

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

A meeting of the University Council was held on Wednesday 8 October 2008 at 11.15 am in the Board Room.

Present	Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (in the chair), Registrar, Senior Lecturer, Senior Tutor, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Dr C Laudet, Dr C MacMaolain, Dr C Morris, Professor J Wickham, Dean of Engineering, Mathematics and Science, Dr V Kelly, Dr M Lyons, Dr D O'Sullivan, Dean of Health Sciences, Dr D Brennan, Professor M McCarron, Professor M Radomski, Dr K Johnson, Professor G Whyte, Mr H Sullivan, Ms C Ní Dhubhda, Mr F Hughes, Ms A Murphy, Mr D Kavanagh.
Apologies	Provost, Dean of Research, Professor J Fitzpatrick, Dr A O'Gara, Mr D Walsh, Librarian, Secretary to the Scholars.
In attendance	Academic Secretary, Acting Secretary, Chief Operating Officer.
By invitation	Chair of the Student Services Committee (Dr A Piesse) (for Actum CL/08-09/007).

SECTION A

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer welcomed all Council members and observers to the first meeting of Council for the academic year 2008-09 and noted the Provost's apologies.

- CL/08-09/001 Statutory Declaration** New members attending Council for the first time made the statutory declaration:  
Dr C MacMaolain, Dr C Morris, Professor J Wickham, Dr V Kelly, Dr D O'Sullivan, Dr D Brennan, Professor M McCarron, Professor M Radomski, Dr K Johnson, Professor G Whyte, Ms C Ní Dhubhda, Ms A Murphy, Mr D Kavanagh.
- CL/08-09/002 Minutes** The Minutes of the 24<sup>th</sup> June 2008, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2008 (two sets of minutes) and the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2008 were approved subject to a correction to Actum CL/07-08/211(b) to read Physical, Computational and Materials Chemistry.
- CL/08-09/003 Matters Arising from the Minutes**
- (i) **Actum CL/07-08/201**, the Acting Secretary noted that special meetings of Council will be held on the 29<sup>th</sup> October 2008 to interview a candidate for a Personal Chair in the School of Genetics and Microbiology, and on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2008 to interview a candidate for a Personal Chair to be jointly

held in the School of Medicine and the School of Biochemistry and Immunology.

- (ii) **Actum CL/07-08/202**, the Acting Secretary noted that Andreas Peschel has declined the offer of appointment of a Personal Chair (Stokes).
- (iii) **Actum CL/07-08/223**, the Acting Secretary noted that Revised General Procedures and Protocol for filling of Chairs is included under Agenda Item C.6.
- (iv) **Actum CL/07-08/227**, the Acting Secretary noted that Professor Holm has taken up the position of Professor/Academic Director Trinity Long Room Hub.

**CL/08-09/004 Outlook for 2009** The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer prefaced his comments on the outlook for 2009 by noting the significant changes in the College's governance structures which resulted in changes to the composition of the University Council and in the functions of Faculty Deans and annual Academic Officers. These changes together with the establishment of the new positions of Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer and Chief Operating Officer should better prepare College for the opportunities and challenges facing it in the coming years. He noted that the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer and the Chief Operating Officer report directly to the Provost and have a strong coordination role of College wide academic and administrative activities.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer identified the main academic tasks for 2008-09, namely, the implementation of the new academic year structure, the reorganisation of the committee structures, and maintaining student numbers and quality.

- (i) *Implementation of the new academic year structure*: if Council, Board and the Fellows approve the revised Statute in respect of the new academic year structure, a considerable body of work will have to be done to ensure a smooth transition from the old to the new academic year structure.
- (ii) *Reorganisation of the committee structures*: Board at its meeting of the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2008 approved the membership of a working group to review and make recommendations on a new committee structure to Council and Board. This working group is chaired by the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer and is expected to report to Council and Board in Hilary Term.
- (iii) *Maintaining student numbers and quality*: A total of 60,720 applications were made to the Central Application Office (CAO) in 2008 representing an increase of 3.9% on the 2007 application figures. Trinity College continued to attract a substantial proportion (11%) of first preference applications in the CAO system and these increased by 2.6% on 2007 (6,556 to 6,731). The registered figures for first year undergraduate entrants for 2008-09 show an increase of 11% on 2007-08 figures. This increase represents increases in some course quotas as well as new course offerings. Despite increases in course quotas, the cut-off points for individual undergraduate programmes have not been adversely affected. CAO points are a measure of the academic quality of new entrants, and it is important that Trinity maintains high standards despite the worsening financial situation facing the education sector.

