

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

STAFF-STUDENT COMMITTEE

A Meeting of Philosophy Staff and Students was held on Tuesday 8 November 2011 at 1.05 p.m. in the Philosophy Board Room, Faculty of Philosophy, Sidgwick Site.

Present: Margrit Edwards (Chief Secretary), Heather Sanderson (Administrator), Jenni Lecky-Thompson (Librarian), Charlie Evans (Secretarial Assistant), Professor Tim Crane (Faculty Chair), Flora Sisman, Mat Simpson, Jasper Wong, Rachel Robertson, Markus Anderljung and Catherine French.

1 It was agreed to continue with the starring of items. Items not starred are on the agenda for information only. People attending the meeting were invited to star any item(s) they wished to discuss.

2 Apologies for absence were received from Dr Arif Ahmed and Prof Michael Potter.

3 The minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2011 were approved. These minutes were previously circulated to all students via e-mail for information.

4 Mat Simpson proposed that Flora Sisman be elected as Chair of the Staff-Student Committee. This was seconded by Jasper Wong, and unanimously agreed on by all present.

5 New appointments:

It was noted that three members of *temporary teaching staff have been appointed for 2011-12:*

Dr Sacha Golob (full time)

Dr Sophia Connell (50%) and Dr Adam Stewart-Wallace (50%)

Leverhulme Visiting Professor:

It was further noted that Professor Chris Martin from the University of Auckland, New Zealand, arrived on 1 September 2011 and will be in Cambridge until 31 March 2012.

6 Old Library:

New students were reminded that the Old Library is a common area where undergraduate students can meet informally, have coffee/tea and discuss philosophy. Due to the nature of the location it was emphasized that discussions will have to be kept fairly quiet because of the various offices adjacent to it.

7 Election of Student Representatives:

Faculty Board in class (f)

It was noted that the elections for student representatives on the Philosophy Faculty Board will be held on **Tuesday 29 November 2011** with the closing of nominations a week earlier on **22 November 2011**. Nomination forms were made available at the SSC Meeting, and it was noted that they can also be collected from the Faculty Office.

It was reported that this year, as agreed at the Open Meeting of the Staff-Student held on Tuesday 8th October 2011, the Faculty will use an online voting system for the student elections. It was noted that an initial email has been sent to all students outlining the election process, and that more details about how to vote will be sent to students in due course.

Council representatives

It was noted that this year, all students on the electoral roll will also have the chance to be elected to serve on Councils of the Schools. It was further noted that these elections will use

the on-line ballot and will be managed by the Education Section. Students were told that the date has yet to be confirmed by the Council of the Schools, but is likely to take place during the Lent Term. CUSU and the Education Section will contact students directly about this.

8 Faculty of Philosophy – Casimir Lewy Library Committee:

It was noted that the date of the meeting will be announced in due course.

Students were made aware of the fact that the Library Committee meeting takes place in the Lent Term to ensure that newly elected Faculty Board Representatives can be present at that meeting.

It was noted that the Library Committee consists of the following members:

The Librarian
The Chair of the Faculty
The Secretary of the Faculty
The Director of Graduate Studies
The Undergraduate Co-ordinator
The Chair of the Staff Student Committee
The two Undergraduate Representatives on the Faculty Board
The Graduate Representative on the Faculty Board

9 M.Phil. Questionnaire:

It was noted that the following two issues were raised:

Presentation skills seminar

It was reported that the Faculty had invited an outside person to hold these seminars. It was widely thought that the presentation skills seminar was not worthwhile. It was agreed to find an alternative to the current seminar and Dr Lillehammer agreed to look into this.

Assessment

a) It was noted that it was agreed at the meeting of Faculty Board on 17 October 2011 to adopt a convention whereby positive feedback to students needs to be conveyed as well as negative feedback.

b) It was further noted that at the same Faculty Board meeting, the grid for marking M.Phil essays that the Faculty currently uses was discussed, as well as the feedback this provides for students. It was noted that Professor Potter had suggested making the grid available to students for transparency and that Dr Lillehammer had supported this. It was reported that some members had said they find the grid helpful, others less so. It was also noted that after some discussion, it was agreed to continue with the status quo.

Catherine French asked for some clarification on why it had been decided not to make the grid and the information in it available to M.Phil students. Professor Tim Crane explained that on the forms used for providing feedback on M.Phil essays, there is a confidential section, containing a grid, which is used by members of the Faculty to comment on accuracy, presentation, etc. The Grid is essentially used as a way of helping those assessing the work to focus their mind, but there is no mechanical connection between the information in this grid and the actual mark given, and for this reason releasing the grid to students wouldn't be especially helpful and could be confusing. Prof Crane explained that the criteria relating to M.Phil essays contained in the graduate handbook is much more useful. However, Prof Crane did agree that students could see the template used for the grid if it would be of interest.

