UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO SCHOOL OF COMPUTING

January 2017
Volume No2
Issue No1

UCSC NEWSLETTER

1967 - 2017
50 years of computing in University of Colombo

50 Years of Computing at University of Colombo



















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1st Edition
January 2017
Volume No2
Issue No1

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Upcoming Events

Postgraduates Inauguration

On 04th March 2017, at 9.00 am, the 2016/17 batch for the Masters Degree programme of the University of Colombo School of Computing will be officially inaugurated in a ceremony at the New Arts Theatre of UCSC. Prof Lakshman Dissanayake; the Vice Chancellor of the University of Colombo and Prof. K P Hewagamage; the director of University of Colombo School of Computing will be heading the ceremony.

Opening of New Auditorium

The new building complex of the University of Colombo School of Computing is scheduled to be completed in the first quarter of the year 2017. The building complex will be built up with lecture halls, a reading room and a parking lot in ground floor reaching in to five stories. The lecture halls will be located on 1st and 2nd floors and the staff rooms will be on 3rd floor. The auditorium will be built on 5 th floor. The seating capacity of auditorium will be 400 with a balcony. UCSC has also planned to reposition its computing museum on the 1 st floor.

The estimated cost of the project is 250 million LKR. From the entire cost, 150 million LKR will be funded by Sri Lankan Government and the remaining will be covered by the generated income of UCSC.

Service Building

The construction of the service building of the University of Colombo School of computing, has been already started. It has been decided to shift the administrative branch of UCSC to the 3 rd floor of the new block. Simultaneously, the finance branch will be shifted in to the 4 th floor of the new block. The library of the UCSC will be expanded in the same floor of the new block.

Undergraduate registration



Enrollment of Undergraduate Student of Computer Science & Information Systems for the Academic year 2015/2016 was held on 16th December 2016.

Undergraduate Inauguration



On 11th January 2017, at 9.30 am, the 2015/16 batch of the undergraduates of the University of Colombo School of Computing was officially inaugurated in a ceremony at the New Arts Theatre of UCSC. Prof Lakshman Dissanayake; the Vice Chancellor of the University of Colombo, Prof. K P Hewagamage; the director of University of Colombo School of Computing and Prof K R R Mahanama; the dean of the faculty Science presided the ceremony.

BIT Registration-2017

The University Grants Commission at its 952 nd meeting held on 3rd November 2016 has granted the approval to conduct the Bachelor of Information Technology (BIT) degree programme without restricting the number of students permitted to be registered as stated in commission Circular No. 13/ 2016. Accordingly UCSC announced the registration for BIT degree programme for the 2017 academic year from 9 th December 2016. The closing date of the registration is 15 th January 2017.

The 16th International Conference on Advances in ICT for emerging regions

16th International conference on Advances in ICT for emerging regions held from 1st to 3rd September brought together local and international researchers and practitioners in computing. The main conference was held at the Hotel Jetwing Blue, Negombo on 1st and 2nd of September with the special participation of Prof. P. S. M. Gunarathna, the vice chairman of the University Grant commission as the chief guest and Prof. Mohan Munasinghe as the guest of honor. Since 1998, ICTer has been playing a leading role in creating a unique platform to those who are interested and skilled in the domain of computing to present their achievements and ideas. Creating an international forum to the local participants is another significant aspect of this conference.

International Information Technology Conference (IITC) which was created in 1998 as a concept of Late Prof. V K Samaranayake, the founding Director of University of Colombo School of Computing,

This year ICTer had received 118 submissions from 6 countries which were double blind reviewed by 84 international and local reviewers. Based on the reviewers' feedbacks, 43 full papers and 05 posters had been selected for the main conference with the acceptance rate of 42%.





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Gradually its name was renewed as ICTer with the aim of highlighting its regional importance. With time ICTer was able to grab the international recognition as a result of being linked with the institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE)UCSC believes this conference as one of its most significant events considering its service in disseminating the knowledge in collaboration with other universities, public and private organizations.

