

## FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

### STAFF-STUDENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

A Meeting of Philosophy Staff and Students was held on Tuesday 5 November 2013 at 1.05 p.m. in the Philosophy Faculty Board Room, Sidgwick Site.

Present: Jane Clare (Principal Secretary), Heather Sanderson (Administrator), Jenni Lecky-Thompson (Librarian), Charlie Evans (Secretarial Assistant), Professor Tim Crane (Faculty Chair), Prof Rae Langton (MPhil Course Director), Prof Alex Oliver (Undergraduate Co-ordinator), Adam Lalak, Peter Zhukovsky, Emily Platten, Liam Livesley, Matthew Dougherty.

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- 1 Starring of items was invited.
- 2 No apologies for absence were received.
- 3 The minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2013 were approved. These minutes were previously circulated to all students via e-mail for information.
- 4 Prof Tim Crane suggested that Peter Zhukovsky might like to act as Chair of the Committee. Peter said that he would be happy to do this, and this was agreed on by all present.
- 5 Staffing Matters:  
It was noted that Professor Caspar Hare, MIT, is the Faculty visitor for 2013 – 2014, and will be arriving in January 2014 for six months. It was further noted that Professor Branden Fitelson, Rutgers, will be visiting for one week in May 2014.
- 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 26 November 2013** with the closing of nominations a week earlier on **19 November 2013**.  
  
It was reported that this year the Faculty will continue to use an online voting system for the student elections. It was noted that more details about this voting system will be sent to students in due course.  
  
*Council representatives*  
It was noted that 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 informed that the date of these elections 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 Representatives. Students were also informed that CUSU and the Education Section will contact them directly about this.
- 8 IB Logic lectures/Potential Logic classes  
Peter Zhukovsky reported that via the Part IB Facebook page, at least 20 students from the year group had indicated that they would be interested in having both more

lectures on Metatheory of Truth-Functional logic, as well as possibly having classes on this topic. It was reported that students felt that there had been a significant change in pace of logic lectures compared to the IA lectures given on Formal Logic by Dr Button, which was in part why students were struggling and felt that more lectures/classes were needed. Prof Oliver suggested that it would be useful to discuss this with Dr Button to see how he felt the lectures were progressing, and Prof Tim Crane encouraged all IB students to use lecture questionnaires (which would be provided to all students at the end of the Metatheory lectures) to provide feedback on these lectures, and the possible need for more of them. Prof Crane also explained that as Logic is a compulsory paper for Part IB, if classes were introduced for Metatheory, they would need to be offered to all IB students, which would mean that Colleges would need to pay for these classes to be run, as is the case for Part IA logic classes. Some students suggested that it is possible to decide not to answer questions on Metatheory during exams, but it was still felt that if classes were to be introduced, they would need to be offered to all students. Peter Zhukovsky reported that he would contact Dr Tim Button to get his view point on how this lecture series was going, and if more lectures could be offered. It was also suggested that this issue could be discussed at the next Logic and Philosophy of Science Caucus meeting (due to take place on 2<sup>nd</sup> December).

9 Faculty of Philosophy – Casimir Lewy Library Committee:

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

Elections for Student Representatives take place in November, as above. It was reported 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.

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

10 Email lists

It was noted that the Faculty has two email lists which are used for publicising events relating to Philosophy – Phil-events, which is for Philosophical events/groups based in Cambridge, and phil-bulletin, which is for philosophical events taking place further afield. Students were informed that they can find more information on these lists, and subscribe to them by visiting <https://lists.cam.ac.uk/mailman/listinfo> and entering the name of the relevant list.

11 Feedback to graduates on their supervisions for undergraduates:

It was reported that Directors of Studies, at their meeting on 7 October 2013, were reminded that the quality of graduate supervising depends on reliable feedback from Directors of Studies to the supervisors they employ. It was noted that such feedback is also helpful to the graduate students' own supervisors. It was further noted that if undergraduates wish to provide feedback on their supervisors, there is the facility to do this via CamSIS self service – students should select the “student questionnaires” section from the “other information” panel.

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

Students were reminded that examples of good work are available for perusal from the library issue desk. (It was pointed out that this is also mentioned on page 14 of the Undergraduate Handbook).

Prof Crane reminded students that the deadline for application to do extended essays and/or a dissertation is

**22 November 2013.**

**It was noted that all titles have to be approved by the Chair of Examiners before students leave for the Christmas break.** Prof Crane noted that this is very important, as it ensures that students do not begin work on the wrong topic. Peter Zhukovsky asked how flexible the content of an extended essay could be in relation to the syllabus, and in particular whether a IB essay could discuss topics covered at Part II. Prof Crane explained that the overall topic of the essay had to be covered by the syllabus of the paper concerned, but that other topics could be mentioned if relevant. Prof Crane underlined that students should discuss their essay title with their supervisor, and that if the supervisor had any concerns about the title, they should contact the Chair of Examiners (Prof Crane for Michaelmas Term 2013). It was also noted that an email was sent out to Part IB and Part II students on October 24<sup>th</sup>, containing full guidelines on extended essays and dissertations.

