

COINS Steering Committee

Meeting 2017-06-08

Minutes: Urszula Nowostawska

Time: 0905 - 1017

Place: Voksenåsen, Oslo

Participants:

- Steering Committee (SC) members: Hanno Langweg (Scientific Director COINS), Ragnar Soleng (University of Tromsø), Audun Jøsang (University of Oslo) from 09:27, Xiaojie Zhu (Student), Sergii Banin (Student), Urszula Nowostawska (Activity Management Office).

Apologies:

- Stephen Wolthusen (NTNU, Gjøvik), Stig Frode Mjølunes (NTNU, Trondheim), Chunming Rong (University of Stavanger).



Agenda

1. Results of election of student representatives
2. Agenda
3. Meeting minutes of SC Skype meeting 2016-11-28
4. Results of the mid-term evaluation
5. Status, goals and milestones
 - a. Tasks from previous meetings
 - b. Admission of students
 - c. coinsrs.no: Upcoming events on front page
6. Students+events
 - a. Looking back: Finse 2017
 - b. ECTS and participation in courses
 - c. Metochi 2017
 - d. ESORICS doctoral consortium 2017
 - e. NISK 2017
 - f. NISK 2018 (Svalbard) + Ph.D. student seminar
7. Budget
 - a. Budget 2017/2018 Internship opportunities
 - b. Reports of in-kind contributions
8. Miscellaneous

Welcome

Welcome and congratulations to Xiaojie Zhu from University of Oslo and Sergii Banin from the NTNU in Gjøvik as the new student representatives.

Agenda

No modification or any changes to the agenda. Agenda was approved.

Meeting minutes 2016-11-28

Previous meeting minutes accepted without objections.

Results of the mid-term evaluation

COINS has received funding from the Norwegian Research Council for the period 2013 -2020. After 4 years, all the research schools are evaluated. COINS students got the questionnaire that they needed to respond. Steering committee members also were contacted to give their feedback on the institution. There were also interviews in January 2017 set up by the panel, with the student representatives, scientific director and the activity management office. Early in May we have received a report from the panel with the recommendation to continue receiving funding for the period 2017-2020. To increase the chance of winning the funding for the research school at the time of application, COINS did not apply for the maximum amount. After 2020 we can apply again for a funding but not in this programme. The other research schools try to merge or broaden the topics and submit the new application but it cannot be a continuation of the existing activities. The idea of the Research Council is that this is just a seed funding. The established activities, after the funding runs out, should be maintained without funding from the Research School programme. We wrote in the mid-evaluation report that we would like to scale down the activities and reduce the costs and we would like to find the alternative sources for the funding, but would like to be independent of them. It could be one big seminar once a year, thus we will have a higher participation and it could be organised by universities at different location. The rooms are almost free and everybody pays beyond the travel costs. For us it is easy to reduce money for mobility when students travel to conferences when they do not have a paper. We should also choose if we want to have winter or summer school, which costs approximately the same. The travel costs for Finse are lower than for Metochi, but the accommodation in Greece is less expensive than in Finse. More people attended Finse, probably due to its longer history.

The mid-evaluation report for COINS is overall very good, with more pluses than minuses. There was a mistake in the report about the gender of the steering committee, which was confused with the advisory board.

Recognition of participation at COINS events for credits is one of the challenges. It is mostly a problem at the University of Oslo, where students cannot participate for credits. The courses taken at other universities are not recognised because they are not on the list of courses

from UiO. To get the courses from other universities the own version of the course needs to be created; there is no possibility of picking courses from other universities. This is a problem for all the research schools in Norway, not just COINS. Thus, this should be addressed on higher level. Perhaps letter from COINS, stating that COINS is funded by Research Council for PhD education would help to solve the problem with administration. If the course is needed they must accept it, otherwise they are opposing the policy of the research council and sabotage the intent of Research Council. At the University of Oslo, Audun would be the person responsible for the respective course description at UiO course code. With the good argumentation in the letter, he should be able to succeed with the recognition of courses. The deadline for writing the course description should be in September. Perhaps it would be possible to get the credits for this year's summer school also. Students from UiO are able to log in to NTNU with the UiO credentials.

Xiaojie will try to get a formal recognition of the course he took at COINS summer school last year and report to us how it worked or should have worked. Parallel, we will try to get UiO course codes for the existing course descriptions, so it will be easier for students in the future.