10 Feedback to graduates on their supervisions for undergraduates:

It was noted that Directors of Studies, at their meeting on 3 October 2011, were reminded that the quality of graduate supervising depends on reliable feedback from Directors of Studies to the supervisors they employ. It was further noted that such feedback is also helpful to the graduate students' own supervisors.

11 Extended Essays in Part IB/Extended Essays and Dissertations in Part II:

It was reported that examples of good work are available for perusal from the library issue desk. (Students were also asked to note that this is also mentioned on page 49 of the Undergraduate Handbook).

Students were reminded that the deadline for application is

18 November 2011.

All titles have to be approved by the Chair of Examiners before students leave for the Christmas break. Flora Sisman asked if there was any penalty for titles being handed in late. Students were reminded that while there is no formal penalty, it is in everyone's interests for titles to be handed in on time, so that they can then be approved before the Christmas break. It was noted that if students do not provide titles on time, this could lead to a delay in them being able to start work on their essay/dissertation.

Students are also asked to note that at its meeting on 23 May 2011, Faculty Board agreed that any students who do not submit their Extended Essay or Dissertation on time, will have no option but to sit the corresponding exam paper. Margrit Edwards emphasized that she will have to be very strict in not accepting any late submissions of extended essays or dissertations. Student reps agreed that they will remind their fellow students of the penalty associated with missing this deadline. It was suggested that supervisors should also be reminded that any student who submits their extended essay or dissertation late will have no option but to sit the corresponding exam paper.

It was noted that for Tripos 2012 only, students who have gained honours in another Tripos and change into Philosophy Part II for their last year will have the option of submitting extended essays **OR** a dissertation but not both since this would then allow them to submit 50% coursework.

It was further noted that from Tripos 2013 all students will have to take 5 papers, (see item 12 below) hence all Part II students will have the option of taking extended essays and/or a dissertation.

12 Changing in to Philosophy at Part IB and Part II (from Tripos Examinations 2013):

It was noted that students who obtained honours in another Tripos and change in to Philosophy are currently let off one paper (i.e. they study for one paper fewer than students who follow the three year Philosophy Tripos).

It was reported that the Faculty has established that cognate faculties such as History, Classics and Divinity do not make such an allowance.

It was further noted that the Faculty Board, at its meeting on 17 October 2011, therefore agreed that all Philosophy candidates will take the same number of papers with effect from Tripos 2013 (i.e. 5 papers).

It was explained that students changing in and taking Part II in two years will not be affected since they already take 5 papers.

13 Examiners' reports:

It was noted that the exam reports for 2011, including external reports, have been posted up on the following website along with the other reports:

http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/u_grads/course_details.html

14 University Plagiarism Policy:

It was noted that the University has recently updated its plagiarism policy, which is now available online at:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism/>

It was further noted that this substantial revision includes an amendment to the University-wide statement on plagiarism following a ruling of the University Tribunal — that a student may be found guilty of an act of plagiarism irrespective of intent to deceive, and be subjected to the deprivation of a degree — as well as revisions to the procedures to be followed by

Examiners in handling suspected cases of plagiarism. Heather Sanderson explained that she understood that this policy had been introduced because it is difficult to prove intent in respect to plagiarism. There was also some discussion about whether it is possible to plagiarise during an exam. Prof Tim Crane said this would be very unlikely. It was explained that when citing sources, it is acceptable in an exam just to cite the name of the author. Prof Crane explained however that what was really important in the exam was how students put their ideas across, and not so much how sources were cited.

It was further noted that the Faculty's local guidance has also been updated and is available from the Philosophy website:

http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/u_grads/u_grads_intro.html

15 Discussion Groups for Part IB students:

It was reported that the Faculty is in the process of arranging discussion groups for Part IB for the Lent Term 2012. It was noted that the topics and timings of these groups are:

Metaphysics & epistemology – Tom Simpson – Friday, 12-1pm, LB12

Ethics –Chris Cowie - Monday, 4-5pm, LB11

Modern & Medieval philosophy – Alexander Greenberg - Wednesday, 3-4pm, LB12

Philosophy of Science – Alexis Papazoglou - Wednesday, 12-1pm, LB12

Political Philosophy - Sebastian Nye - Thursday, 3-4pm, LB11

Students were reminded that they may sign up for as many groups as they wish, but need to bear in mind the additional work involved. It was also noted that once a student has signed up, it is expected that s/he attends all the sessions.

