

**FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY**  
**STAFF-STUDENT COMMITTEE**

**Minutes**

A meeting of Philosophy Staff and Students was held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2019 at 1.05 p.m. in the Philosophy Faculty Board Room.

Present:

Professor Rae Langton, Professor Alex Oliver (Undergraduate Coordinator), Jo Harcus (Librarian), Heather Sanderson (Faculty Administrator), Charlie Evans (Graduate Secretary), Clare Dickinson (Principal Secretary), Charlie Evans (Graduate Secretary), Cathy Mason (Graduate Student Rep), Daniel Sharman (Undergraduate Student Rep), Joe Foye (IB), Anna Simpson (Administrative Assistant).

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1. Joe Foye chaired the meeting.
  2. Starring of items was invited.
  3. Apologies for absence were received from Sahanika Ratnayake.
  4. The minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019 were approved. These minutes were previously circulated to all students via e-mail for information.
  5. Matters arising from the minutes not raised elsewhere on the agenda  
Item 10: Availability of Lecture Handouts. At the Faculty Board meeting on 4 March, it was decided to put together a written proposal for Faculty Board consideration on 20<sup>th</sup> May.  
It was reported that Jo Harcus had already added some handouts to Moodle and the intention was for all handouts (labelled with term and year date) to go on either the lecturer's own webpage or Moodle. The students present supported this plan for easier access. It was noted that an index of every handout would not be feasible.  
Accessibility of online documents was briefly discussed in relation to changing accessibility legislation. Existing documents, websites and apps would need to be compliant by 23 September 2020. More information would follow in due course. Joe Foye recommended CUSU's *Disabled Students' Campaign* as a reference source of good practice.
  5. New appointments/Staff news  
It was announced that Tom Dougherty has accepted a position as Associate Professor at USC (University of North Carolina) beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> 2019. Tim Button has accepted a position at UCL starting in September 2019. Zoe Walker-Fagg started a new job at the CUDAR office (Alumni Relations) in the University in March. Congratulations were extended to all.
  6. Proposed syllabus changes for Tripos 2019-20  
It was reported that HPS and ASEC have confirmed approval for Part IB Philosophy students to borrow the HPS Part II Paper 5 "Epistemology and Metaphysics of Science" with effect from Oct 2019. (ASEC is the new Academic Standards and Enhancement Committee, which is a subcommittee of the General Board's Education Committee).

It was clarified that there would be an initial maximum quota of 15 Philosophy students, which is the number of Philosophy students taking the Part IB Philosophy of Science option in recent years.

[It was explained that if Philosophy students were to switch into HPS Part II, they would not be able to take HPS Part II Paper 5 again, if they had already taken it as one of their Philosophy Part IB options.]

It was noted that more information would be sent to all Part IA students, and Directors of Studies later this term.

7. Student Representation Review – Consultation

It was reported that The General Board's Education Committee (GBEC), Cambridge University Student's Union (CUSU) and the Graduate Union (GU) have been undertaking a wide-ranging review of student representation throughout the 2018-19 academic year. It was explained that a preliminary proposal for consultation had been drawn up, based on initial feedback from faculties and focus groups. Comments were invited, in particular to the questions on page 3 of the consultation document. The following documents were circulated:

- a) Covering letter of 5 April 2019 from the Education, Quality and Policy office.
- b) Consultation document.
- c) Philosophy Feedback document from the MT 2018 Survey

Discussion was invited on the relevant consultation questions (section 4, page 3) of the consultation document.

4.6 Proposal to site the organisation and administration of elections with CUSU and the GU – It was noted that the current election system overseen by the Faculty works well. Student reps and staff members expressed strong concern over Philosophy losing the autonomy of running the election and wondered whether fewer students, especially grads, would vote and also stand if the election was CUSU led. It would need to be made very clear to potential student reps that they wouldn't be bound to CUSU/GU. Although it may be administratively simpler for CUSU to oversee the elections, if the change were to be implemented, the Committee felt Faculty involvement would still be essential to increase engagement and secure nominations.

4.7 Proposal for CUSU and the GU to have an institutionally recognised role in inducting, supporting and training student representatives - Concerns were raised from staff and students regarding the necessity and desirability of potential extra CUSU and GU student training. The Faculty currently provides appropriate, tailored training to students which would need to happen irrespective of additional training. It was noted that School reps have a vote on the CUSU Council. More detail would be required regarding the proposed CUSU training.

4.8 Proposed alignment to a single election date – It was noted that the Philosophy election date is currently carefully scheduled to work in conjunction with Faculty meetings and to promote maximum student participation starting in Michaelmas Term. If a single election date is implemented, it would need to be set in consultation with Faculties.

