

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY
STAFF-STUDENT COMMITTEE

Minutes

for the meeting Tuesday 5th May 2020, 1.05 p.m. by Zoom webinar

Present: Professor Rae Langton, Professor Michael Potter (Chair of Examiners), Dr John Filling (Undergraduate Coordinator), Dr Nakul Krishna, Dr Owen Griffiths, Heather Sanderson (Faculty Administrator), Marie-France Moss (IT Officer), Jo Harcus (Librarian) Clare Dickinson (Principal Secretary) Charlie Evans (Graduate Secretary), Sahanika Ratnayake (PhD student) Marc Niklas Ernst (MPhil Student Rep), Ronja Griep (MPhil student), Arun Prabhakar (Undergraduate Student Rep), Amanda Astley (Undergraduate), Jack Walker (Undergraduate), Anna Simpson (Administrative Assistant).

This meeting was an opportunity for students to raise questions, provide feedback, and feel supported, during the global pandemic with remote study and working.

This meeting was **not** audio/video recorded, as it was designed to be a live event, unfolding in real time, where discussion could be open, relaxed, engaged, and interactive.

1. Rae Langton chaired the meeting.
2. Starring of items was invited.
3. No apologies for absence were received.
4. The minutes of the meeting held on 4th February 2020 were approved. These minutes were previously circulated to all students via e-mail for information.
5. New appointments/Staff news
It was reported that Alexander Bird had been elected to the Bertrand Russell Professorship of Philosophy, and would take up the role on 1st of October 2020. He would join the Faculty earlier, on 1st of July 2020, as Director of Research (part-time). Alexander Bird is currently the Peter Sowerby Professor of Philosophy and Medicine at Kings College, London.
- * 6. Easter Term 2020 Teaching arrangements
All students were emailed details about remote teaching provision for Easter Term 2020. Further information could be found on the following dedicated pages on the Faculty Website.
Undergraduate - <https://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/teaching-ET2020>
MPhil - <https://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/graduates/mphil-ET2020>
PhD - <https://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/graduates/phd-ET2020>

Questions and comments were invited. Feedback received mentioned online seminars were working well; Logic Classes were working well. The mechanics of remote learning were good, student motivation was discussed. There may

still be ongoing issues if students don't have good access to internet and books.

- *7. Tripes Examinations – Revised Assessment Arrangements Easter Term 2020
All undergraduates had been emailed details of the revised methods of assessment for the Philosophy Tripos (email from cll30@cam.ac.uk on 31 March 2020 at 16.48), information could also be found on the following webpage:

<https://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/ugrads-exam-folder/revised-assessments-ET2020>

The normal Philosophy Faculty marking criteria could be found on the following webpage:

<https://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/ugrads-exam-folder/markig-criteria-2020.pdf/>

Questions and comments were invited. An undergraduate student rep reported that they were not aware of what could have been done better in the circumstances and hadn't received any negative feedback from other students regarding the revised assessment arrangements.

8. Dates for Release of Part IB and Part II Marks

Part IB – Friday 19th June 2020
Part II – Thursday 18th June 2020

Breakdown of marks would be sent to Directors of Studies and Senior Tutors beforehand. **Directors of Studies would inform students of their marks for individual papers. If a student was unable to contact their Director of Studies to receive their marks, they should contact the Tutorial Office of their College.** The Faculty Office would be unable to disclose marks to individual students.

- *9. Library update

Jo Marcus, Philosophy Librarian, reported that the Library team have been working hard with colleagues from across the Cambridge Libraries network to plug gaps in electronic provision of undergraduate reading list materials as far as possible. As well as purchasing more ebooks, updating links to temporary eresources in Moodle and liaising with Paper Co-ordinators to organise scans of book chapters (where copyright permissions allow) they have also been responding to graduate students' requests for electronic resources to support their research. Despite the team's best efforts, however, some readings only exist in print and aren't available to be scanned.

The undergraduate student reps reported good accessibility to reading list materials and, in response to a question from the postgraduate student rep, Jo confirmed that the majority of postgraduate requests have also been fulfilled.

Jo encouraged student reps to encourage all students to email phillib@hermes.cam.ac.uk if there is anything at all the Library team can help with. Jo also thanked teaching staff who are helping with scanning and asked them to forward any further requests they receive to the Library email above before scanning. This will allow the team to check if the reading is already available electronically, check copyright permissions if it isn't and

make scans available to all Philosophy students and staff via Moodle to ensure compliance with our licence with the Copyright Licensing Agency.

The Library team are also hoping to offer some virtual Philosotea sessions - watch your email for more details.

10. Well-being and financial support

Wellbeing and welfare information for all students during the Coronavirus outbreak can be found here

<https://www.studentwellbeing.admin.cam.ac.uk/coronavirus>

Information for students in need of financial support due to the Coronavirus outbreak can be found here <https://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/fees-and-funding/financial-hardship-support-access-funds>

*11. Query from a 1st year Discussion Group leader and 1st year undergraduates about (1) Discussion Group readings and (2) an undergraduate led reading group

Sahanika Ratnayake, PhD student and Part IA Discussion group leader, raised the following query:

- 1) "Update readings for Ethics sections of 1A Discussion group: There are various pedagogical (too swift of a transition to normative philosophy, too complex, order of readings etc.) and diversity issues (not representative in terms of range of philosophy and philosophers) with the current reading.

It was proposed and agreed that this query be put to the Ethics, Political Philosophy and Aesthetics Caucus, which will next meet on 11 May 2020.

Undergraduate students raised the following query.

- 2) "Faculty support for 1A undergraduate led reading group: Undergraduate students rarely attend reading groups run by graduate students or faculty unless they are explicitly linked to papers running that term. To rectify this it was proposed the Faculty support a group led by undergraduates themselves."

There was support for this proposal. Amanda Astley and Jack Walker were asked to email John Filling and Rae Langton to progress this. The Library team are also very happy to source readings for the group and make them accessible online.

12. Arts & Social Sciences Open Days

The Cambridge Open Days for prospective undergraduate students would be on Thursday 2 July and Friday 3 July 2020. These would now be delivered as virtual events. Attendees would be directed to download the Open Days app to view online general and subject presentations. The app would also provide information about the University and Colleges and there would be links to the soon-to-be-launched Virtual Tour. Philosophy would need to contribute at least one online subject session, i.e. a course presentation, either live webinar or pre-recorded session.

Additionally, in-person Open Days are planned for Thursday 17 and Friday 18 September, information would follow.

13. Proposed syllabus changes for Tripos 2020-21

Changes proposed by Student Staff Committee on 4 Feb 2020 were approved by Faculty Board by circulation.

The latest Guide to Courses for 2020-21 showing all of the approved changes was circulated for information.

14. Reading Lists

Faculty Caucus meetings would be reviewing Combined Course Outlines and Reading lists this term. These will be updated over the summer and made available via the Faculty website before the start of the new academic year.

15. Lecture Questionnaires evaluation sheets

Evaluation sheets for completed lecture questionnaires for Lent Term 2020 would be available for consultation in due course. For queries, people should email philadmin@cam.ac.uk.

The Faculty would be considering how to collect evaluation for Easter Term 2020 teaching provision. Further details would follow.

16. NUS Green Impact

The Philosophy Green Team (Clare Dickinson and Charlie Evans) would continue to highlight green issues to the Faculty.

17. Any other business.

The possibility of running ad-hoc seminars around the current Covid-19 pandemic was briefly discussed. Richard Holton will run a session on ethical issues and Covid-19. Sahanika said she would also find out about sessions run by HPS.

18. Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be held in Michaelmas Term 2020. SSC and Faculty Board meeting dates for 2020-21 would be confirmed after the Faculty Board meeting on 18 May 2020.