

# FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

## STUDENT- STAFF COMMITTEE

### Minutes

for the online meeting on 7 February 2022, 12.05 p.m. by Zoom

**Present:** Alexander Bird (Chair of Faculty), Jessie Munton (Undergraduate Coordinator), Arif Ahmed (Chair of Examiners), Heather Sanderson (Faculty Administrator), Paul Heller (Postgraduate Student Rep), Izzy Solomon (Undergraduate Student Rep), Gerard Kornacki (Undergraduate Student Rep), Roma Ellis (Undergraduate), Ellen Hammersley (Senior Administrative Assistant), Anna Simpson (Administrative Assistant).

1. Alexander Bird chaired the meeting.
2. Starring of items was invited.
3. The minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2021 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 IA – St John's College  
Izzy Solomon, Part IA – Trinity Hall  
Paul Heller, MPhil – Churchill  
Students were reminded that the reps could be reached on [phil-studentreps@lists.cam.ac.uk](mailto: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: Gerard Kornacki, St John's College – [gk443@cam.ac.uk](mailto:gk443@cam.ac.uk)

Postgraduate rep: Joe Ross-Biddles, Trinity College – [jlr66@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jlr66@cam.ac.uk)

5. Academic Administrative responsibilities  
Chair of Faculty Board: Alexander Bird  
Undergraduate Co-ordinator: Jessie Munton  
Chair of Examiners (Tripos): Arif Ahmed  
MPhil Course Director: Sarah Fine  
Subject Convenor (Undergraduate Admissions): Julia Borcharding  
Director of Postgraduate Admissions: Alex Oliver  
Director of Postgraduate Studies: Michael Potter

6. Staff news  
It was reported that John Filling had left as Lecturer to take up a position at UCL but remained as Affiliated Lecturer and would still be involved in some teaching for the remainder of the academic year.  
It was further reported that Charlie Evans had left the Postgraduate Secretary role to take up a new position at the University of Edinburgh. Anna Simpson would move into the Postgraduate Secretary role on 21<sup>st</sup> February and a new Administrative Assistant would be recruited.

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7. Teaching and Support Arrangements 2021-22

Students were reminded that the current protocols for students could be found on the website here:

<https://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/teaching-2021-22>

Jessie Munton thanked the student reps for raising the query over access to handouts and recordings. Whilst reminding that there would be valid instances where recordings weren't possible, Jessie recommended contacting lecturers directly if material wasn't available.

8. Tripes Examination Update

Arif Ahmed responded to queries received from Undergraduate Students.

- *Faculty plans for any exam mitigations / changes due to content missed through strike period. Particularly relevant for courses with a large taught element that cannot be easily supplemented outside class (e.g. Part II Mathematical Logic, Part IA Formal Methods)*

Arif reported that the Faculty plans would depend on the University's mitigation policy. Arif would feedback at the start of the Easter Term.

- *It was also noted that academics are considering an examination / marking strike later in the year. What are the current plans if this occurs, and what would happen for Part II students regarding degree classification?*

Arif clarified that an examination strike is not confirmed. If it were to go ahead, the Faculty would follow the University's advice but it would be expected that Part II examination and graduation would be prioritised.

Arif sought student feedback on preferred exam conditions, online/in halls and handwritten/typed for Summer 2023 at the earliest. The students at the meeting had varied views.

**Action point** - the reps to survey students and report back.

9. Deadline for handing in Tripes Extended Essays/Dissertations

Students were reminded that the deadline for submitting extended essays via Moodle for Part IB and Part II is **Friday 18 March at 12 noon**. It was explained that if students missed this deadline without prior approval from the Chair of Examiners, they would be required to instead sit the written exam for this paper (although it was noted that students should be aware that Friday 18 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 site 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 6 May at 12 noon**. If students missed this deadline without prior approval from the Chair of Examiners, students would then fail that paper, as by May 6, the final deadline would have passed for amending exam entries.

10. Philosophy Tripes Examinations/Marking Criteria in 2022

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

It was reported that The Guidelines for Examiners and Assessors (including Marking Criteria) Tripos Examinations 2022 are being updated, and would be added to this webpage later this term: <https://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/ugrads-exam-folder/guidelines-examiners-assessors>

11. Tripos exam scripts available on the Philosophy website

Students were reminded that several sample exam scripts have been made available on the website, anonymised and with the permission of the authors: <http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/ugrads-exam-folder/sample-answers>

At Faculty Board on 31 January 2021, a student rep asked for further scripts to be made available, based on more current papers. Arif Ahmed and Ellen Hammersley would be following up on this and reporting back when they are available.

12. Deadline for handing in MPhil 2<sup>nd</sup> Essay

Students were reminded that the deadline for submitting the 2<sup>nd</sup> Essay is **Friday 18 March at 12 noon**.

13. Library Resources

Jo Marcus provided the following update:

Following Magda's retirement in December, Lennie Chalmers will be joining the library team on weekday mornings this term. Lennie already works in your library on Saturday mornings alongside Berny Steptoe who works on Saturday afternoons so will be a familiar face to many of you. If you need any help at all finding or accessing readings, navigating the online reading lists, referencing your sources or anything else, please don't hesitate to ask Jo, Lennie, Hebe or Lauren and we'll be very happy to help.