We also get administration obstacles in Gjøvik as we merged with Trondheim. Administration in Trondheim wants to treat all courses the same regardless if they are Bachelor, Master or PhD. They ask for an extended course description for the summer school, but we have only one generic description of the summer school. They want the topic of the summer school, literature list and they want the student registration by 15th of August while we have the summer school in August. The same with the winter school where students need to register by 15th of February and then can only withdraw until middle of April, like for the other courses. If they will not do it, they will fail the course. We have to solve this problem administratively. Additional problem with students is that the student cannot choose the COINS courses from the beginning since the administration does not like the course descriptions, because it does not tell you exactly what the course is about, does not have a topic of the school. However, we do not know few months in advance who is going to be a lecturer in Finse, we cannot say in 1.5 year in advance what topics we are going to have. We may need to register the student for ECTS points in the next semester and pass immediately, but it would only work if the student is not in hurry to graduate soon. However, this option is not good either, since you should take an exam after you have registered for it, so administration may not accept it. This way is used in Trømso.

Beyond 2020 we have to think which COINS courses we are going to continue and in what form, something we want to have or it would be useful for PhD students. It should be included for all PhD students in information security as mandatory or recommended courses.

Sergii suggested that it could help if the COINS courses would have a title: COINS summer school in information security or digital forensic. It would be easier for the student to convince the administration to register to this course at the very beginning since this sounds

like it is relevant to their study. Apparently, students have problems to register for the COINS courses at the beginning of their PhD, but later they can replace this course with other.

It would be good to discuss which COINS courses we would like to continue after 2020. We could do it as a part of a workshop in Svalbard. There will be NISK conference and it will probably have a high participation of supervisors. All of the courses have various subjects and they are changing every year. We do not have regular courses with specific topics. We have IMT6007, COINS IT Security Exercise, which has not been offered yet.

Xiaojie asked if the internship based on COINS network could be offered as a course with credits. One would have to think about the learning objectives of the internship. However, this sounds rather like an individual thing, maybe not the COINS event.

Status, goals, and milestones

Tasks from previous meetings

No tasks left from previous meetings.

Students+events

In parallel with the steering committee session, COINS students are discussing the upcoming events for 2017 and 2018 to find out if anything needs to be incorporated or changes are needed.

Metochi summer school 27/8 – 3/9 2017

- The school will have a topic: Secure Implementation of Cryptographic Software, where we can combine people interested in cryptography and those who are implementing cryptographic algorithms. We have six speakers on the list. If one of them drops out, we will still have very interesting programme.

Mathematical Methods for Cryptography 4/9 – 8/9 2017

- Tor Helleseth birthday workshop.

ESORICS 11/9-13/9 2017

- Collocated with the ESORICS we will have COINS Doctoral Consortium. Vasileios Gkioulos, COINS PhD student, wanted to organise it, which is a great idea and we want to encourage all our students and post-docs and colleagues to submit papers. There will be proceedings which will give the publication points. The best papers are those selected for publications and they will be in the post-proceedings. Not every submission will be accepted, there is a selection of papers.

Xiaojie suggested that we should also have award for the best review paper. We need to find out if EasyChair allows a feedback as an author to the review. There is no option in EasyChair to reply to reviewer. We can have a best review award; something to put in the CV. Xiaojie will investigate the possibilities.

NISK 27/11 -30/11 2017

- The website is up and running, but the invitations were not sent yet. Everybody welcome to the organizing committee. Last year it was organized by Alexander Kolosha.
- It will have parallel session with NIK. It will probably take place in Grand Hotel or Westerdals.

Miscellaneous

Next steering committee meeting could take place at the ESORICS conference, around 15th of September in Oslo.

We can also consider December or January 2018. Last year it was very difficult to have a steering committee meeting with NISK in November. Maybe meeting directly after NISK would work, Wednesday, 29th of November.

We never had a steering committee meeting in Gjøvik. Maybe we should have during the Skibladner season (from 17th of May to mid-August). We could start our meeting in Gjøvik go to Hamar and come back. There is a restaurant on the boat and afterwards we could go to a meeting room at NTNU. That could be a suggestion for 2018 meeting.

We need to have also Advisory Board meeting, the last one we had was at the end of 2015. They should have a chance to discuss mid-evaluation report.

Action Item for Xiaojie - new proposal for partnership, to have more connections with different partners. It will be discussed on the next steering committee meeting.