Council discussed the issues raised by the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer and agreed that quality and standards of programmes should not be diluted and that College should have a strategy in place to deal with the consequences of further reductions in the core grant. In response to a question, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer confirmed that there are no plans to freeze staff appointments. He

emphasised the need to achieve greater efficiencies across the College, and noted that Trinity College's financial position was, for now, relatively stable. The need for infrastructural improvements and development to support additional students was stressed, and the potential adverse impact on student services was highlighted. Council noted that there is an urgent need to find creative solutions to address the consequences of limited resources and further financial reductions to College's block grant.

**CL/08-09/005 Graduate Studies: Proposed Masters in Theological Studies** A memorandum from the Dean of Graduate Studies dated 29<sup>th</sup> September 2008 was circulated. The Dean of Graduate Studies introduced this item. She provided the background to the development of the programme, noting the involvement of the Registrar with the House of Bishops and the Church of Ireland Theological Institute (CITI) to advance the proposal. The Masters in Theological Studies proposes to replace the current Bachelor in Theology degree which has been in existence since 1988. Following a review of the degree programme, it was found that 85% of candidates for the degree programme held an honours degree on application, and a majority already had a level of experience and knowledge of ministry that prepared them for study at postgraduate level. The Dean drew Council's attention to the unique structure of the Masters programme which has two part-time modes of delivery: Part A carries 120 European Credit Transfer Scheme (ECTS) over a three-year period and has a quota of 10 EU students; Part B carries 120 ECTS over a six-year period and has a quota of 15 EU students. The programme complies with College's regulations on ECTS, and its first entry is scheduled for October 2009.

The Registrar commented on the importance of continuing inter-institutional relations with the CITI, and commended the Dean of Graduate Studies and the former Senior Lecturer for their contribution to the development of the Masters programme. He noted the innovative nature of delivery of the Masters programme and its contribution to the lifelong learning agenda. Model B places a high emphasis on distance learning thus enabling greater ease of participation by mature learners. In response to a query from the Students' Union Education Officer, the Registrar confirmed that Council had approved the discontinuation of the Bachelor in Theology degree and that the B.A. (Mod) in Biblical and Theological Studies would continue in existence. He also confirmed that there would be no reduction in the resources dedicated to the final year of the Bachelor in Theology. In response to a question, the Dean of Graduate Studies confirmed that the proposed two modes of part-time delivery was a new structure, and she emphasised the importance of flexibility in the provision of postgraduate programmes. She confirmed that the admissions criteria were appropriate, and that the proposed Masters was ecumenical in nature and was not, therefore, exclusive to any one religious denomination.

Council approved the proposal leading to the award of Masters in Theological Studies.

**CL/08-09/006 Academic Appeals Committee** Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Appeals Committee dated 10<sup>th</sup> July 2008 were circulated. Council noted and approved the recommendations therein.

**CL/08-09/007 Student Services Annual Report 2006-07** A copy of the Student Services Annual Report 2006-07 was circulated. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer welcomed Dr A Piesse, Chair of the Student Services Committee, to Council for this item. Speaking to the report, Dr Piesse drew Council's attention to the main services

provided which include the Careers Advisory Centre, the College Chaplaincy, the College Day Nursery, the College Health Service, the Department of Sport, the Disability Service, the Student Counselling Service, the Tutorial Service, the Capitation Committee, and the Financial Assistance Committee.

Dr Piesse noted the key achievements of the Student Services in 2006-07. These included the opening of the Sports Centre, the appointment of the new College Medical Director, Dr D McGrath, and a sessional College psychiatrist, the election of the new Senior Tutor, Dr M O'Regan, the appointment of an Access Officer and two Inquiry Officers, and the completion of work on the student mental health policy and guidelines.

Key issues still to be addressed include the need to:

- provide adequate space for student services;
- consolidate an adequate number of College psychiatrist sessions;
- provide appropriate line management in the day nursery;
- conduct a formal analysis of the demand for after-school and holiday care for school-age children and to resolve the chronic shortage of places available;
- assess the effect on student services of the diversification of the student body and increase in 4<sup>th</sup> level participation.