A significant number of academics and practitioners of the industry take part in this conference by submitting and reviewing research papers as well as by contributing to organize the conference.



The industry track which was carried out for the first time in the ICTer records was another outstanding event of the 16th conference. The main purpose of the industry track was to allocate a space for the leaders and visionaries of the computing industry in Sri Lanka to share their achievments and experience in computing.UCSC decided to divide the conference into two sessions in order to give more opportunities to the participants to select the subject areas according to their preferences.

School of Engineering, Stanford University, United States, and Prof. Alex Aiken from Department of Computer Science also from Stanford University.After the main conference on 1st and 2nd of September we could successfully conduct a work shop of the keynote speakers and the well known practitioners of the field on 3rd of September at the UCSC. UCSC highly appreciate the enormous support given by Code- Gen as the global research partner, millennium IT as the





It was a great honor for us to have four prominent international academic personalities as our keynote speakers on that special day. They were Prof Falko Dressler from the department of computer science, University of Paderborn, Germany, Prof. Laurie Buys from School of Design, Queensland University of Technology, Australia, Prof. Jennifer Widom from

platinum sponsor, Gambio Software engineering and National Science Foundation as the gold sponsor, IFS as the silver sponsor and 99X throughout the journey. The enormous support given by the Ministry of Higher Education, University Grant Commission, Vice chancellor and his office is another reason for the success of the conference.







Insight - Director UCSC

Prof.K.P Hewagamage



DIRECTOR, UCSC
BSc(Col), PhD(Hiroshima), SMIEEE

Prof. K. P. Hewagamage servers as a senior lecturer in Computer Science at the University of Colombo School of Computing (UCSC) and the coordinator of the e-Learning Centre at UCSC. He holds a bachelors degree in Computer Science with First Class honours form University of Colombo and a doctorate in Information Engineering from Hiroshima University. Dr. Hewagamage topped his batch at University of Colombo and won the Professor Mohan Munasinghe Award for the Outstanding Graduate in Computer Science and the D. P. P. Samerasekara Peace Award for forestering the goodwill and harmony in the Faculty of Science in 1994. Later, he was awarded Japanese Government Monbusho Scholarship for Postgraduate studies in Japan.

During last 8 years, he has successfully managed several e-Learning projects funded by Sida, IDRC, JAICA, and World Bank. Among them, the National e-Learning Centre Project of Swedish International Development Agency is the largest project (www.e-Learning.lk). One of his current main emphasis is on Promoting Free and Open Online Education (FOOE) to bring the benefits to less privileged society in Developing Countries.

Dr. Hewagamage who is a senior Member of IEEE and ACM, is the former chair of IEEE Computer Society Chapter of Sri Lanka. At the same time, he is an active member of IEEE and academic advocate of ISACA .

Since 2002 ,the University of Colombo School of Computing has being growing into a leading institute in learning ICT in Sri Lanka as well as in South Asia. Now it is ready to step into its 15th year in 2017. We had a small interview with Prof. K P Hewagamage, the Director of the UCSC to learn more about the principles, the procedure and the future potentials of the institute.

What are the major strengths that UCSC possesses as an institute of IT education and research?

From the starting, the UCSC has been achieving eminence above every other computing learning centre in Sri Lanka. Its reputation for outstanding academic achievements is known not only in Sri Lanka but also many other countries of the region and this is one of the most significant strengths of our institute. Secondly, the University of Colombo School of Computing is situated in the centre of Colombo city surrounded by nationally important landmarks. The human resource capacity of UCSC is also equally outstanding. We have a highly qualified academic staff including more than 25 senior lecturers with doctoral level qualification and they have been graduated from renewed universities around the world. Simultaneously, the infrastructures such as students' laboratories, research laboratories, a school with wide fiber network, the fully wired building complex for the internet access, well equipped library with books, journals, CDs, internet access to e-journals and an art network operating centre have also become our major strengths.

