Memorandum

TO: Computer Science majors and advisers

DATE: September 15, 2015

FROM: Kevin Wortman
Chair, Undergraduate Committee

SUBJECT: CPSC 313 and 315

Executive Summary

1. Effective Fall 2015, CPSC 315 is a 3-unit course whose material is entirely different from that of CPSC 313.
2. Starting Spring 2016, Computer Science (CS) majors are advised not to take 313, and those who do may never use it in lieu of 315.
3. As a conciliatory gesture, CS majors who took 313 in Fall 2015 or earlier may petition to use 313 in lieu of 315.
4. CS majors who have taken 313:
   a. If you are taking 313 now (Fall 2015), the Department will automatically count it in lieu of 315.
   b. Else,
      i. If you have already successfully petitioned to count 313, that petition stands and you do not need to do anything.
      ii. Else, you must file a new petition to count 313 by the last day of classes (December 11).

Background

As you may be aware, CPSC 315 is an ethics course required for the CS major. Effective Fall 2015, the curriculum of 315 was expanded and its unit value increased from 1 to 3. Conversely, 313 is a GE course covering the social impact of computing, intended for non-majors.

In past years, while 315 was a 1-unit course, its material overlapped somewhat with that of 313, and a few students petitioned to use 313 in lieu of 315. While these petitions were generally granted, we emphasize that 313 has never been a major requirement, and has never been described as equivalent to 315 in the Catalog, Undergraduate Handbook, or any other official publication. Starting in Spring
2015, if not earlier, Department advisers explicitly discouraged students from petitioning to use 313 in lieu of 315.

Despite this, a rumor persists that 313 and 315 are equivalent, and a few CS majors recently took 313 under the impression that they may use it in lieu of 315. This impression is mistaken, but as a gesture of goodwill, and to facilitate students’ timely graduation, the Department is offering “amnesty” to these students.

As stated in the Executive Summary above, the Department will automatically act to count 313 in lieu of 315 for those CS majors currently enrolled in 313 (approximately 11 in number). In all likelihood, majors who took 313 before Fall 2015 already successfully petitioned to count 313. But if a major took 313 prior to Fall 2015, would like to use 313 in lieu of 315, and their TDA does not show 315 as completed, they must file a petition with the Department to count 313 in lieu of 315. These petitions must be filed by the last day of classes (December 11, 2015).