Proposal to Change Introduction to Research in Data Science

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1 Proposal

This is a proposal to change the number of credits for Introduction to Research in Data Science (INFR11105) from 30pts to 20pts. IRDS is a course that is open only to students in the first year of the CDT in Data Science. It consists of guest lectures from PhD supervisors associated with the Centre, as well as a small practical project in data science.

We also propose a minor change to the DPT for the MSc by Research in Data Science, (i.e. the CDT first year). As the justification overlaps, we include that proposal also in this document.

2 Justification

The role of IRDS within the curriculum of the MSc by Research in Data Science is rather analogous to the combined role of IRR / IRP in the taught MSc. Therefore, as IRR and IRP have now moved to 20pts total, it would seem appropriate for IRDS to also move to 20pts.

Looking at the assessment and workload for IRDS under the new workload model, it is evident that the structure of IRDS is different from that of other courses that we offer, because of the specialized nature of training students within a CDT. That said, IRDS seems closer to a 20 point course than a 30 point course under the new workload guidelines.

Additionally, there has been a reduction in choice caused by moving so many MSc classes from 10 pts to 20 pts. This reduction hits CDT students especially hard, because the MSc by Research allows for only 60pts of taught courses rather than 80pts as in the taught MSc. Many of the most popular classes for CDT students — including MLPR, PMR, IAML, and MLP — are among those that are moving to 20pts.

If no changes are made, it would be impossible for CDT students to take all three most popular machine learning courses — MLPR, PMR, and MLP — under the current DPT. We have discussed this situation with the student representatives of the CDT, and they have relayed to us in strong terms that it would cause significant difficulties if students were unable to take this combination next year. Reducing IRDS to 20 pts and adding the MLP course to the “Unstructured Data and Applications” container will allow this combination. Therefore it is imperative that this change be made for Autumn 2016 rather than waiting until next year.

3 Implementation

- IRDS (INFR11105): Change SCQF credits from 30 to 20.
- IRDS (INFR11105): Change ECTS Credits from 15 to 10.
- DPT: MSc by Research in Data Science: Add Machine Learning Practical (INFR11132) to the “Unstructured Data and Applications” container