As a higher learning centre, we have been privileged to receive high reputation and recognition from the industry and this has opened the path to high rate of employments for the graduates. Likewise, we have well established research groups with international recognition and high level of curriculum- complies with ACM IEEE curriculum standards

In your view, how UCSC has contributed to National IT Education sector so far?

During last three decades, we have made a great effort in developing the national ICT education in Sri Lanka. It was UCSC and its predecessors who started the computer science degree programme in this country in 80's. Today, UCSC covers 4 major computing degrees in the discipline which are capable of providing wide range

of job opportunities for the graduates. With these job opportunities, the industrial requirements for the IT professional in Sri Lanka have been highly fulfilled. The Introduction of Bachelor of Information Technology (BIT) degree programme was one of our huge achievement because this is the first IT degree in Sri Lanka with the most training resources and experiences in the field of ICT and this offers the opportunity for those who are unable to enter the University and for those who are non-graduates but already work in the field of Information Technology to obtain a degree in ICT at a reasonable price compared to many other ICT degree programmes.

Moreover, UCSC offers FIT (Foundation of Information Technology) to develop competency of ICT required for knowledge workers and high education. UCSC also conducts and supports ICT exhibitions, workshops, competitions etc for the school Students with the support of the undergraduates in order to grab their attention towards the field of ICT. In fact, as a pioneer institute in ICT in Sri Lanka we provide support for all the other institutes to promote computing education at different levels including secondary education levels.

What is your plan for UCSC undrgraduates to improve their knowledge and skills ?

As the first step of improving the knowledge and skills of the UCSC undergraduates, we follow internationally acceptable curriculum/ syllabi guidelines of ACM- IEEE in developing the degree programmes. It will help us to obtain international level accreditation. In my opinion, improving student centered teaching and learning practices are the basis for the quality assurance.

I believe this is the foundation to improve the knowledge and skills of undergraduates. Not only that, UCSC has designed a well defined and a gradually updated syllabus for the undergraduates.

What is your plan for UCSC for the next 5 years?

UCSC continuously focuses on its past performances and the present and future potentials with the purpose of reaching to the highest of the excellence in ICT in Sri Lanka.

We have developed our strategic plan to address 7 major goals for the next five years, (2017-2021).

The first goal of our strategic plan is to be a centre of excellence in teaching and learning in computing. The second one is to promote research and development in computing while emphasizing interdisciplinary research. Our third goal is to create socially responsible professionals with entrepreneurial skills, leadership qualities and integrity, focusing on our students.

We also consider to establish and maintain conducive environment for productive work and career enhancement. We hope that it will help to enhance the learning capacity and make a favourable environment for the students ultimately. We believe, the image of an organization is really important for its sustainability. Especially the international recognition is highly required for the expansion and development of UCSC. Our sixth goal is to empower society through ICT since we consider it as a national responsibility of UCSC. The final goal of UCSC is to make significant contribution to provide professional services to establish the country as a knowledge hub.

It is important to develop the team work and collaboration to achieve these strategic plans. We need all stakeholders' active participation to carry out the activities of our plan.



STUDENT



PARAMITHA - Blood Donation

Encouraging undergraduates to contribute for the benefit of the society is one of the practices UCSC has followed and once again "paramitha", the annual blood donation campaign was held on 22nd September 2016 providing opportunity to share and be empathetic towards the community.



IEEE Pre-Extreme

Preparation is a must for coders always and there by students were given the chance to participate in a warm-up competition while guidance provided on how to face the upcoming IEEE Xtreme programming competition, which was organized by UCSC IEEE Student branch on 24th September 2016.



Sports Day

1st October 2016, a special day for the undergraduates as well as graduates of UCSC where the annual sports day and the farewell gathering took place. The sports day was organized by the 12th batch of UCSC where various kinds of interactive activities were performed enhancing harmony and allowing for fun moments.



Reminisce 2016 - farewell of 2010/11 batch

"Reminisce 2016", an event of farewell for the 2010/2011 batch was organized as a moment to flourish the memories and spend time in rejoice.



