

STAFF-STUDENT COMMITTEE

Minutes

A meeting of Philosophy students and staff was held on 5 November 2019, at 1.05 p.m. in the Faculty Board Room, Raised Faculty Building, Sidgwick Site

Present: Joe Ashe (Part IA), Wouter Cohen (PhD), Frank Cudek (Part IB), Marc Niklas Ernst (MPhil), Ronja Griep (MPhil), Charlie Evans (Graduate Secretary) Dr John Filling (Undergraduate Coordinator), Heather Sanderson (Faculty Administrator), Anna Simpson (Administrative Assistant).

- 1 Marc Niklas Ernst put himself forward to chair the meeting.
- 2 Starring of items was invited.
- 3 Apologies for absence were received from Professor Rae Langton and Clare Dickinson.
- 4 The minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2019 were approved.
- 5 Matters arising from the minutes not raised elsewhere on the agenda
Item 7: Student Representation Review – Consultation.
The Faculty took part in the University-wide consultation on changes to representation during the 18-19 academic year. Proposals for change were put forward as a Grace in the University Reporter in July 2019. The Regent House called a ballot on the changes, to take place during the Michaelmas Term 2019. Therefore, **there would be no changes to the process or dates for the 2019-20 elections** which would take place under the same rules as had been in place for the past few years.

The Notice in the Reporter which was dated 22 July 2019 could be viewed on the following webpage:

<https://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/201819/weekly/6557/section3.shtml#heading2-17>

It was reported that more information would follow after the ballot.

6 Staff-Student Committee

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

b) Year Delegates on the Staff-Student Committee

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. It was explained that students who agreed to be representatives for their year group would perform a different function from the elected Faculty Board Representatives (see below for more information on elections of Student Representatives).

The following students agreed at the meeting to be Year Delegates from 6th November 2019 until the First Staff-Student Meeting in the Michaelmas Term 2020:

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----|
| Representing Part IA: | Joe Ashe | CC |
| Representing Part IB: | Frank Cudek | T |
| Representing Graduates: | Wouter Cohen (PhD) | CAI |
| | Marc Niklas Ernst (MPhil) | ED |
| | Ronja Griep (MPhil) | F |

7 Election of Student Representatives

A guidance document from CUSU was circulated. Students would also be able to access a CUSU produced Faculty Reps Handbook at:
<https://www.cusu.co.uk/faculty-representation/>

It was noted that the elections for student representatives on the Philosophy Faculty Board would be held on **Tuesday 19 November 2019** with the closing of nominations a week earlier on **12 November 2019**.

This year the Faculty would continue to use an online voting system for the student elections. More details about this voting system would be sent to students in due course.

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 use the on-line ballot and would be managed by the Educational and Student Policy (ESP) Section. The date has yet to be confirmed by the Council of the Schools, but it is likely that elections would take place towards the end of November 2019. CUSU and the ESP Section would contact students directly about this.

8 Query from a 2nd year undergrad about coverage of metatheory of propositional calculus

A 2nd-year philosophy undergraduate had asked to discuss the following:

“There is a gap in terms of content between Part IA Formal Methods and Part II Mathematical Logic that is not covered in Part IB of the Tripos, namely the metatheory of propositional calculus (MPL).

Indispensability of covering MPL before tackling Part II Math Logic is quite clear. I would like to know how the Faculty wants to accommodate this issue. It seems to me that there are 4 options:

- 1) MPL will be assumed to have been covered independently by students;
- 2) MPL will be added to P. II Math Logic without loss of other contents of the paper;
- 3) MPL will be added to P. II Math Logic with some loss of other contents of the paper;
- 4) There will be additional (non-examinable?) series of lectures on MPL.”

If the decision had not been made yet, they would like to know which of these options would be the most likely.

HS explained that the student was correct that MPL is not covered in the Part IB or Part II teaching for 2019-20. Moreover, it was explained that there the syllabus is reviewed each year, and the Part II content for 2020-21 would be considered as part of that annual process and would take into account the paper changes that had taken place for Part IB in 2019-20, to ensure an appropriate transition. The MPL query would be covered at the Faculty’s caucus meeting at the end of Michaelmas term 2019. Proposed Syllabus changes would then go for review to Faculty Board, be reported at the next Staff-Student meeting for student comment, before going to the March 2020 Faculty Board for a formal decision.

HS explained that the MPL query had been forwarded meantime to Owen Griffiths who said that a thorough textbook called Metatheory is freely available on Tim Button’s website, for any students who wished to read ahead on the subject.

9 Specimen question papers for new Part IB Philosophy papers for 2019-20

Students were reminded that mock exam papers were available on the webpage below for:

Paper 1 Knowledge, Language and the World, and
Paper 2 History of Analytic Philosophy

<https://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/IB/curr-students/ugrads-exam-folder/ugrads-exams>

10 Faculty of Philosophy – Casimir Lewy Library Committee:

It was noted that the Library Committee meeting would take place in Lent Term to ensure that newly elected Faculty Board Representatives can be present at that meeting.

It was noted that the Library Committee consists of the following members:

Librarian – Jo Harcus

Chair of the Faculty – Rae Langton

Faculty Administrator – Heather Sanderson

Director of Graduate Studies – Richard Holton

Undergraduate Co-ordinator - John Filling

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

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

11 Email lists

It was noted that the Faculty has two email lists which are used for publicising events/information relevant to philosophy:

Phil-events is for Philosophical events/groups based in Cambridge, and
Phil-bulletin is for information of broader interest.

Sometimes information would be 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.

12 Extended Essays in Part IB/Extended Essays and Dissertations in Part II

Students were reminded that a selection of samples of good work of Part IB and Part II extended essays and dissertations were available to view via 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>

Students were reminded that the deadline for application was 12:00 noon on Friday 22 November 2019.