Your library has now purchased several CO2 monitors to measure the air quality in the study spaces. These use a traffic light system to indicate the air quality and the library team will check them regularly. If the monitors are green, we don't have to have as many windows open which will hopefully make your library a much warmer and welcoming place to study. If the monitors are orange or red, we will need to temporarily open more windows to ventilate the space until they turn back to green.

With the monitors in place, we will no longer need to close the library at lunchtimes for air purging from 7 February. We'll also be removing the one-way system and reopening the computing area with one PC in use from that date.

14. Proposed syllabus changes for Tripos 2022-2023

It was explained that 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 2022-23 as tracked changes.

It was reported that changes shown on the Guide to Courses had been approved *in principle* by the Faculty Board on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022.

Unless the Student-Staff Committee had strong objections, the plan would be for the syllabus changes to be implemented with effect from October 2022.

Feedback from students would need to be discussed at the next Faculty Board meeting on 7 March 2022.

It was noted that updated information about borrowed papers is still to be confirmed. The proposed borrowing of Jurisprudence Paper from the Law Tripos for Part IB Philosophy students, went through Philosophy Faculty Board and Student-Staff consultation and approval in 2020-21, and is subject to Law Faculty and University approval.

Students asked about the process for borrowing papers from other Faculties. Arif explained the background to the proposed borrowing of the Jurisprudence Paper and also noted that there was no reason in principle why a student couldn't take the initiative and make a suggestion for future borrowed papers.

15. Discussion Groups for Part IB students

It was noted that the following seven discussion groups would run from weeks 2-7 of Lent Term 2022:

Mr A. Fisher Knowledge, Language and the World, wk 2-7, Monday 2-3pm, In person

Ms R. Griep Political Philosophy wk 2-7, Tuesday 9-10am, In person

Ms S. Melendez-Gutierrez History of Analytic Philosophy wk 2-7, Tuesday 5-6pm, online, via Zoom

Mr J. Wagner Early Modern Philosophy wk 2-7, Friday 2-3pm, In person

Mr B. Marschall Ethics wk 2-7, Monday 3-4pm, In person

Mr C. Zarzar Greek and Roman Philosophy wk 2-7, Friday 4-5pm, In person

Ms Z. Walker Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art wk 2-7, Monday 5-6pm, In person

Students were reminded that once they have signed up to a group, they are expected to attend all 6 sessions.

16. Lecture Questionnaires

Students were encouraged to complete the online questionnaires in Lent Term. Lecturers would be asked to remind students, where possible, in their last lecture to fill in a feedback questionnaire for the lecture course. Students were also encouraged to complete questionnaires for Discussion Groups and Logic Classes.

The online questionnaires could be found on the relevant Moodle pages as follows:

IA: <https://www.vle.cam.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=210441>

IB: <https://www.vle.cam.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=210451>

II: <https://www.vle.cam.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=210461>

The deadline for LT22 feedback questionnaires would be midnight on Tuesday 22nd March 2022.

Students were also reminded of the box on the questionnaire for comments on other aspects of the Philosophy Course, and students were encouraged to use this

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box for any comments on lectures they attend that are borrowed from other Faculties.

**Action point:** Student reps are asked to mention the questionnaires in their communications with students.

17. National Student Survey for 3<sup>rd</sup> year undergrads

It was reported that the 2022 NSS survey opened on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022. The deadline is 30 April 2022. The link is here: <https://www.thestudentsurvey.com/>

Part II Philosophy students would also be contacted direct by Ipsos MORI. Feedback would be appreciated.

18. Postgraduate Offer Holders' Event

The offer holders' event would be held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022. Some current postgraduate student helpers would be needed, and information will be sent nearer the time. Heather reported that the Faculty is hoping to book a College venue for a hybrid online/in person event.

19. Cambridge Open Days for Prospective Undergraduates

It was reported that the format of the 2022 Cambridge Open Days for prospective undergraduate students would be hybrid with both virtual and in-person elements. The live Open Days would be held on Thursday 7 July and Friday 8 July 2022. Some current undergraduate and postgraduate student helpers would be needed, and further information would follow.

20. Any other business

Queries from postgraduate rep:

1. *Budget for social events. In particular I am keen to have enough budget to do both an MPhil formal and a more general grad dinner.*  
**Action point:** Postgraduate rep to investigate costs and report back to Heather.
2. *Coffee Machine. I have discussed this a bit with Ellen already but basically plans moving forwards for fixing and/or replacing the coffee machine.*  
EH reported the Faculty is in the process of buying the current machine and returning it to use following servicing.
3. *Moving the graduate seminar back into the Philosophy faculty. This has been moving around a lot recently and some have asked to look into whether it would be feasible to have it back here.*

**Action point:** AS to follow up with postgraduate rep.

21. Date of next meeting

Monday 9 May 2022.