Ph.D. Program in Computer Science  
CUNY Graduate Center  

Executive Committee Meeting  
October 19, 2001  
10 am-11:30 am  

Present: Profs. Sergei Artemov Ted Brown (chair), Mel Fitting, Jacob Shapiro, Miriam Tausner, Ms. Audrey Mbogho, Mr. Myles Nash, Mr. Stephan Altmueller  

Professor Brown presented demographic information about the class of students that started the program in Fall 2001. A little more than twenty students that were admitted registered for courses. A table with their previous degrees and their detailed GRE scores was presented and discussed. Most entering students hold a Masters degree.  

Professor Artemov was formally introduced. The rules and regulations for the Executive Committee were discussed. Not all colleges were represented in the meeting. It was suggested that if a representative cannot attend he or she should send a replacement. All representatives can only serve a limited number of years on the committee (2 consecutive three-year terms).  

Professor Brown presented the scores of the qualifying exam in Spring 2001. Four students failed, one student for the second time. The distribution of the scores over the different subjects was presented.  

It was mentioned that a new course (Programming Languages) is going to replace the course on Database in the future in the core requirement.  

Professor Brown presented a model that estimates the number of students that are needed in the future. Starting by the number of courses that was taught by faculty per year, the unanimous opinion was that the program should accept a maximum of 20 students a year. The funding for students is currently limited and it is unlikely that the Graduate Center will provide more funds in the future. Grant money has to be obtained by the program itself.  

Professor Brown raised the question whether the graduate center should allow admission twice a year in order to grow the program. The demand in the spring is usually much smaller than for the fall. In the past it was easier for students from CUNY campuses to informally enter the program by taking two courses as non-matriculated students. Professor Brown suggests that for now this as a case-by-case basis, since the number is small.
The question was raised whether the dissertation committees should contain an outside reviewer or not. In the past it was very difficult to find reviewers that would commit the necessary time. Especially since there are no funds available to pay for reviewers expenses. Professor Brown proposed the following procedure for picking a dissertation committee will strengthen the committee: After a student picks an advisor and a topic, the Executive Officer will intercede in committees’ composition, working in collaboration with the advisor.

Based on an initiative by Professor Artemov, there will be a colloquium throughout the spring semester. Speakers from academia and industry will be invited to give talks about their research.

One of the major topics of the next executive committee meeting will be to review the positive recommendations of the faculty admissions committee for faculty to be added to the Ph.D. program.