It was explained that the consultation document would be discussed again at Faculty Board on 20 May 2019, and that Rae Langton would lead on consultation questions.

8. Tripes Examinations

It was noted that all undergraduates have been emailed a copy of the exam timetable. Students were reminded that the final version of the Philosophy Tripes Exam timetable could be found on pages 151-152 of the Main Period Easter Term document at:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/students/studentregistry/exams/timetable/>

Students were reminded that the Philosophy Faculty uses a numerical marking scheme.

It was noted that details of the current marking guidelines and criteria could be found on the Faculty website at:

<http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/IA/curr-students/ugrads-exam-folder/ugrads-exams/marking-criteria-new>

Students were reminded that past exam scripts and sample answers were available on the website.

<http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/ugrads-exam-folder/sample-answers>

9. Reading Lists

It was noted that Faculty Caucus meetings would be reviewing Combined Course Outlines and Reading lists during Easter term. Updates would be made over the Summer and would be posted on the Faculty website.

10. Library exam period extended opening hours

It was reported that the library would be operating extended opening hours this term until Friday 14th June, opening 9am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 11am to 5pm on Saturday.

11. Faculty Newsletter

It was reported that the 15<sup>th</sup> issue of the Faculty Newsletter was due to be published in June/July 2019.

12. Lecture Questionnaires evaluation sheets

It was noted that evaluation sheets for completed lecture questionnaires for Lent Term 2019 would shortly be available for consultation from the Library issue desk.

Students were also informed that if they had any suggestions on how the questionnaires used to collect feedback on Lectures, Discussion Groups and Logic Classes could be improved, this would be very welcome.

13. Arts & Social Sciences Open Days

It was reported that the Cambridge Open Days for prospective undergraduate students would be held on Thursday 4 July and Friday 5 July 2019. It was explained that on each day there would be an information stand located in the Law Faculty Foyer from 10am – 4pm, as well as a course presentation 2.30 – 3.15pm in the Faculty of Divinity and a tour of the Faculty. Any students who were interested in volunteering to help on the stand for one or more two-hour slots, were asked to contact Anna Simpson in the Faculty Office, who would then liaise with the Undergraduate Co-ordinator, Alex Oliver.

Anna Simpson would send an email to all students requesting volunteers and liaise with student reps to promote student involvement. It was noted that students should be able to liaise with the Faculty Office regarding travel difficulties.

14. Dates of Faculty Board/Degree Committee meetings for 2019-2020

The following dates for Faculty Board and Degree Committee meetings for the academic year 2019–2020 were proposed at the Faculty Board meeting on 4 March 2019:

Michaelmas Term 2019-20

Monday 14 October  
Monday 18 November

Lent Term 2020

Monday 27 January  
Monday 2 March

Easter Term 2020

Monday 18 May

Long Vacation 2020

Monday 29 June

15. Dates of Final Examination Meetings and Release of Marks

Part IA – Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2019

Part IB – Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2019

Part II – Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019

It was explained that breakdown of marks would be sent to Directors of Studies and Senior Tutors shortly after the final exam meeting. **Directors of Studies would inform students of their marks for individual papers. If a student was unable to contact their Director of Studies to receive their marks, they would need to contact the Tutorial Office of their College.** The Faculty Office would be unable to disclose marks to individual students.

16. NUS Green Impact

It was reported that the Green Team (Clare Dickinson and Charlie Evans) has submitted this year's Green Impact workbook and are hoping to gain a Gold Award. The team were audited on 2 May and the Committee were delighted to hear that they had received excellent feedback. The results would be announced at the Green Impact Awards Ceremony on Friday 21 June. It was announced that the Philosophy Green Team would continue to highlight green issues to the Faculty and there would be some events during Easter Term and over the Summer. It was noted that student members of the Committee were supportive of the Green Team work.

17. Well-being events

It was revealed that the Faculty would be running some well-being events including 'meet the pets' before exams this year. Further details would follow soon.

'Philosotea' – Jo Harcus informed the Committee that there would be a series of Philosotea sessions in the Old Library for all Faculty staff, students and friends to take a break and come along for free hot drinks and treats. The first of these would be held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May at 11am.

18. Any other business.

Heather Sanderson reminded the Committee that a Philosophy Undergraduate Student Survey had been circulated to all Undergraduate students to investigate how students experience studying Philosophy in our Faculty and invited student reps to promote student involvement on social media. Students commented that the survey would take longer than the suggested 5 minutes to complete to do it justice. A suggestion to extend the deadline was considered, but ultimately

decided against due to any potential impact on exam focus. Heather agreed to send a reminder to complete the survey by the deadline of midnight on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May.

19. The next meeting would be held in Michaelmas Term 2019.