

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

STUDENT- STAFF COMMITTEE

Minutes

for the meeting on 20th February 2023, 12.05 p.m. in person

Present: Alexander Bird (Chair of Faculty), Julia Borcharding (Undergraduate Coordinator), Sarah Fine (MPhil Course Director), Heather Sanderson (Faculty Administrator), Marta Bax (Postgraduate Student Rep), Eli Bertuccioli (Undergraduate Student Rep), Gerard Kornacki (Undergraduate Student Rep), Daisy Agidi (Undergraduate), Ellen Hammersley (Senior Administrative Assistant), Joanne Wells (Administrative Assistant), Jo Harcus (Casimir Lewy Librarian), Anna Simpson (Postgraduate Secretary)

1. Alexander Bird chaired the meeting.
2. Starring of items was invited.
The Faculty Board considers agenda items and will confirm that equality, diversity, and inclusion has been considered.

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2022 were circulated and approved.

4. Election of Student Representatives
Following nominations and co-option, the following students were appointed as Faculty Board Representatives:
Gerard Kornacki, Part IB – St John’s College
Eli Bertuccioli, Part IA – Sidney Sussex
Marta Bax, MPhil – Darwin
Students were reminded that the reps could be reached on phil-studentreps@lists.cam.ac.uk

Council representatives

All students on the electoral roll were also eligible to stand to be elected as either an undergraduate or a postgraduate representative to the Council of the School of Arts and Humanities. It was reported that the new representatives for the Council of the School of the Arts and Humanities are:

Undergraduate rep: Lisa Delaney (St Catharine’s College, English)

md960@cam.ac.uk

Postgraduate rep: James Searle (Homerton College, MMLL) jms329@cam.ac.uk

5. Academic Administrative responsibilities:

The following academics are now overseeing the following areas:

Chair of Faculty Board: Alexander Bird

Undergraduate Co-ordinator: Julia Borcharding

Chair of Examiners (Tripos): Arif Ahmed

MPhil Course Director: Sarah Fine

Subject Convenor (Undergraduate Admissions): Richard Holton

Director of Postgraduate Admissions: Alex Oliver

Director of Postgraduate Studies: Michael Potter

6 Staff news:

7 Deadline for handing in Tripos Extended Essays/Dissertations

Students were reminded that the deadline for submitting extended essays via Moodle for Part IB and Part II is **Friday 17 March at 12 noon**. If students miss this deadline without prior approval from the Chair of Examiners, they will be required to instead sit the written exam for this paper (although students should be aware that Friday 17 March is also the deadline for amendments to exam entries. If a student does not submit their extended essays by the deadline, and then does not ask the College to amend their exam entry to sit the written paper, they would then fail that paper).

Students were further reminded that the deadline for submitting dissertations via Moodle for Part II is **Friday 5 May at 12 noon**. If students miss this deadline without prior approval from the Chair of Examiners, students will then fail that paper, as by May 5, the final deadline would have passed for amending exam entries.

*8 Philosophy Tripos Examinations/Marking Criteria in 2023

Faculty Board will be considering any mitigation at its next meeting on 6th March. However, the Chair indicated that exams are likely to contain full content as in previous strike-impacted years. The reason for this is the topics in question could well have been covered in supervisions, and no student should be put in detriment by the removal of a topic. The Chair of Examiners will follow up in writing after Faculty Board has met.

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

The Guidelines for Examiners and Assessors (including Marking Criteria) Tripos Examinations 2023 are being updated, and will be added to the webpage later this term: <https://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/ugrads-exam-folder/guidelines-examiners-assessors>

*9 Tripos exam scripts available on the Philosophy website

This is to remind students that several sample exam scripts have been made available on the website, anonymised and with the permission of the authors. They can be found on the following web page:

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

It will be noted on the website where exams were open book exams for future reference.

10 Deadline for handing in MPhil 2nd Essay

Students were reminded that the deadline for submitting the 2nd Essay is **Friday 17 March at 9am**.

11 Updates from your Philosophy Library

Philosotea

Come and get to know other students and staff over a free hot cuppa and treats on Fridays from 11:30am in the Old Library. The last Philosotea break of the term will be at 11:30am on Monday 13 March.

Tell us what you think

Help Cambridge University Libraries to continue offering the services, spaces and collections you need by completing [our online student and staff survey](#). You can

also opt into a prize draw to win one of ten £50 [Love Cambridge](#) gift cards. The survey will be open Monday 13 February to Friday 3 March. For more information, including how the data collected will be used, see the [Cambridge University Library website](#).

The survey asks you to think about the library you use most often. If that's not your Philosophy Library but you have specific comments or suggestions for us, please don't hesitate to pass that on to us in the library, by email or anonymously via our physical and [virtual](#) feedback walls or your student reps. Your feedback is always very welcome and much appreciated.