16 Lecture questionnaires:

It was reported that students are encouraged to complete the paper questionnaires which will be distributed in final lectures (in weeks 4, 6 or 8 as appropriate) in Michaelmas Term. It was noted that students are also encouraged to complete questionnaires circulated in Discussion Groups and Logic Classes. Students were reminded that if they miss the final lecture, or do not get the opportunity to complete a questionnaire in their lecture, it is possible to download questionnaires from the Faculty website:

http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/u_grads/questionnaires/ugrad_questionnaires.html

It was further noted that questionnaires can also be used if students wish to comment on any lectures they attend which are cross listed on the Philosophy Lecture list, but run by other Faculties, such as HPS. Students were reminded that completed questionnaires should be returned to the box next to the photocopier outside the Faculty Office.

17 Lecture Questionnaires evaluation sheets:

Students were reminded that evaluation sheets for completed lecture questionnaires are available for consultation from the Library issue desk. It was noted that attention is drawn to this on page 21 of the current undergraduate student handbook.

18 Website redesign:

It was reported that a working party has been set up to consider redesigning and updating the Faculty Website. It was noted that a proposal from Prof Tim Crane and Dr Ahmed will be circulated to the Working Party to provide the basis for discussion for a meeting to be held before the next Faculty Board on 21 November 2011. It was further noted that the working party consists of:

Dr Arif Ahmed (Undergraduate Co-ordinator)

Ms Amanda Cawston (Graduate Representative on Faculty Board)

Professor Tim Crane (as Convenor and Chair)

Mrs Margrit Edwards (Chief Secretary, Faculty Office)

Ms Charlie Evans (Secretary, Faculty Office)

Ms Marie-France Moss (Computing Officer)

Professor M D Potter (as Director of Graduate Studies)

Mrs Heather Sanderson (Administrator)

Mr Mat Simpson (Undergraduate Representative on Faculty Board)

Ms Flora Sisman (Undergraduate Representative on Faculty Board)

19 Sutton Trust Summer Schools:

It was reported that the Department of Theology and Religious Studies hosted another summer school jointly with Philosophy from 18–22 July 2011.

The Faculty thanked Ms Amanda Cawston, Ms Lorna Finlayson, Mr Stephen Methven, Mr Sebastian Nye and Mr Robert Trueman who presented the Philosophy sessions. (It was noted that a payment of £50 for each session was provided from the Cambridge Admissions Office). The Faculty also thanked Dr Arif Ahmed who presented the Admissions Session for Philosophy.

It was noted that 10 Year 12 students from state schools with underprivileged backgrounds attended. It was also noted that 5 of them put Religious Studies on their applications, and 5 put down Philosophy.

Feedback was received from 2 students, and this was positive.

It was agreed at the meeting of the Faculty Board on 17th October 2011 to make similar arrangements with Divinity for 2012.

20 Possible collaboration with MIT and Harvard:

It was reported that following the successful Conceptual Content Conference run by Professor Tim Crane and Dr Sacha Golob in September, contact has been made with Professor Sean Kelly (Harvard) and Professor Alex Byrne (MIT). It was noted that it is hoped to set up collaboration with both institutions possibly under the name 'Cambridge Squared'. Activities could include an annual conference and exchange visits for graduate students. This would allow Cambridge graduate students to visit Harvard and MIT and provide useful insight in the running of American Departments. In return, American student could visit our University. This would stimulate contact and the three institutions could take it in turn to host the annual conference.

It was reported that at the meeting of the Faculty Board on Monday 17th October 2011, it was agreed to start collaboration next year when Professors Richard Holton and Rae Langton from the MIT Philosophy Faculty will be visiting our Faculty.

It was noted that funding will be sought from various sources such as the Newton Trust or the AHRC.

21 Introductory Day, 5th October 2011

It was reported that the Introductory Day for all new Philosophy students took place on Wednesday 5th October 2011. Mat Simpson and Flora Sisman were thanked for giving a very informative talk on what is involved in being a student rep. It was noted that it is hoped that a similar talk will be given by a student rep at the next Introductory Day in October 2012.

22 Amoral Sciences Club

It was noted that the contact name and President for the ASC is:
Mat Simpson, Robinson, ms887@cam.ac.uk

23 Inaugural Lecture

It was reported that Professor John Marenbon's Inaugural Lecture: 'When was Medieval Philosophy?' will take place on Wednesday 30 November 2011, 5.30 p.m., Little Hall, Sidgwick Site.

24 Any other business

There was no other business raised.

The meeting ended at 13.25 hrs.