Dr Piesse informed Council that a review of the day nursery is currently underway and a review report is expected soon. She requested that those members of Council concerned with the Estates Strategy Group would keep the student centre high on the agenda.

In response to a query, Dr Piesse observed that there were currently 204 children waiting for places in the day nursery, which makes provision for 48 children, and noted the need to assess current and potential demand beyond that provided by the waiting list. It was commented that the cost of childcare in Ireland was possibly the highest in Europe. The lack of childcare and its perceived effect on admissions and retention especially of mature students was discussed, but there was no evidence available to correlate lack of availability of childcare places with either admissions or retention of parent students. Council agreed that this level of information was necessary in order to plan for future provision.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer thanked Dr Piesse for presenting the Student Services Annual Report 2006-07.

Council noted the Student Services Annual Report 2006-07.

**CL/08-09/008 Dean of Students' Annual Report 2007-08** A copy of the Dean of Students' Annual Report 2007-08 was circulated. The Dean of Students introduced this item acknowledging the many achievements of his predecessor, Mr Bruce Misstear, in this post. He drew Council's attention to the main activities of Dean of Students during the academic year 2007-08 which included: membership of the Student Service Committee; coordination of project submissions in respect of student services to the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) 2 Working Group; participation in the quality review of the College Tutorial Service; chair of the Student Experience Forum; member of the Irish Universities Student Services Network and of several committees and sub-committees of College. In respect to policy development, the Dean of Students noted that the mental health policy and the policy on intermission of studies for extra-curricular activities were approved by Council and Board, and further noted his

involvement in drafting a College policy on fitness to practice issues and discussions on updating the Student Charter.

Turning to priority actions for 2008-09, the Dean of Students noted the importance of advancing College's plans for a new Student Centre, of continuing to promote student volunteerism, and of integrating more fully off-campus students into the social activities of the College.

Council discussed the issue of fitness to practice and noted the importance of involving the relevant accreditation and professional bodies in agreeing a common approach. The Dean of Students explained that the first step is to agree a College position and then to consult with the relevant bodies. In response to questions, the Dean of Students confirmed that there are no known benchmarks for evaluating the Trinity experience but that this was an issue that the Irish Universities Student Services Network would address in time. The Students' Union Education Officer commented that adequate infrastructural supports for students, including a Student Centre and student accommodation, contributed to the quality of the student experience and were contributing factors in attracting and retaining students. One Council member commented that the position of Dean of Students was a fulltime senior position in other Irish Universities. The Academic Secretary noted that two student services positions were awarded under SIF 2 despite the decision by the SIF International Panel of Assessors not to allocate funds to student supports. Concluding comments on this item, the Dean of Students reaffirmed the importance of adequate student supports to attract and retain students and to foster graduate loyalty to the College.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer commended the work of the Dean of Students and thanked him for his annual report. Council noted the Dean of Students' Annual Report 2007-08.

**CL/08-09/009 Draft Statutory Change on the Academic Year Structure** A memorandum from the Registrar dated 4<sup>th</sup> October 2008 was circulated. The Registrar introduced this item noting that Board (Actum BD/07-08/275) and Council (Actum CL/07-08/155) approved the introduction of a new academic year structure with effect from the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2009. To give effect to the new academic year structure as approved by Board and Council, Chapter XVII of the 1966 Consolidated Statutes has to be amended. The Registrar drew Council's attention to the proposed revised Statute.

In discussing this item, the Students' Union Education Officer sought clarification on the timing of reading weeks and the Scholarship examinations. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer noted that these were being addressed separately and advised the Students' Union Education Officer to discuss this matter further with the Academic Secretary. In response to a question on the proposed timing of the academic appeals, the Registrar advised that the draft schedule of the academic year structure will be amended to reflect the revised Statute if approved by the Fellows.

Council noted and approved the revised Statute to give effect to the new Academic Year Structure with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> July 2009 as follows:

1. The Academic Year shall consist of three Terms, namely:

Michaelmas Term, which shall begin on the last Monday in August, on which day the Academic Year shall commence, and continue to the Friday of the sixteenth week thereafter;

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Hilary Term, which shall begin on the first Monday after four full weeks following the end of Michaelmas Term and continue to the Friday of the twelfth week thereafter; and

Trinity Term, which shall begin on the Monday following the end of Hilary Term and continue to the Friday of the twelfth week thereafter.

