Summary of the meeting with the OC's of Informatics

Monday 6 March 2017 was a joint meeting with the OC's (Opleidingscommissies) of Informatics. Main topic was the document *Informatica-Onderwijs in Perspectief.* The board of IvI asked the OC's to identify the 5 most important opportunities of joining forces together with the VU at one physical location, the 5 most important threats, and try to come up with solutions for addressing these threats. The last question was to specify the role of the OC's in the process of moving the programs.

Informatica-Onderwijs in Perspectief is a vision document of UvA Informatics. There is also a joint perspective of the UvA and VU, see Amsterdam Department of Informatics Newsletter 16 March.

Met de huidige staf en met de groeiende studentenaantallen is een efficiëntieslag noodzakelijk, maar dit mag niet leiden tot kwaliteitsverlies (page 3).
- Q: Not losing quality? How is that going to be done? A: There are e.g. programming courses given on both sides. Is that the most efficient way? A solution could be to give lectures online plus small working groups with student assistants. This could free up a lecturer (senior researcher?) who might then give a more advanced course. We want prevent mass courses.
- Q: Number of students is growing. How will the scaling go? Especially when we go together with the VU? A: It is a balancing act. OC's could think along and give guidelines. What are your ideas? Concerning the link between education and research: Bachelor courses are more skilled based and Master course more focused on research.
- Several questions were raised that need to be discussed within the OC and/or with the program director, e.g. the link with research in the courses; integrating courses for both programs in AI (not enough teachers; in practice it doesn't work out that way).
- Comment about the ILLC Master: computer science quality of our course will decrease. We attract students from other courses: so can we pay our bills.
- Q: What is driving our focus on research and education? Where do we stand in 5 five years time? A: The shared location is driving our research like data science & security and we have and want to offer a rich educational landscape. For the coming year the focus is the steps we need to take for moving to the new building.

Identify the 5 most important opportunities of joining forces together with the VU at one physical location
1. Can be a way to solve current problems in staffing of education, but should not lead to losing quality of education.
2. Can be a time to start anew and to define a new, modern program.
3. Opportunity to change policy and to ensure better deployment of staff in both Bachelor and Master education.
4. You can use each other's expertise to improve the quality of education.
5. Uni-location permits good scheduling, better than bi-location.
6. Greater flexibility for students (Master level): test different directions and by then being able to make a choice for the future.
7. More specialization opportunities for Master students.
8. Much better connection: plane, train, what ever.
9. More complete campus, shops etc.
10. Institute has more colleagues in your domain to consult.
11. For student more expertise and consulting possibilities.
12. More visibility and exposure in the media.
13. All the programs should be integrated.
14. Embedding in research, some don't have a good-enough foothold in research.

Identify the 5 most important threats of joining forces together with the VU at one physical location and try to come up with solutions for addressing these threats

1. Giving together courses does not necessarily solve problems unless you have additional (note: not alternative) teaching methods applied in order to guarantee small-scale education and/or to change departmental policy regarding deployment staff in education (as shown in *Informatica-Onderwijs in Perspectief*: more commitment researchers). Changing deploying staff, VU does that better.
2. BSc joint program IK + IMM + LI, splitting tracks leads to specialization while you would like a broad program at Master level. It detracts from the argument that you should be broadly trained.
3. ILLC will be traveling more, or their Master's courses who remain at ASP will be less followed. → Solution: flexible workplaces for ILLC teachers in the NU building.
4. For a certain number of the computer science educational programs Science Park is a much more natural environment. → Solution: stay at ASP
5. There is much talk about support for the transition of education programs, but nothing is visible at the moment. Top-down decisions presented as bottom-up. OC's are now asked for involvement but is too late.
6. Educational facilities will not be of the same standing as we have now (e.g., lab, educational support staff). → Solution: new unique system (e.g. unique Blackboard) or similar enough   for the students.
7. For some programs, no vision on how moving would improve the education. → Solution: create vision (in order to find strong points to work on).
8. Because of scaling issues, supposedly electives are restricted (to students for whom these are obligatory). → Solution: carefully "declare" electives, be clear on restrictions and expected entrance level; give study career guidance (necessary to have educational support   on this).
9. Bi-location is a threat to the richness of the courses on offer.   → Solution: transport between the campuses, better scheduling (week days associated to a specific location).
10. Lose connection to the inner city, professors have to go to the inner city for exposure.
11. All the nerds together, mono disciplinary.
12. Gender balance will go down.
13. More joint program moving your balance to English. → Solution: balance between international and Dutch students like AUC.
14. Atmosphere.
15. Getting bigger.
16. Loss of identity.
17. Link with CWI & ILLC.

Specify the role of the OC's in the process of moving the programs

1. The OC's will get more power and they are going to use it.
2. Creating new curriculum in consultation with OC; which subjects are of good quality, which can be combined, which not?
3. OC members should be asked for input, and involved more in the preparation stage of decisions. Representation of the OC in the committees in the preparation/working groups, or organise feedback sessions with OC's.
4. OC value should be made explicit- and physically visible so the students can find the OC.
5. How do you organize the OC's after the move with 6 Bachelors, 11 Masters, lectures?
6. How do we cluster, how do we separate courses?
7. OC's need more vision.
8. Strengthening the OC's playing more roll in decision-making process.
9. The question why are we doing this, was never discussed in the OC's.

A few additional remarks that have been made.
Threats need to be solved. People, who don't support it, have to solve the threats.
We should learn from the mistakes and don't repeat them.
Is it possible to visualize the support for the move? It's difficult to measure that with a referendum with a yes or no.
OC's could also be a medium to hear if there is support and represent that opinion.
UvA & VU teacher team meet each other a lot. They have never discussed this? They are member of the OC's.
No one asked so far what is the opinion of the OC's. We have the feeling that we are not heard.
OC's should be more proactive.

One of the conclusions is that it is good that we came together; we should have done that before. A next meeting with the OC's will be organised before the summer.

Present: Koen Vellenga, Ulle Endriss, Loek Stolwijk, Auke Pals, Boas Kluiving, Toto van Inge, Michel Klein, Andre Nusselder, Frank Nack, Maarten van Someren, Pim van Helvoirt, Arnoud Visser, Jacobijn Sandberg, Andy Pimentel, Marcel Worring, Noa Visser, Ramona Roller, Ilse van der Linde, Karst Koymans, Rob Belleman, Arjan Vreeken, Laura Aina, Jaquim Cadogan, Gerben van der Huizen, Nick Bezhanishvili, Mieke van den Berg.