PhD Program in Computer Science Executive Committee

October 14, 2005

Present: Ted Brown (EO), Kent Boklan (Deputy EO), Sergei Artemov (Graduate Center), Gwang Jung (Lehman College), Yung Kong (Queens College), Ioannis Stamos (Hunter College), Abdullah Uz Tansel (Baruch College).

Visitors: Youssef Elhari (Ph.D. student), Juan Rodriguez (Elhari’s godfather).

1. Introductions (Ted Brown).

2. Approval of minutes of May 13, 2005.

3. Announcements from the chair Ted Brown.
   a. Institutional.
      i. There is a new President, William Kelly, and a new acting Provost, Linda Edwards.
      ii. There will be possible changes in the way science is done in CUNY.

   b. Departmental.
      i. Kent Boklan was been appointed a Deputy E.O.
      ii. Results from the teaching surveys were mostly very positive. They were given to the faculty after the Executive Committee looks at them.
      iii. There were two failures (after appeals) on the first level examination.
      iv. Statistics for incoming group. There was a slight decline in the number of applicants: 93 down from 106 in 2004. The Program issues fewer admission offers: 52 down from 72 in 2004 and got about the same number of students in the freshman class: 26 vs. 25 in 2004.
      v. The Program started a more formal procedure for students who enter without a masters degree. These students are offered an additional year and a list of classes in masters program to take before taking the regular first year required courses in the Ph.D. Program.
      vi. The Program EO came up with the initiative to have foundational classes for second year students offered by major clusters within the program. This initiative has got a positive respond from the executive committee.

a. $1500 research grants for students. A grant Committee was created consisting of Ted Brown (EO), Kent Boklan (Deputy EO, Queens College), Mel Fitting (Lehman College).

b. NRC survey of doctoral programs starts in 2006, cf. Linda Edwards' memo. In order to raise the visibility of the program it was decided to invite top speakers of the level of Turing Award winners to give the Computer Science Colloquium in the Spring of 2006 (Professor Stephen Cook of the University of Toronto and Professor Michael Rabin of Harvard and Hebrew University of Jerusalem). Sergei Artemov informed the Committee about a coming conference on Logical Foundations of Computer Science in 2007, which will be widely announced in the Spring of 2006.

c. Self study and visit
   i. choosing of program visitors for spring. From a larger list, a list of five suggested visitors was approved: Juris Hartmanis (Cornell), Andrew Yao (Princeton), Luc Devroye (McGill), Pankaj Agarwal (Duke), Richard Ladner (University of Washington).
   ii. the visits will be a Thursday or Friday during the Spring semester.

d. Subash Sankar (Hunter College) was approved unanimously as a permanent member of the Program.

e. Mr. Youssef Elhari appeal was studied and discussed in depth in a supporting atmosphere. Mr. Elhari and his godfather gave detailed answers to numerous questions and received a number of friendly advices from the EC members.

5. Executive session

   a. Continuation of discussion of the appeals.
      i. The Executive Committee reached consensus in supporting the EO decision to discontinue Mr. Elhari affiliation with the Ph.D. Program in Computer Science. The Executive Committee recommended the EO to mention in a letter to Mr. Elhari that there was a possibility for him to be readmitted to the program provided he showed a satisfactory progress in his research in the area of Computer Science.
      ii. The appeal of Ms. Ratma Priya Moganti to be allowed to sit for only either the Analysis of Algorithms section or the Parallel and Distributed Computation section, rather then sitting for the whole exam when it is offered again next June was rejected unanimously.