News from Head of School

Duties Allocations for 2010/11

The first draft of duties allocations for 10/11 is now available via:
http://intranet.cs.man.ac.uk/ACSO/staffLoads/overview.php?year=2010

This is a draft in that: (i) not all staff affected by changes have been consulted; and (ii) some known issues have yet to be resolved. Please feel invited to pass on any comments to Ruth Maddocks (ruth.maddocks@cs.man.ac.uk) by 2nd April, who will then ensure that these are considered before the process is completed. If you are unhappy with some aspect of your allocation, please discuss this with your manager, who may also be minded to send a message to Ruth about your position. If you have been in discussions about your duties and are surprised by the current state of play, please email a query to Ruth, as your allocation could be one of the unresolved issues. If you want to discuss the details of a role, please consult the relevant Head of Function.

Nominations for BCS Distinguished Dissertation (Urgent) 9 April 10

This is an urgent request for nominations for the BCS Distinguished Dissertation Prize. The Deadline for Application to the BCS is April 9.

Information here

If you have a student who completed in 2009 or 2010 for whom a strong case can be made for a Distinguished Dissertation, please send their names to Jon Shapiro as soon as possible, and by the 26 of March at the latest. If there are a number of candidates, we will determine which have the strongest cases. What is required is the following:

The dissertation should be accompanied by a written justification (the 'Nomination Text') of perhaps 300 words by one of the examiners - preferably the external - explaining the dissertation's claim to distinction.

The nomination should also include the names and contact details of three suggested reviewers who are not in the same Department as the nominated thesis, who are independent of the supervision and examining of the thesis, and who have indicated that they are willing to provide a review.

The School normally gives a prize to the best thesis, and that thesis may or may not be submitted for the BCS prize. Due to the short time constraint, I propose that we do this in the reverse order. Information about our Best Thesis process is here.

Jon Shapiro

Telephone Usage

Our budget for the forthcoming financial year includes steep cuts in non pay expenditure. This means that there are likely to be a range of steps taken that seek to reduce non pay expenditure, where making savings typically involves lots of small scale changes to behaviour. In this context, a review of our telephone charges reveals that some office phones make numerous calls to mobiles, which one might anticipate are not all for work purposes. For example, one office made 121 calls to mobiles at a cost of £59.11 in January, which is in the region of 6 calls per working day, giving rise to an annual bill of over £700. This note is to remind phone users that office phones are for work use, and to
Turing Lecture

The school hosted the sixth annual Manchester Turing lecture this week, in partnership with the BCS and IET. The lecture proved one of the most popular to date, with an audience of over 350 people attending to hear Chris Bishop (Chief Research Scientist, Microsoft Research Lab Cambridge) lecture on machine intelligence. A video recording of the lecture is available at http://www.cs.manchester.ac.uk/aboutus/events/Turing/10-Christopher-Bishop/

Many thanks to all those involved in the organisation of this event.

Events

My Projects Training w/c 22nd Mar 10
The university is in the process of rolling out My Projects, as a means by which investigators can accessing financial information on research grants. All staff with research grants are encouraged to attend one of the training sessions, which are taking place 1:00-2:00 on:

- Monday 22nd March - Sackville Street Building Room C014
- Tuesday 23rd March - Kilburn Building Room 1.5
- Wednesday 24th March - Schuster Building Room Bragg Theatre
- Thursday 25th March - MIB Lecture Theatre (Please note that this will be 1.30-2.30)
- Friday 26th March - University Place - Theatre A

It is envisaged that sessions will take no longer than 45 minutes.

Presentation by the European Patent Office 22 Mar 10
10:00, Room C18, Ferranti building
Mr. Yannis Skulikaris and Ms Dafni Koutsorodis from the European Patent Office will give a presentation on the role of the EPO. The presentation will be illustrated with case studies on the granting and refusal of patents for inventions in engineering and physical sciences. This presentation is specifically tailored for academics.

Riemann Manifold Langevin and Hamiltonian Monte Carlo 22 Mar 10
Mark Girolami, Inference Group, University of Glasgow
14:00, 2.19, Kilburn Building
Machine Learning seminar home page

Analysis and Design of Nonlinear Sampled-Data Control Systems with Applications to Electromechanical Systems 24 Mar 10
Dr Dina Shona Laila. Kingston University London
14:15, Lecture Theatre 1.4, Kilburn Building
Seminar home page

Mixed Speculative Multithreaded Execution Models 24 Mar 10
Dr Marcelo Cintra. Edinburgh University.
11:00, LF17, Kilburn Building

Computational Science Open Meeting 25 Mar 10
10:00-14:00, Atlas rooms, Kilburn Building
Please register your place. Lunch will be provided after the meeting, please indicate on the form if you require lunch. Email Manchester Informatics Admin with any queries.

Energy Institute Event 25 Mar 10
LED Lighting Developments
Colin Pearce, Lighting Engineer, Philips Solid State Lighting
18:30, Room 1.218, University Place
Colin, a qualified lighting engineer with over 20 years experience in the lighting industry, will provide an overview of the latest lighting developments using LED (light emitting diode) technology. Both energy and cost savings are achievable in all types of businesses including offices, industrial, retail and public sector. This presentation will highlight examples of both interior and exterior uses including what options are available and the potential energy savings achieved with new equipment. Operational samples of some of the LED products will also be on display to enable comparison between LED and tungsten lamps.

Clickers session 26 Mar
14:00, CEEBL, C24 Sackville Street Building
Clickers are hand held devices that allow students to respond to questions that the lecturer sets (they look a bit like a TV remote). This allows both students and the lecturer to get instant and effective feedback, particularly if they are used with such techniques as Peer discussion. It is hoped that this will provide both a practical introduction to using clickers, some theoretical basis and promote further discussion. There is no charge for this event and tea and coffee will be available. Please email Richard Jardine with the subject header “Clickers session” for registration or further information.

eLearning Workshops - Turnitin/eAssessment & Feedback/ Improving Your Bb space Various
People who should read this: Anyone interested in developing their eLearning skills.
EPS Staff are offered the opportunity to develop their eLearning skills in a series of workshops over the Easter period. There are four different workshops in total; Turnitin and Grademark for Academics, Turnitin for Administrators, Formative eAssessment & Feedback and Improve Your Blackboard Space. Please note...although these workshops are delivered by the EPS eLearning team to book on you MUST email its.training@manchester.ac.uk.
Further information in pdf

Funding Opportunities
TESS: Opportunity for funding and support for eLearning development
If you are a member of academic staff and you are considering expanding or improving how you use online learning tools to enhance aspects of your teaching provision, for example in engaging students, assessment or feedback, a new initiative from the Teaching Enhancement and Student Success Fund is providing support to help you.

The initiative can help you to develop and enhance your online teaching methods and resources. It will:

- Provide you with £1500 which you can allocated for resources (e.g. a laptop/desktop, peripherals or software, or other resources to enhance your online teaching)

- Involve you attending a short series of dedicated workshops (minimum of 3) where you will learn, with your peers, how to plan and design online learning into your curriculum, and how to use online learning tools which will help you to implement your project. These workshops will be run by staff from the eLearning teams. The workshops will begin in April 2010, with further sessions available in the summer.

- You will also receive the support of a Learning Technologist from the
Faculty eLearning team to facilitate bringing your project to fruition.

If you would like to discuss what sort of enhancement project you might undertake, and to receive advice and help with your application, please contact Alison Hamilton (ext. 51608), or Phil Boulton (ext. 50331) in the EPS eLearning team.

Please send the completed application form to Tony Brown, Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning by Friday 26 March.

Guidance notes