

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY  
STUDENT-STAFF COMMITTEE

**Minutes**

for the meeting on Thurs 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023, 10am in the Faculty Boardroom.  
Professor Michael Potter chaired the meeting.

- 1       \*   *Circs*
- Starring of items was invited.  
          Points 9, 11, 12, 13, 14 were starred.
- EDI review of decisions reminder  
          The Student-Staff Committee considered agenda items and confirmed that equality, diversity, and inclusion would be considered.
- 2
- Apologies for absence.
- 3       \*
- The minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023 were approved. These minutes were previously circulated to all students via e-mail for information.
- 4
- Academic Administrative responsibilities
- The following academics are now overseeing the following areas:
- Chair of Faculty Board: Michael Potter  
                                  Undergraduate Co-ordinator: Sophie Dandelet  
                                  Chair of Examiners (Tripos): Alex Oliver  
                                  MPhil Course Director: Jessie Munton  
                                  Subject Convenor (Undergraduate Admissions):  
                                  Spencer Johnston  
                                  Director of Postgraduate Admissions: Julia Borcharding  
                                  Director of Postgraduate Studies: Richard Holton
- 5
- Staff news
- The following new staff were welcomed to the Faculty and/or colleges:
- Dr Christopher Masterman, Teaching Associate.  
          Ms Colette Oliver, Teaching Associate.  
          Ms Janette Dutton, Postgraduate Secretary.

6 Election of Student Representatives

Elections took place across 10th–16th November 2023. Congratulations went to our 2 elected Undergraduate Student Subject Representatives for Philosophy: Eli Bertuccioli and George Wang. Currently there is no Postgraduate Representative.

See: <https://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/student-elections>

7 Lecture/Logic Class/Seminar (Discussion) Group questionnaires

Students have been encouraged to complete the [online questionnaires](#). Lecturers have been asked to remind students, where possible, to fill in a feedback questionnaire for the lecture course. A link to the form and QR code has been emailed to students and they have been emailed a reminder.

8 Discussion Groups for Part IB students:

The Faculty is in the process of arranging discussion groups for Part IB for Lent Term. Groups, leaders and timings will be confirmed in due course. Once a student has signed up, it is expected that they will attend all the relevant sessions.

9 \* Library Updates

\* Consultation on the proposal to move to a single loan period of 28 days for all user groups with unlimited auto-renewals

The Philosophy Library team invited comments on the above proposal to change library loan periods which would mainly affect undergraduate students. The context and reasons for the proposed change, and the actions the Library team are taking to mitigate the potential impact of auto-renewals for all groups, are summarised in the attached paper.

**Comment** The student reps advised they had received no negative feedback from students. As long as auto-renewal continues, there should be no issues. The Librarian reaffirmed that students are encouraged to get in touch if they have any queries or need help. The Chair had no objection to the proposal.

Philosotea

All Philosophy students, staff and visitors were warmly invited to join the library staff for this term's final servings of Philosotea on Thursdays between 2pm and 3pm in the Faculty Common Room (The Old Library). Take a break and get to know each other over free cups of tea, biscuits, and healthy treats on the Library team.

Timings of next term's Philosotea breaks will be confirmed after the vacation.

#### Giving us your feedback

A reminder that we're here to help and welcome your feedback and suggestions for ways we might be able to further improve the usability, accessibility and inclusivity of your library spaces, services and collections. You can [contact us](#) at any time, or let us know your thoughts via our feedback walls in the library or [online](#), or via your student reps. We look forward to hearing from you.

10

#### Green Impact

The Faculty has signed up to [Green Impact](#), the University's environmental accreditation scheme. The first meeting of the Green Impact Team committee took place in week 8 of MT.

11

#### In-person typed exams

The student representative requested an update on the Faculty's efforts to press the University for in-person typed exams for Philosophy students and an explanation of how the University has responded to these efforts.

**Comment** There was an experiment with typed exams for 1 Faculty last term. 1 more will be added in 2024. If these are successful, this option will be offered to further Faculties. Philosophy has requested this option and is happy to contact the school again to re-enforce its importance to the Faculty. Philosophy has expressed its wish to move to invigilated typed exams no later than the academic year 2025-26. Pressure from the CSU would be helpful.

12

#### Philosophy Student Cap for Proposed PBS Paper

Some students have raised concerns regarding the proposed cap of 15 philosophy students for PBS01: Introduction to Experimental Psychology and Neuroscience. The student representative requests that the Faculty please clarify how places will be allocated if more than 15 philosophy students are interested in the paper.

**Comment** The cap of 15 has been in place for some time, only the format of the Paper has been changed. The cap has not been reached over the past several years. If more than 15 students are interested, the current inclination is to select at random from those that meet the qualifying criteria.

13

### Borrowing Jurisprudence

Update on the possibility of borrowing the Jurisprudence paper from the Faculty of Law.

**Comment** After discussions with the Faculty of Law it was decided to request the borrowing of the Jurisprudence paper. The process is currently in progress and should be in place for the next academic year. This paper would be an alternative to Political Philosophy as there is significant overlap.

**Action** Heather Sanderson to send paperwork to the Faculty of Law for approval by Law's Faculty Board at its meeting in February, after which she will submit an ASEC form. All to be completed by the end of March latest.

14

### ODC (Overall Degree Classification)

Michael Potter to present a report.

**Comment** The University offers 2 options: 30/70 or 100. Having operated the 30% Part IB / 70% Part II ODC this summer, the Faculty's preference is to return to 100% Part II. The current methodology is for Part IB and Part II to be double-marked with any disparity in marks discussed if close to a boundary grade. At any discussions for Part II, there is no option to review Part IB. A 100% Part II ODC model is therefore considered fairer to students.

The earliest option to reintroduce 100% ODC would be for students graduating in 2028. However, current students could be consulted by proxy for those future students the change would affect.

**Action** The Chair will send out a poll to students for their views on this future change.

15

### Any other business

Update on request for undergraduate student events.

**Comment** A (philosophical) movie night with refreshments to be organised by the students has had promised donations from colleges and the SU totalling approx. £80. The Chair agreed to contribute up to an additional £50.

**Action** The student reps will obtain and forward further details of the event to the Faculty Office. The Student Reps and the Green Impact student committee members will liaise to ensure a coordination of dates.

School Council: a by-election for undergraduates takes place in Lent Term. The Chair suggested this might be an interesting year to be a representative due to the reshaping of the campus agenda.

16

Date of next meetings

The next SSC meeting will be on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February.

Student evaluation form QR code:

