university of
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Exam concerns

Burlacu, I. <i.burlacu@student.rug.nl>   Thu, Jun 22, 2023 at 9:44 PM
To: "Jorge A. Pérez" <j.a.perez@rug.nl>

Dear Professor,

First and foremost, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the lecturers and the teaching assistants for the hard work, dedication, and commitment throughout the duration of the course. The effort you have put into delivering engaging lectures, providing thoughtful insights, and offering consistent support has significantly enriched our learning experience, and we greatly appreciate it. However, we would like to express some concerns regarding the difficulty of the exam and time constraints.

The depth of the questions required a substantial amount of analysis and careful reasoning. Considering the shorter time limit compared to past exams and the number of questions, we believe we had insufficient time to accurately prove our understanding of the material. Either a reduction in complexity or an extension would have allowed for a fair assessment of our knowledge.

For a better understanding of the challenges we have encountered in the exam, we have listed every issue raised by students:

- Question 2 had a dependency between part a and part b, students who did not manage to find the PDM's accepting language, were not able to use the pumping lemma. The lack of an answer to part b does not reflect the knowledge of the pumping lemma, instead the students are being further penalized for the missing language definition;
- Question 3 entailed analysis of a complex Turing machine operation on binary digits. Students had spent a noticeable amount of time finding out how the TM processed the input to deduce the operation.
- Question 5 called for the construction of an unrestricted grammar for a language. On top of this being a generally difficult and time consuming exercise it was also not covered by tutorials or past exams which added to the difficulty.

Given the aforementioned, we kindly ask you to take this into account when grading the exams.

Signatures:
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