Book recommendations

If there are books, or any other print or electronic resources, you need for your studies or research, or which you think it would be helpful to have in the library, please don't hesitate to [get in touch](#) with the details or complete our [online book suggestion form](#). Suggestions for our [Wellbeing](#), [Philosophical Fiction](#) and [Study Skills](#) collections are also very welcome!

- *12 Proposed syllabus changes for Tripos 2023-2024
(*circ*). The teaching staff have subject Caucus meetings in Michaelmas Term each year, to review the syllabus for the following year. Any proposals are then submitted to Faculty Board first, before they are circulated to students, for feedback.

The draft updated Guide to Courses was circulated, showing proposed changes to the syllabus for 2023-24 shown as tracked changes.

Changes shown on the Guide to Courses were approved *in principle* by the Faculty Board on 30th January 2023.

As the Student-Staff Committee had no strong objections, syllabus changes will be implemented from the upcoming academic year, October 2023.

Feedback from students would need to be discussed at the next Faculty Board meeting on 6 March 2023.

Note that updated information about borrowed papers is still to be confirmed.

- *13 Lecture/Logic Class/Seminar (Discussion) Group Questionnaires
Students have been encouraged to complete the [online questionnaires](#). Lecturers/leaders have been asked to remind students, where possible, in their last lecture/group to fill in a feedback questionnaire for the lecture course. A QR code is also available to scan. A link to the form and QR code has been emailed to students. Help from student reps to promote the questionnaires to their peers would be greatly appreciated.

The deadline for LT23 feedback questionnaires is midnight on Monday 3rd April 2023.

All feedback is made available to the lecturer/leader and reviewed by the Undergraduate Coordinator on behalf of the Faculty.

- 14 National Student Survey for 3rd year undergrads
The 2023 NSS survey opened on 11 January 2023. The deadline is 30 April 2023. The link is here: <https://www.thestudentsurvey.com/>

Part II Philosophy students will also be contacted direct by Ipsos MORI. Feedback is appreciated and is considered by Faculty Board.

15 Postgraduate Offer Holders' Event

The offer holders' event will be held on Thursday 23 March 2023. Some current postgraduate student helpers will be needed, and information will be sent nearer the time.

16 Cambridge Open Days for Prospective Undergraduates

The format of the 2023 Cambridge Open Days for prospective undergraduate students will be hybrid with both virtual and in-person elements. The live Open Days will be held on Thursday 6 July and Friday 7 July 2023. Some current undergraduate and postgraduate student helpers will be needed, and information will be sent nearer the time.

17 Green Impact

The Faculty is taking part in the University's environmental accreditation scheme [Green Impact](#) after a 3 year hiatus, and is delighted to welcome 4 undergraduate students to its [Green Impact team](#): Izzy Solomon, Dev Penamala, Jess Hawkins, and Mohammed Hassan. Whilst the administrative staff will be focussing on completing the Green Impact workbooks with the aim of achieving a Silver Award this year, the students are initially focussing on their own proposal of a topic-based panel consisting of invited environmental philosophers (internal & external).

*18 Cambridge Period Project

Following the Cambridge Period Project's proposal to the Health and Wellbeing committee in 2020, the General Board's Education Committee officially agreed "to recommend to Faculties and Departments that they provide menstrual products in University buildings." This will ensure inclusivity and access to period products when they are needed most, as well as reduce the stigma associated with periods.

MMLL and Philosophy are taking part in this project to provide free period products in some locations in the Raised Faculty Building. Currently there are free-vend units in the 2nd floor women's toilet and in the 1st floor men's toilet, as we don't have gender-neutral toilets. Products are also available in the library well-being collection. It would be helpful if student reps could share this information with students.

*19 Any other business

The postgraduate rep asked how students might be able to help support striking members of staff and it was noted students are able to join picket lines as a way of showing support if they so choose.

The MPhil Course Director asked the student reps and student guest for their opinions on whether they found in-person or online college interviews to be preferable. The general consensus was that the option of choosing, depending on personal circumstances and character, was preferable as a number of factors came into play for each individual. Specific points included:

- It is less intimidating and less stressful to be able to prepare and be interviewed in known, comfortable surroundings. There is less pressure for those who have anxiety speaking face-to-face.
- Technical issues can be unsettling or may impact a prospective student negatively.

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- An in-person format can be very enjoyable and means applicants get to meet other prospective students and experience the university environment which can be very affirming.
 - Not all prospective students have a calm home environment in which they can prepare or carry out an interview online without disruption.
 - Not all schools have the space to offer prospective students a quiet, focussed environment for an online interview.

The Chair encouraged student reps to also raise issues between meetings, particularly if time is potentially an issue.

20 Date of next meeting

The next Student Staff Committee will take place on Monday 8 May 2023 at 12.05.

Student Key Deadlines

Friday 17 March 2023

09:00 – MPhil 2nd Essay Submission Deadline

12.00 – UG Extended Essay Submission Deadline

Friday 5 May 2023

12.00 – Part II Dissertation Deadline

Student evaluation form QR code:

