

Turku Centre for Computer Science - TUCS

Board meeting

Monday, May 12, 2003, at 13.00

DataCity A, 5th floor, Meeting room Monologi

Items of the agenda

1. Validity of the meeting and presence of a quorum
2. Additional items
3. Study Reports (Le Grand)
4. Degree requirement for the Graduate School (Le Grand)
5. The handling of postdoctoral applications (Järvi)
6. TUCS Advisory Committee (Järvi)
7. Discussion item: TUCS strategy (Järvi)
8. Announcements
 - 8.1 Announcements by the Director
 - 8.2 Minutes of the TUCS board meeting of April 10, 2003

Board meeting

Monday, May 12, 2003, at 13.00
DataCity A, 5th floor, Meeting room Monologi

Minutes

Present:

Members of the board:

Ralph-Johan Back, Prof., Chair
Christer Carlsson, Prof.
Jouni Isoaho, Prof. (arrived at 13.08, during item 2)
Juhani Karhumäki, Prof.
Tapio Salakoski, Prof.
Kaisa Sere, Prof., Vice-Director
Reima Suomi, Prof., Vice-Chair (arrived at 13.15, during item 3)
Jaakko Kuosmanen, CEO
Henry Lönnbäck, M.Sc. Student
Niko Railo, M.Sc. Student

Presenting Officers:

Timo Järvi, Prof., Director, Presenting Officer
Mats Aspнас, Coordinator, Presenting Officer
Christel Donner, Administrative Officer, Presenting Officer
Ulrika Gustafsson, Administrative Officer
Pia Le Grand, Administrative Officer, Presenting Officer, secretary of the meeting

1. Validity of the meeting and presence of a quorum

The notice of a board meeting has to be sent three weekdays before the meeting takes place. The meeting must be valid and the members present have to constitute a quorum. The meeting constitutes a quorum when the chairman and at least five members of the board are present.

The notice of this board meeting was sent on Wednesday, May 7, 2003.

Proposal: The validity of the meeting and presence of a quorum will be recorded.

Decision: According to the proposal.

2. Additional items

The agenda of possible additional items will be handed out in the beginning of the meeting.

Proposal: Possible additional items will be presented.

Decision: No additional items were presented.

3. Study Reports (Le Grand)

The TUCS Graduate School Committee proposes continuation of TUCS status and financing for the TUCS Ph.D. students according to appendix 1/04/03. The appendix 2/04/03 shows the financing situation of the TUCS students according to the laboratories.

The students will be informed about the continuation or termination of their financing/student status by e-mail. The decisions will take effect on September 1, 2003.

Appendix: 1-2/04/03 (electronic)

Proposal: The TUCS board approves the proposal of the TUCS Graduate School committee for continuation of TUCS status and financing for the TUCS Ph.D. students according to the appendix 1/04/03.

Decision: The TUCS board approved the proposal of the TUCS Graduate School committee with some additional clarifications, which are included in appendix 1b/04/03.

4. Degree requirement for the Graduate School (Le Grand)

The degree requirement item was left on the table on the board meeting on March 3, 2003 (see http://www.tucs.fi/about/organization/board/minutes/2003/board_20030303.pdf).

On their meeting on April 28, 2003 the Graduate School Committee discussed the degree requirement for the TUCS Graduate School. The Committee proposes that exceptionally talented Bachelor's should still have the possibility to be accepted to the Graduate School.

There is one main problem when admitting students with a B.Sc. to the Graduate School. Studying within the TUCS GS basically requires that the student must be accepted for doctoral studies by the Faculty. The problem is that the faculties do not all accept students with a B.Sc. degree for doctoral studies, even if it is possible according to degree regulations. In most cases the student with a B.Sc. must first earn the Master's degree

(i.e. write a Master's thesis and pass a certain amount of credits) before applying to the Faculty to be accepted for doctoral studies.

The study time at the Graduate School is expected to be four years regardless of the degree the student has when he/she starts at the TUCS GS. For a student with a B.Sc. it might take some time to get the Master's degree - and to be accepted by the Faculty for doctoral studies. When accepting a student with a Bachelor's degree to the GS the TUCS board should be convinced that the student is talented enough to be able to get his/her Ph.D. degree in four years.

Another problem is giving exact information to the applicants about the criteria for selection. Prior to starting the application procedure the applicant usually wants to know if he/she is eligible, since getting the requested documents for the application - getting the degree certificates and transcripts translated by official translators, having the copies officially certified, passing an English language proficiency test, etc. - can be laborious and expensive. It would be fair towards the applicants in general and also regarding the students with a B.Sc. to be able to give exact information about the criteria for selection. Since the GS committee does not pre-evaluate the candidates we cannot give more exact information than the following: "In exceptional cases, if the applicant shows proof of particular talent, he/she can be admitted with a Bachelor's degree. In practice this means that all the grades have to be maximal or almost maximal".

Proposal: The TUCS Graduate School mainly accepts students with a university Master's degree equivalent to a Finnish university Master's degree. In exceptional cases, if the applicant shows proof of particular talent, he/she can be admitted with a Bachelor's degree. In practice this means that all the grades have to be maximal or almost maximal.

The study time is expected to be four years regardless of the degree the student has when he/she starts at the TUCS Graduate School. The maximum time for TUCS funding is five years.

Decision: The TUCS Graduate School accepts students with a university Master's degree equivalent to a Finnish university Master's degree with a major relevant for the TUCS Graduate School. In exceptional cases, if the applicant shows proof of particular talent, he/she can be admitted with a Bachelor's degree. In practice this means that all the grades have to be maximal or almost maximal.

The study time is expected to be four years regardless of the degree the student has when he/she starts at the TUCS Graduate School. The maximum time for TUCS funding is five years.

5. The handling of postdoctoral applications (Järvi)

Post doc positions have been open for continuous search. This means that that there have been in average 2-3 applications per board meeting. When hiring new post docs very little material for comparison has been used. So the competence level required has varied

from time to time. On the other hand we have been able to react quickly to new applications.

As the economical situation at the moment is unclear and to make the hiring situation more comparable I suggest that TUCS would open foreign post doc positions only 4 times in a year. This would also help to make a more accurate estimation of the economical situation. Suitable times could be the end of February, May, August, and November.

Laboratories are encouraged to open researcher positions with project funding to young post docs.

The postdoctoral researcher position financed by the Academy of Finland will be declared open separately when needed.

Each application that will be handled by the TUCS board is sent to two laboratory heads, whose research interests match the best with the applicant's. These two laboratory heads, who are decided by the TUCS Director, are asked to give a statement about the applicant. They should have 6 weekdays to give the statement. The statement should be given 6 weekdays before the board meeting.

In addition to asking the statements from two laboratory heads per applicant, all applications that have arrived before deadline are sent as a notice to all the other laboratory heads at the TUCS. These do not have to give statements about the applicants.

Proposal: TUCS will declare open post doc grants only at the end of February, May, August, and November. The deadlines for applications will be set according to the dates for the board meetings. The deadline will be 13 weekdays before the meeting.

Each application is sent to two laboratory heads, whose research interests match the best with the applicant's. These laboratory heads, who are decided by TUCS Director, should give a statement about the applicants. In addition, all applications that have arrived before deadline are sent as a notice to all the other laboratory heads at the TUCS. These do not have to give statements about the applicants.

Decision: According to the proposal.

6. TUCS Advisory Committee (Järvi)

The TUCS Advisory Committee was briefly discussed on the board meeting on April 10, 2003 (http://www.tucs.fi/about/organization/board/minutes/2003/board_20030410.pdf).

The mission of the Advisory Committee is stated in the TUCS statutes, but no exact rules or directions regarding the composition of the committee have been made.

The current composition of the Advisory Committee is presented in appendix 3/04/03. There have been some changes in the original list of members, but not all of the changes were well documented. Also, the committee was originally nominated for an indefinite time.

To make the membership more regular, it is proposed that a new board nominates the Advisory Committee for a 3-year period. New members and changes may be proposed at TUCS board meetings during that period. The membership is personal, although a deputy may take part in a meeting when appropriate. Below Jaakko Kuosmanen from ICT-Turku is proposed as a new member. No other names have come out in the discussions before the meeting. The TUCS will be represented by the Director, the Vice Director, the Coordinator, the Chairmen of the Board, and by the Administrative Workgroup.

Appendix: 3/04/03 (electronic)

Proposal: The memberships in the appendix 3/04/03 will be confirmed for the period 1.6.2003 – 31.5.2006. Jaakko Kuosmanen will be nominated as a new member for the same period.

Decision: According to the proposal.

7. Discussion item: TUCS strategy (Järvi)

The need for a strategy has been stressed several times for example in the TUCS board, by the Advisory Committee, and by the TUCS staff. Now, as the financial structure will change at the turn of the year, we need to develop a new strategy for TUCS. A base for discussion can be found in appendix 4/04/03.

The way to develop the strategy should be discussed. One possibility is to divide the strategy into different areas (e.g. education and research) and create suitable workgroups, which could develop strategies for their particular area. Leaders, whose task would be to form the groups and to lead the discussions, could be appointed.

The strategy is needed in August at the latest. By now we do not know the precise contents of the agreements between the universities and the Ministry of Education for year 2004 and the period 2004-6. As soon as we get this information we can expand the strategy based on this new situation. The strategy will be brought to some subsequent board meeting.

Appendix: 4/04/03 (electronic)

8. Announcements

8.1 Announcements by the Director

Appendix: 5/04/03 (electronic)

8.2 Minutes of the TUCS board meeting of April 10, 2003

The minutes of the board meeting of April 10, 2003 can be found on http://www.tucs.fi/about/organization/board/minutes/2003/board_20030410.pdf

Turku, May 20, 2003

Ralph-Johan Back
Chairman of the board

Timo Järvi
Director

Pia Le Grand
Administrative Officer