.

8. **CS/IS/IT Programme changes**

- SAICSIT has nominated Carina de Villiers and Brenda Scholtz to attend the IS 2020 Curriculum in Mexico to represent South Africa on the panel on 13 August.

- Brenda Scholtz asked the committee to send contributions, articles or anything to do with IS skills to them before August.

9. **Future of CS/IS/IT Departments in faculties**

Andre Calitz mentioned that many universities, especially UNISA, were going through restructuring processes within the departments.

10. **University conference funding**

Mac van der Merwe stated that some universities, especially UNISA, are striving towards publishing strictly in journals and not only in conference proceedings. This new requirement from universities

has affected the application process for funding and might have a greater impact and fluctuations in attendance at future (including SACLA) conferences.

11. General

- Hussein Suleman asked if the departments are doing anything related to President Cyril Ramaphosa's proclamations about coding in schools. He suggested discussing the possibility of offering two required courses such as data sciences and introduction to programming if this revolution is to be taken seriously.
- The consensus was that other current issues at universities should be resolved before considering this initiative.

12. Closure

Mac van der Merwe thanked the committee for attending and closed the meeting at 17:50.