IEEE Day

Celebration of IEEE Day was grandly held at New Arts Theatre on 4th October 2016 with the theme 'leveraging technology for a better tomorrow' in order to inspire and encourage the youth to innovate for a better future.

DIARIES

iHack 2.0



"iHack 2.0", a 24 hour coding hackathon was organized by the UCSC ISACA student group for undergraduates where island-wide participation was witnessed encouraging young people to think beyond to solve major issues prevailing while improving quality of life.

ROMENTHEM - Fresher's Welcome



The most awaited event of the second year students who were in eager to welcome the fresher's, "Romenthem" took place on 15th October 2016 at the New arts theatre combining talents of the students in drama, dance and music making a night to remember for the audience as well.

Career Fair



There is a time to pursue a career making the learnt materials of worth and career fair 2016 held on October 17th was such moment for the students of UCSC to interact with organizations who are with the intention to reach young and new potential for their company growth. This was a platform for the students to be aware of the skills required to reach their goals.

Vaani Vizha



The annual celebratory event of Tamil students was held on October 28th following the traditions. It was a platform for them to display their talents in dance and music whilst engaging in their customary practices such as performing pooja.

Mozilla Series



UCSC Mozilla club organized a series of events consisting a Quality Assurance workshop, Localization competition and a session on web development on the dates of November 18th, November 22nd and December 1st respectively.

Memorial Oration of Prof V K Samaranayake

Prof V K Samaranayake, the founding director of the University of Colombo School of Computing and played a huge role in the development of the UCSC as well as the development of the IT industry and IT education in Sri Lanka. To express the sincerely gratitude and as an appreciation of his enormous service- throughout his lifetime, the UCSC annually organizes a memorial Oration of Prof V K Samaranayake.



This year it was the 9th Annual Vidya Jyothi Professor V K Samaranayake Memorial Oration which was held on 5th July, 2016 at 4.00 p.m. at the Auditorium of the department of National Archives with the guidance of the Director and the board of Management of UCSC. After the welcome speech of Prof. K P Hewagamage, the Director of UCSC, Professor Lakshman Dissanayake Vice Chancellor, University of Colombo addressed the gathering. Professor Saman Halgamuwa, full professor of University of Melbourne and the Professor V K Samaranayake endowed visiting professor of UCSC delivered the 9 th oration on " Big Myths and Big opportunities in Big Data Analytics: A Data Engineering Perspective". Dr. D A S Athukorale, Deputy Director, UCSC marked the end of the 9th memorial oration with the vote of thanks.More details are available at ucsc.cmb.ac.lk.

Helping Hands from UCSC Undergraduates



"Undergraduates of UCSC have never failed to address the opportunities to serve the community. Therefore once again Exploration club of UCSC was able to reach different regions in the island to share their knowledge this year as well. The aim was to support and encourage students in rural areas to enhance their academic capabilities especially in science related curriculum and studies targeting subjects like mathematics whilst giving a hand for learning English as well. Majority of the students were about to face the ordinary level examinations while others belonged to lower classes. They were able to reach schools in the areas of Panadura, Monaragala, Nikevaratiya and Puttalama where they held small scale sessions to discuss the study materials."

BIT NEWS

The University of Colombo School of Computing held its 13th convocation for the graduates of Bachelor of Information Technology – external (BIT) at Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (B.M.I.C.H.) on 13th September 2016. The most rev. Dr Oswald Gomis, the Chancellor of the University of Colombo presided the meeting. UCSU took the initiatives to the external degree (BIT) or The Bachelor of Information Technology in 2002 by having the most advanced training resources and experiences in the field of ICT with the expectation of developing the human resources in Information and communication technologies.

With the assist of the expertise of more than 22 PhD, 05 MPhil , 10MSc/ MBA drawn from the University of Colombo, the local Universities and also from the other reputed international universities of the countries such as United Kingdom, Scandinavia , Japan Australia etc, BIT has become the first in Sri Lanka. Moreover during the last year more than 30 training institutes spread over the country, have offered the training programs for the BIT degree.