All titles have to be approved by the Chair of Examiners before students leave for the Christmas break.

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 did not submit their dissertation on time would effectively fail the paper, as the deadline for submitting dissertations was after the final deadline for amending exam entries.

13 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>

14 Examiners' reports

It was noted that the reports for 2019, including external reports, would be available on the Faculty website under “Examiner reports” by 8 November 2019:

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

A raven login would be required to access the reports.

Faculty Board recently commended the detail in these reports, and agreed that students should be encouraged to make use of them.

15 Discussion Groups for Part IB students:

It was noted that the Faculty was in the process of arranging discussion groups for Part IB for the Lent Term 2020 (weeks 2-7). The leaders of these groups would be confirmed in due course. Based on discussion group topics in 2019, the topics would *likely* be:

Knowledge, Language and the World

History of Analytic Philosophy

Ethics

Early Modern Philosophy

Epistemology & Metaphysics of Science

Political Philosophy

Students would be emailed with details and may sign up for as many groups as they wish, but need to bear in mind the additional work involved. Once a student has signed up, it is expected that s/he will attend all the sessions.

16 Lecture handouts

It was noted that some handouts are made available to students outside of lectures.

These could be found on Moodle for the relevant paper or the lecturer’s own websites.

Access to these Moodle pages would be restricted to students taking Philosophy papers and is administered by Library staff. It was agreed that an email reminder would be sent to students to remind them of handouts on Moodle.

17 Lecture questionnaires

Students were encouraged to complete the paper questionnaires, which would be distributed in final lectures in weeks 4, 6 or 8 of Michaelmas Term, depending on the length of the lecture series. Students were also encouraged to complete questionnaires circulated in Discussion Groups and Logic Classes. If any students missed the final lecture, or did not get the opportunity to complete a questionnaire in their lecture, it was possible to download questionnaires from the Faculty website:

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

Students were reminded that evaluation sheets for completed lecture questionnaires from past years were available for consultation from the Library issue desk.

18 Old Library

New students were reminded that the Old Library was a common area where students and/or staff could meet informally, have coffee/tea and discuss philosophy etc. Due to the nature of the location conversations would have to be kept fairly quiet because of the various offices nearby. Hot Chocolate and coffee could be purchased for 60p, and tea for 50p – payment should be placed in the black honesty tin next to the coffee machine. In line with the University’s Sustainable Food Policy: (http://www.unicen.cam.ac.uk/files/cambridge_sustainable_food_policy_2016_0.pdf) the hot chocolate, tea and sugar provided in the coffee area are all Fairtrade products. Students were reminded that if they were using one of the mugs provided by the Faculty for their hot drink, they should wash it up at the sink by the Faculty Office. It was noted that this was not part of the cleaners’ job and it would be appreciated if everyone took responsibility for their washing up. Please leave the Old Library area as you would wish to find it!

19 Social Committee for undergraduates

It was noted that the Faculty could provide some funding for social events for undergraduates. If any students were interested in setting up a social committee, they should contact Heather Sanderson (hs313@cam.ac.uk).

20 Graduate Social Events

It was noted that the Faculty was also able to provide some funding for social events for graduates, e.g. Christmas lunch etc. The grad rep would usually get involved with this, but if any other students were interested in setting up a social committee, they should contact Heather Sanderson (email hs313@cam.ac.uk).

21 NUS Green Impact

The Faculty was awarded a Gold Green Impact award in June 2019, and the Green Impact Team in the Faculty were now working towards submitting a Platinum Award in 2021. If any students were interested in joining them Philosophy Green Impact Team, they should contact Clare Dickinson in the Faculty Office – cll30@cam.ac.uk or Charlie Evans in the Grad Students Office – cme34@cam.ac.uk

22 University Open Days for prospective students in 2019-20

- a) The Postgraduate Open Day was on Friday 1st November 2019.
- b) Cambridge Open Day for prospective undergraduates would be held on Thursday 2nd & Friday 3rd July 2020.

Thanks were extended to everyone who had helped with recent Open Days. Student volunteers would be sought again, prior to each new Open Day event.

23 Introductory Day for new students

The Introductory Day for all new Philosophy students took place on Wednesday 9th October 2019. The committee thanked Sarah Merrick for talking about being a student rep. It is hoped that a student rep would give a similar talk at the next Introductory Day in October 2020.

24 Amoral Sciences, Immoral Sciences and Moral Sciences Clubs etc

It was noted that details of the Amoral Sciences Club, Immoral Club, Moral Sciences Club, and other discussion groups and seminars could be found here: <http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/seminars-phil/seminars-discussions>

25 Any other business.

- A student wished to clarify whether it was still possible to have exam questions on a part of the syllabus that had no associated lectures and no specimen questions online. John Filling confirmed that the Faculty does not undertake to lecture on every topic listed on the Syllabus, as stated in the Guide to Courses, but there could be examination questions on any topic in the Syllabus. Specimen questions were not an indicator of which exam questions would come up.
- A student noted that there was a University petition to ensure adequate training of all supervisors. John Filling clarified that Supervisors were organised by Colleges and that the Philosophy Faculty offers training sessions to ensure high standards.
- HS suggested that the name of the committee should be changed from Staff-Student to Student-Staff to encourage student participation. The committee approved and the change would be proposed at Faculty Board.
- Philosotea – the next event would take place on 21 November 2019.
- Podcast filming – Filming in the Faculty would take place on 21 November 2019 to refresh the Philosophy films for prospective undergrad students. HS would be looking for student volunteers who were happy to be filmed – further details would be emailed in due course.