

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

OPEN MEETING OF STAFF, GRADUATES AND UNDERGRADUATES

The Open Meeting of Philosophy Staff and Students was held on Tuesday 21st October 2014 at 1.10 p.m. in the Board Room, Faculty of Philosophy, Sidgwick Site.

Present: Jane Clare (Principal Secretary), Professor Richard Holton (Chair of the Faculty Board, in the Chair), Heather Sanderson (Administrator), Shyane Siriwardena, Alexander Murphy, Sheanna Patelmater, Emily Robinson, Eugene Chua, Theo St John-Stevens.

Professor Holton opened the meeting by asking everyone to introduce themselves.

- 1 Minutes of the Open Meeting of 22nd October 2013 were approved.
- 2 Brief report by the Chair of the Faculty, Professor Richard Holton
Professor Holton briefly reported on the business of the past academic year. He outlined staff changes for 2014–15,

Prof Holton explained that he is the Chair of the Faculty Board for 2014-15, and that Dr Tim Button is the Undergraduate Co-ordinator for the Faculty for Michaelmas Term 2014, and Prof Alex Oliver for Lent and Easter Terms 2015. He also reported that Prof Huw Price is Director of Graduate Studies, Dr Clare Chambers is Director of Graduate Admissions and Angela Breitenbach is MPhil Co-ordinator. Dr Arif Ahmed is Chair of Examiners for Part IA, Part IB and Part II although Prof Michael Potter will act as Chair of Examiners in Michaelmas Term 2014 while Dr Ahmed is on leave.

Prof Holton mentioned that there had been some syllabus changes for 2014-15, and that students were consulted on these changes via the Staff-Student Committee.

Students were reminded that the current syllabus can be found on the Faculty website, along with course notes and reading lists.

- 3 The Staff-Student Committee
A short outline of the way the Staff-Student Committee functions was circulated. Prof Holton explained that the Staff-Student Committee meets once a term to discuss matters of importance to students. It was noted that the Staff-Student Committee is a formal channel for students to express views that will then be considered by the Faculty Board meeting (essentially a departmental meeting) that next follows the meeting of the Staff-Student Committee. It was also explained that when the Faculty Board is considering taking action that will directly impact on students, they would seek students' opinions via the Staff-Student Committee. Prof Holton encouraged students to serve as reps on the Staff-Student Committee, because it is an effective way for students to have an impact on their education. It was also underlined that student voices are listened to at Faculty Board (via the representation of Faculty Reps). It was noted that the Staff-Student Committee works most efficiently if students initially raise any issues with

their Student Reps, who can then seek the opinions of their fellow students on these issues before bringing them to the SSC. If students bring concerns direct to the Staff-Student Committee without consulting their fellow students, it can be difficult to know what the consensus is on an issue, and this can waste time. It was noted that students who agree to serve on the Staff-Student Committee can contact their fellow students through the student year group email lists (phil-students14@lists.cam.ac.uk for Part IA, phil-students13@lists.cam.ac.uk for Part IB and phil-students12@lists.cam.ac.uk for Part II). It was also explained that ahead of the three meetings of the Staff-Student Committee, student reps will be given the chance to put forward items to go on the agenda to be discussed at the meeting.

4 Representatives on the Staff-Student Committee:

Student members were sought from all Parts of the Tripos and from amongst the graduates. It was explained that students who agree to be representatives for their year group perform a different function from elected Faculty Board Representatives (see below for more information on elections for Faculty Board Reps). It was noted that it is hoped that at least two students from each Part of the Tripos would act as student representatives on this Committee for their year group. It was noted that the Chair and the Secretary of the Faculty Board are ex-officio members of the Committee.

The following students agreed at the meeting to represent their year groups from 21st October 2014 until the next Open Meeting in the Michaelmas Term 2015:

Representing IA:	Alexander Murphy	CAI
	Sheanna Patelmaster	G
	Eugene Chua	W
	Theo St John-Stevens	EM

Representing Graduates: Shyane Siriwardena (PhD) N

There were no 2nd or 3rd year students at the meeting. Mrs Clare said she would send out further emails to the students asking for volunteers to act as reps.

The four IA students who volunteered as reps also expressed an interest in setting up a social committee. Prof Holton agreed to this and said that the Faculty would make a small yearly financial contribution.

5 Dates of the Staff-Student Committee Meeting

A document showing the dates for the three SSC meetings in 2014-15 was circulated. It was noted that the next meeting would take place on Tuesday 4th November, at 1.05pm in the Faculty Board Room. Students were also encouraged to look at the Undergraduate Calendar, which can be found on the Philosophy website which shows the dates for all SSC meetings, amongst other important dates.

6 The following announcements were noted:

Election of Chair of the Staff-Student Committee

It was noted that the Committee will be asked to elect a Chair at the next Staff-Student Committee meeting.

Student Election to the Faculty Board

It was reported that the elections for student representatives on the Philosophy Faculty Board will be held on **Tuesday 25th November 2014** with the closing of nominations a week earlier on **18th November 2014**.

Elections would be organised via an online voting system, students would receive further information on this nearer the time.

Student Representatives on the Councils of the Schools

It was noted that all students on the electoral roll also have the chance to be elected to serve on Councils of the Schools. It was explained that the Philosophy Faculty is part of the School of Arts and Humanities, which in turn is one of six schools within the University. It was explained that while a Philosophy student could stand for election to the Council there is no requirement for the Faculty to provide a candidate, since the philosophy Faculty is one of eight Faculties that come under the School of Arts and Humanities. It was also explained that the Council of the Schools is less of a decision making body, and more for reporting. However, if students are interested in learning more about the working and administration of the University, this would be a good council to sit on. It was noted that the elections for Student Representatives for the Councils of the Schools will also use the on-line ballot and will be managed by the Education Section. It was further noted that the date has yet to be confirmed by the Council of the Schools, but is likely to take place on the same day as the elections for Faculty Board Student Reps. CUSU and the Education Section will contact students directly about this.

Faculty Reps – who are they and what do they do?

A document from CUSU was circulated.

Suggestion Box

Attention was drawn to the suggestion box in the Old Library where students are invited to post any comments they wish to make on any Faculty related matter. It was noted that the suggestion box was introduced so that students would have another way of passing on concerns/suggestions in addition to filling out lecture questionnaires. It was noted that if students need confidential advice on any matters, support could be found at:

<http://www.studentadvice.cam.ac.uk/>