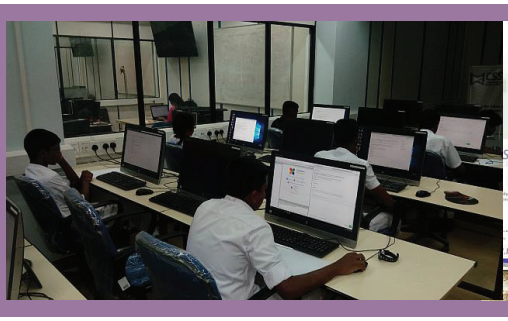
Producing qualified ICT professionals in addition to the traditional university outputs, setting professional standards and encouraging students in obtaining skills in commercial ICT applications, giving an opportunity to obtain a degree in ICT for those who are unable to enter to the University and for those who are non-graduates but already work are few examples for the range of objectives of this program.

The minimum duration of BIT is three years. DIT or the Diploma in Information Technology will be awarded after the successful completion of the course examination of the first year of BIT program and the HBIT will be awarded after the successful completion of second year examination. 33,000 candidates have enrolled to this program since the beginning. BIT provides a well defined and a gradually updated syllabus which is capable of fulfilling the industrial requirements ultimately. It also provides a wide range of job opportunities for its local and foreign ICT graduates and has been redesigned according to the policy frame work for external and extension programs introduced by University Grant Commission in 2010.

2016 is the 16th consecutive academic year of BIT and in the 13th convocation in 2016 we were able to schedule to award a total of 262 degrees. It is a great pleasure for UCSC to mention that since 2003 a total of 1923 students have been graduated from the University of Colombo School of Computing including 30 first class honors, 115 second uppers and 154 second lowers. Simultanious it is a greate honour for UCSC to state that the employability rate of the BIT graduates is 90%. bit.cmb.ac.lk is open for further details.



National School Software Competition





Online test of the National School Software Competition (NSSC) organized by the CSSL and Ministry of Education was conducted at the UCSC with the help of UCSC staff and students. 20 school students from various parts of the country took part this competition to showcase their programming talents.

KOICA





University of Colombo School of Computing has conducted a training program for Criminal Investigation Department and Government Analysis Department which was funded by KOICA. Certificate awarding ceremony was held on 22nd August 2016.

Visit by Malaysian Officials and student representatives





His Royal Highness Prince of Perlis, Malaysia Tuanku Syed Faizuddin Putra Ibni Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Jamalullail, who is also the Chancellor of the Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UNIMAP), accompanied by His Excellency Wan Zaidi Wan Abdullah, High Commissioner of Malaysia, Mr. Azhar Mat, Head of Chancery of the High Commission of Malaysia, Dato' Professor Dr. Zul Azhar Bin Zahid Jamal, Vice Chancellor of the Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UNIMAP) and few student representatives from Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UNIMAP) have visited University of Colombo School of Computing on 30th November 2016.

Workshop on Time Management





Workshop on Time Management for the UCSC staff was done by Professor Gihan Wikramanayake at Amaya lake resort in September, 2016.

Awards



UCSC Won three awards in three categories "m-Content", "Inclusion & Empowerment", and " Culture & Tourism" at "e-Swabhimani Awards 2016" organized by the ICTA on 31st October 2016.



