

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

STUDENT-STAFF COMMITTEE

Minutes

for the online meeting on 1 November 2021, 12.05 pm by Zoom.

Present: Professor Alexander Bird (Chair of Faculty), Professor Arif Ahmed (Chair of Examiners), Professor Alex Oliver (Undergraduate Coordinator), Heather Sanderson (Faculty Administrator), Jo Marcus (Librarian), Charlie Evans (Graduate Secretary), Patrick Pan (Undergraduate Student Rep), Karolina Filova (Undergraduate Student Rep), Theo Langslow (Undergraduate), Gerard Kornacki (Undergraduate), Alex Offen (Undergraduate), Moemen Ismail (Undergraduate), Anna Simpson (Administrative Assistant).

Apologies: Nadia Ben Hassine (Postgraduate Student Rep)

1. Alexander Bird chaired the meeting.
2. Starring of items was invited.
3. The minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2021 were circulated and approved.
4. There were no matters arising from the minutes not raised elsewhere on the agenda.

5. Student-Staff Committee

a) A short outline of the way the Student-Staff Committee functions was circulated for information, and any questions.

b) Year Delegates on the Student-Staff Committee

Volunteers were sought from all Parts of the Tripos and the MPhil and PhD programmes to be a representative for their year group at Student-Staff Committee, a different function from the elected Faculty Board Representatives. There were no volunteers. In practice not all students would wish to attend all meetings but it was hoped/expected that at least two delegates from each year would regularly attend.

Any students who would be willing to volunteer as a year delegate should contact phil-admin@cam.ac.uk

6. Election of Student Representatives

The Chair highlighted that elections for student representatives on the Philosophy Faculty Board would be held from 12 November to 18 November 2021 with the closing of nominations a week earlier on 9 November 2021. Results would be announced centrally on 19 November 2021.

For more information about being a student rep students could see:

<https://www.cambridgesu.co.uk/yourvoice/academicreps/>

Thanks were offered to the student representatives for their hard work and support during a complicated year. An undergraduate rep observed that students had become more aware of the presence of their student reps over the past 12 months, in part due to their input into exam arrangements.

This year elections would again be administered centrally by the Cambridge Student Union. Further details on the elections could be found at:

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

Council representatives

It was noted that all students on the electoral roll would also have the chance to be elected to serve on Councils of the Schools. These elections would also take place from 12-18 November 2021.

7. Teaching Arrangements 2021-22

The Faculty had previously issued the updated the main guidance document for students for 2021-22 which could also be found on the website:

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

The Faculty would review the teaching and learning arrangements throughout the year. Student feedback was invited.

8. Lecture handouts

Some handouts are available to students outside of lectures. These can be found on Moodle for the relevant paper or the lecturer's own websites. Access to these Moodle pages is administered by Faculty Office staff.

9. Lecture questionnaires

Online questionnaires would once again be used to compile teaching feedback during the year. Lecturers would be asked to remind students, where possible, in their last lecture to fill in a feedback questionnaire for the lecture course. Students would also be encouraged to complete questionnaires for Discussion Groups and Logic Classes. Alexander Bird encouraged the student reps to highlight the questionnaires to their peers and reminded them that the results are discussed by the Faculty.

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

The weblinks to access the online questionnaires are available here:

<https://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/questionnaires/ugrad-questionnaires>

Details would be circulated to teaching staff and students by email.

Students were reminded that evaluation sheets for completed lecture questionnaires from past years are available for consultation – please contact the Faculty Office staff.

10. Exam arrangements

Confirmations of the proposed exam arrangements have been circulated by the Chair of Examiners, Arif Ahmed.

In summary all papers would be five hours, online and open book, with the exception of the three papers below that would be closed book and in person:

- Part 1A Paper 5 (Formal Methods.)
- Part II Paper 5 (Philosophy in the Long Middle Ages)
- Part II Paper 7 (Mathematical Logic)

For full details see:

https://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/files/philosophy_tripos_2022_update_october_12.pdf

Arif Ahmed confirmed he would attend all SSC meetings during the year to discuss exam arrangements. Patrick Pan reported that communication of exam arrangements had been very clear and students have a good understanding.

11. Tripes Final degree classification

The University has moved to an overall degree classification with **effect for students who matriculated in Michaelmas 2020**. This move was to address a concern that the previous process - whereby students received a class for each year but not an overall class for their degree - was often not understood by potential employers or admitting bodies of other Universities.

The algorithm for obtaining the final classification for the Philosophy Tripos is Part I A (0%), Part IB (30%) Part II (70%). Assessment marks from the first year do not contribute to the overall class. The second year will be weighted at 30% and the third year will be weighted at 70%.

Emails to 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students would follow, and additional information would be included in the [Guide to Courses](#).

It was reported that the model chosen by the University was inline with the preference of Philosophy undergraduate students when surveyed before Faculty Board in 2019.

Patrick Pan reported that some students, especially those selecting borrowed papers, had mentioned they might have chosen different paper options had they known about the 70:30 split.

Alex Oliver felt it would be feasible to change paper options and that it should be possible for any paper. Alexander Bird confirmed this should be communicated to both students and DoSs.

Action Point: HS, AA and AO to liaise and HS to send an email.