**Students were also asked to note that at it's meeting on 23 May 2011, Faculty Board agreed that any students who do not submit their Extended Essay on time, will have no option but to sit the corresponding exam paper. It was also noted that Part II students who do not submit their dissertation on time will effectively fail the paper, as the deadline for submitting dissertations is after the final deadline for amending exam entries.**

- 13 Examples of Part IB and Part II essays to go online  
It was noted that it was agreed at the SSC meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2013 that it would be helpful to have some sample Part IB and Part II essays online, to demonstrate how essays are graded. It was reported that several Part IB and Part II students have given permission for their exam scripts from Tripos 2013 to be used. It was noted that the Faculty will now review these exam scripts and decide which will be the best examples to make available online.
- 14 Examiners' reports:  
Students were informed that the exam reports for 2013, including external reports, will be posted up later this term on the following website along with the other reports under "Examiner reports":  
<http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/IA/curr-students/ugrads-exam-folder/ugrads-exams>
- 15 Re-naming of Essay Paper titles  
Prof Crane informed students that from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013, the papers previously known as the "Essay Paper" have now been renamed the "General Paper". It was noted that this applies for all three parts of the Tripos. Prof Crane explained that this change was agreed on following a recommendation made by an External Examiner.
- 16 Discussion Groups for Part IB students:  
It was noted that the Faculty is in the process of arranging discussion groups for Part IB for the Lent Term 2014. It was further noted that the topics and leaders of these groups are:

**Metaphysics & epistemology** – Carlo Rossi  
**Logic** – Kyle Mitchell  
**Ethics** – Neal Carrier  
**Early Modern philosophy** – Alexis Papazoglou  
**Philosophy of Science** – Paul Raekstad  
**Political Philosophy** – Paul Raekstad  
**Greek and Roman Philosophy** – Sophia Connell

Students were informed that timings of the groups will be confirmed shortly. They were also told that they may sign up for as many groups as they wish, but need to bear in mind the additional work involved. Once a student has signed up, it is expected that s/he attends all the sessions.

17 Lecture questionnaires:

Students were encouraged to complete the questionnaires which will be distributed in final lectures (in weeks 4, 6 or 8 as appropriate) in Michaelmas Term. Students were also encouraged to complete questionnaires circulated in Discussion Groups and Logic Classes. Students were informed 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/curr-students/questionnaires/ugrad-questionnaires>

Students were also told that Questionnaires can be used if they 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. These should then be completed and returned to the box next to the photocopier outside the Faculty Office.

18 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 11 of the current undergraduate student handbook.

19 Website redesign:

It was noted that the Philosophy web site has been reorganized and work on it is now almost complete. It was explained that there are now separate sections for Part IA, Part IB and Part II, with various pertinent links on the left hand of these pages. It was noted that it is hoped that this will make the website easier for students to navigate.

Students were informed that they might find the dates on the calendars helpful.

Undergraduates:

<http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/important-dates-folder/ugrads-calendar>

Graduates:

[http://www2.phil.cam.ac.uk/grads/grad\\_calendar.html](http://www2.phil.cam.ac.uk/grads/grad_calendar.html)

Prof Crane also reported that four graduate students have produced a guide to writing essays, which is now available on the Faculty website at:

<http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/IA/curr-students/writing-skills/>

Prof Crane explained that while this guide would be particularly useful for IA students, he would recommend the guide to all students wanting advice on how to approach a philosophical essay.

20 Social events for undergraduates

It was noted that at the SSC Open Meeting on 16 October 2012, there was some discussion of the provision of social events for undergraduates. It was mentioned that at the Open Meeting on 12 November 2002, it was agreed that it was up to the undergraduate representatives of the Staff Student Committee to organise the setting up of a Social Committee consisting of two undergraduate students each year who would be willing to organize social events for undergraduates. The setting up of such a committee would depend entirely on students' enthusiasm and willingness to serve. It was also noted that the Faculty had agreed to make a small yearly financial contribution to the Social Committee. It was reported that if students are interested in setting up such a committee, they should let the Faculty Office know.

21 Cambridge Open Days for prospective undergraduates:

*Thursday and Friday 4 and 5 July 2013*

Everyone who helped with the Arts Open Day was thanked, and in particular Dr Hallvard Lillehammer and Ms Charlie Evans for the organization of the smooth running of the events for these two days.

It was noted that next year's Open Days will be on 3rd and 4th July 2014.

22 Sutton Trust Summer Schools:

It was reported that the Department of Theology and Religious Studies hosted a summer school jointly with Philosophy from 16th – 19th July 2013.

Warm thanks were given to Claire Benn, Karen Crowther, Ali Boyle and Luke Hawksbee who presented the Philosophy sessions

It was noted that a similar arrangement with Divinity will be made for 2014.

23 Introductory Day, 9th October 2013

It was reported that the Introductory Day for all new Philosophy students took place on Wednesday 9th October 2013. Adam Lalak was 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 2014.

24 Amoral Sciences Club

Students were informed that the contact name and President for the ASC is currently Jasper Wong, [jcw2@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jcw2@cam.ac.uk). However, it was noted that Jasper has now swapped out into Law, and it was thought that he would be stepping down as President from the end of Michaelmas Term 2013. Jasper has now confirmed that he will remain in post until the end of Lent Term 2014.

25 Any other business.

There was no other business raised.

The meeting ended at 13.30 hrs.