Team - whileLOOP from UCSC
Competition - Janashakthi Full Option Appathon Challenge
Place - (1st Place)Winner



Team - Conf-T
Competition - Netcom Competition, SLIIT CodeFest
Place - 2nd Runners Up



Team - Void
Competition - SLIIT Codefest 2016 (Tertiary hackathon)
Place - 2nd place



Team - #hos
Competition - Guru E-Learning Open Competition
Place - (1st place) Winners

50 Years of Memories



Dr Roger Stern of the University of Reading (right) and Miss D. S. Jayawardane (left) of the University of Colombo analysing daily rainfall data on the Data General Eclipse S/140 Mini computer. **[1982]**



Visit of Prime Minister J.R. Jayawardana to the Election Office before the announcement of the final result. In the picturethere are Mr. H. W. Jayawardena, Prof. V. K. Samaranayake and Mr. Chandrananda de Silva, Commissioner of Elections.**[1982]**



BBC Micro computer Lab **[1983]**



Staff of Institute of Computer Technology at BMICH **[1987]**

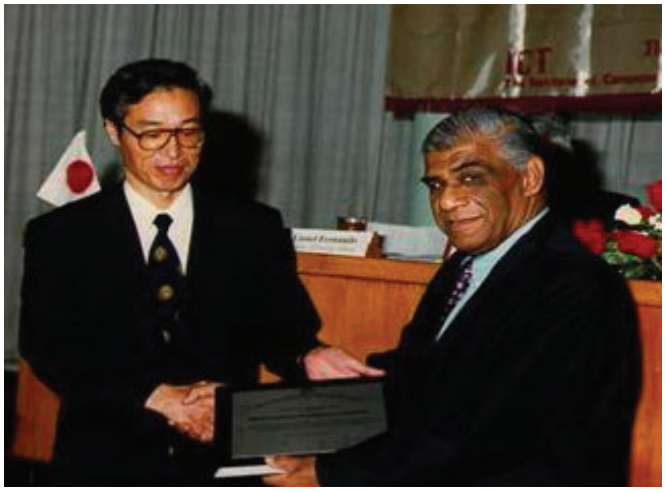


Laying foundation ston for Computer building complex by Dr P. R. Anthonic. **[1985]**



At the inauguration of a Third Country Training Program funded by JICA and conducted by UCSC. In the picture, Dr. P. R.Anthonis, Chancellor, Mr. Kaiho, Resident Representative JICA, Prof. Samaranayae and participants **[1999]**

50 Years of Memories



Mr. Kaiho, Resident Representative of JICA in Colombo presents the JICA President's Award for the best JICA assisted project worldwide to the ICT. Prof. Samaranayake, Director received the award. **[1999]**



At the signing of the Order establishing the University of Colombo School of Computing in 2002. l-r Prof. V. K. Samaranayake, Director, ICT, Prof. Tilak Hettiarachchi, Vice Chancellor, Prof. R L C Wijesundara and Dr. N D Kodikara. **[2002]**



Prof. Samaranayake signing letter of acceptance as new Director, UCSC **[2002]**



Chancellor Dr. P. R. Anthonis lighting the Traditional Oil Lamp to mark the establishment of the University of Colombo School of Computing UCSC on 1st September **[2002]**.



At the inauguration of the Digital Studio of the Advance Digital Multi Media Centre of the UCSC established with JICA assistance. **[2003]**



With the UCSC team processing and releasing the results of the 2004 Parliamentary General Election. **[2004]**

50 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

The University of Colombo School of Computing is looking forward to celebrate its three significant milestones during the next academic year.

The first landmark is the completion of 50 years of the Introduction of Computer related subjects to the University of Colombo by the Department of Mathematics which was started in 1967.

The second landmark is the completion of 30 years of the introduction of Computer Technology to University of Colombo which was started in 1987 and this had been funded by the Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA).

The third significant event was the reaching the 15th year of the establishment of UCSC.
The University of Colombo School of Computing was established in 2002 with the guidance of Late Professor V. K Samaranayake; the founding director of UCSC, as the first higher learning centre in Sri Lanka by merging the two institutes of Computer Technology and the Department of Computer Science of the University of Colombo.

All the three events have been taken place in the month of September. Over five decades, with the above mentioned achievements the UCSC have fulfilled its potentials by becoming one of the leading figures in IT and Computer Science with a significant contribution to the development of the nation in the field of IT.

Thus in 2017, UCSC is prepared to celebrate its collective achievements reflecting the founding years and looking forward to the upcoming years.