12. Faculty of Philosophy – Casimir Lewy Library Committee

The Library Committee meeting takes place in Lent Term to ensure that newly elected Faculty Board Representatives can be present at that meeting.

The Library Committee membership is:

Librarian – Jo Harcus

Chair of the Faculty – Alexander Bird

Faculty Administrator – Heather Sanderson

Director of Graduate Studies – Richard Holton MT and ET; Michael Potter LT

Undergraduate Co-ordinator – Alex Oliver MT; Jessie Munton LT and ET

2 Undergraduate Representatives on the Faculty Board – *tbc after election*

Graduate Representative on the Faculty Board – *tbc after election*

The library team strongly encourage and welcome your feedback about the library space, services and collections (print and electronic) at any time. Pop into the library to speak to Jo or email her at jmh225@cam.ac.uk. If preferred, you could send your feedback anonymously via the online feedback wall at https://en-gb.padlet.com/phillib/Feedback_Wall or via your student representatives.

13. Email lists

The Faculty has two email lists which are used for publicising events/information relevant to philosophy:

Phil-event@lists.cam.ac.uk is for Philosophical events/groups based in Cambridge, and Phil-bulletin@lists.cam.ac.uk is for information of broader interest.

Sometimes information is posted to both lists. Students could 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.

14. Extended Essays in Part IB/Extended Essays and Dissertations in Part II

Students were reminded that the deadline for submitting extended essay and dissertation titles is **12:00 noon on Friday 19th November 2021**.

All titles have to be approved by the Chair of Examiners before the end of Michaelmas Term, on 3rd December 2021.

Students were also asked to note that any student who does not submit their Extended Essay on time, would have no option but to sit the corresponding exam paper. Any student who does not submit their dissertation on time would effectively fail the paper, as the deadline for submitting dissertations is after the final deadline for amending exam entries.

Students were reminded that a selection of samples of good work of Part IB and Part II extended essays and dissertations are available to view from the Philosophy library issue desk. Examples could also be found on the webpage below:

<https://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/ugrads-exam-folder/ext-essays-diss>

15. Sample Exam Answers

Students were reminded that there are now several examples of real answers to Tripos Exam Questions with notes about the expected class, and model answers to a Formal Methods paper on the webpage below:

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

16. Examiners' reports for 2021

Where available individual examiners' reports and the External Examiner's report for Part II for 2021, would be available shortly on the Faculty website under "Examiner reports"

<https://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/exam-reports>

A raven login would be required to access the report.

17. 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 (weeks 2-7). The groups and leaders have been confirmed and timings would follow in due course.

Knowledge, Language and the World – A. Fisher
History of Analytic Philosophy – S. Melendez-Gutierrez
Ethics – B. Marschall
Early Modern Philosophy – J. Wagner
Epistemology & Metaphysics of Science – O. Westerblad
Political Philosophy – R. Griep
Greek and Roman – A. Santoro
Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art – Z. Walker

Once a student signs up to a group, s/he would be expected to attend all the sessions. More information would follow in due course.

18. Harassment prevention and complaints

The Faculty has signed up to the BPA/SWIP Good Practice Scheme, and also follows the University's procedures.

Following Faculty Board agreement at the meeting on 20 May 2020, documentation and invitations to bought-in lecturers will make sure that everyone involved in teaching has University training in equality and diversity matters and that they know about the University's sexual harassment policy.

For academic staff administrative roles (including Equality Working Group/Athena SWAN Academic Lead; Gender Champion; Racial & Sexual Harassment Officer etc) see <https://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/people/Admin-roles/view>

The Breaking the Silence webpage is available here:
<https://www.breakingthesilence.cam.ac.uk/breaking-silence-university-statement>

19. Social Committee for undergraduates

Normally the Faculty would provide some funding for social events for undergraduates. However, it would depend this year on how the pandemic situation develops; if any students would be interested in setting up a social committee, they should contact Heather Sanderson (email hs313@cam.ac.uk).

20. Postgraduate Social Events

Normally the Faculty is also able to provide some funding for social events for graduates, e.g., Christmas lunch and the postgrad rep would get involved with this. However, it would depend this year on how the pandemic situation develops; if any other students would be interested in setting up a social committee, they should contact Heather Sanderson (email hs313@cam.ac.uk).

21. University Open Days for prospective students

- a) The virtual Postgraduate Open Days were held on 1 - 14 November 2021.
- b) Cambridge Open Days for prospective undergraduates would be held on 7 & 8 July 2022.

Thanks were extended to everyone who helped with recent Open Days in particular Jessie Munton. Student volunteer helpers would be sought again nearer the time.

22. Introductory Day for new students

The Introductory Day for all new Philosophy students took place on Wednesday 6 October 2021. Thanks to Patrick Pan for talking about being a student rep. We hope that a student rep will also give a similar talk at the Introductory Day next year in October 2022.

23. Amoral Sciences, Immoral Sciences and Moral Sciences Clubs etc

Details of the Amoral Sciences Club, Immoral Club, Moral Sciences Club, and other discussion groups and seminars can be found here:
<http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/seminars-phil/seminars-discussions>

24. Any other business

No other business.

25. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the SSC will be Monday 7 February 2022 at 12.05pm on Zoom.