2. There shall also be two sessions, namely:

the Winter session, which shall begin on Monday following the end of Michaelmas Term and continue to the Friday before the beginning of the following Hilary Term; and

the Summer session, which shall begin on the Monday following the end of Trinity Term and continue to the Friday before the beginning of the following Michaelmas Term.

3. Research is conducted on an ongoing basis throughout the year; but, except as otherwise approved by the Board, other formal academic engagements ordinarily occur during the three Terms of the Academic Year. In particular, undergraduate teaching is normally undertaken in Michaelmas and Hilary Terms, and annual undergraduate examinations are normally held in Trinity Term.

**CL/08-09/010 Committees** A memorandum from the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer dated the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2008 was circulated. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer introduced this item noting that the Restructuring Implementation Advisory Group as part of a wider remit commenced the review of College's committee structures in 2007-08. The three-faculty structure was implemented in January 2008 and procedures were put in place for the appointment of a Chief Operating Officer and a Chief Academic Officer. In light of these changes and the need to consider the impact of the new academic and administrative governance structure on existing committee structures, the Restructuring Implementation Advisory Group recommended a holding position for 2008-09. Board at its meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> June and Council at its meeting also on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2008 approved the recommended holding position which included the discontinuation of the Heads' of School Committee as of the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2008 and the continuation of the sub-committees of the Heads' of School Committee until a new structure is approved. It was further recommended that the remit of the Centre for Academic Practice and Student Learning Committee should merge with the Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Committee and this reconstituted committee as well as the Graduate Studies Committee, the Quality Committee and the International Committee should report directly to Council until such time as a new committee structure is approved by Board.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer informed Council that Board at its meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2008 approved the membership of a new Working Group on Committee Structures. Referring to the amalgamation of the remit of the Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Committee and the Centre for Academic Practice and Student Learning Committee, he proposed to Council the working title of "Undergraduate Studies Committee" for this reconstituted committee.

Drawing Council's attention to the revised terms of reference for the International Committee, he noted that these new terms of reference reflect more closely the three-faculty structure and specifically focus on increasing international activity across College.

Council discussed this item and in response to a query, the Vice-Provost stressed the importance of increasing international activity and having the proper decision making structures in place to promote this. The Dean of Students noted the need for representation of student services on the International Committee, and the Vice-Provost/ Chief Academic Officer commented that both the Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Union were represented on the Committee but agreed that the Dean of Students or any other relevant Officer or staff member could be co-opted to the Committee for relevant agenda items.

Council (i) noted the membership of the Working Group on Committee Structures, (ii) approved the working title "Undergraduate Studies Committee" and (iii) noted and approved the revised terms of reference and the membership of the International Committee.

## SECTION B

**CL/08-09/011 Information Policy Committee** The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the minutes of the Information Policy Committee from its meeting of 3 July 2008, which had been circulated.

**CL/08-09/012 Student Services Committee** The Council noted and approved the recommendations as set out in the circulated minutes of the Student Services Committee from its meetings of:

- (i) 3 June 2008;
- (ii) 8 July 2008.

## SECTION C

**CL/08-09/013 University Council 2008-2009** The Council noted the list of members of Council for 2008-2009, as circulated.

**CL/08-09/014 Higher Degrees—Reports of Examiners - Higher Degrees by Research Alone** The Council noted and approved the reports of examiners on candidates for higher degrees, noted by Board on 9 July 2008, which had been approved by the Sub-committee of Board and Council as follows:

- (i) 18 June 2008

**PhD** Ebrahim Afsah; Johanna Archbold; David Jean Pierre Blond; Antonio Pedro Crespo Martins; Jonathan Gordon; Belinda Moller; Valentina Nisi; Ann Lucille Patten; Karen Sheehan; Patricia Stapleton; Bettina Stefanini; Lawrence Tam.

MSc Lina Abdelhadi; Ilana Bernstein; Elsa Garrido; Ellen Shiel.

(ii) 26 June 2008

PhD Giorgio Carta; David Thomas Coyle; Carla De Tona; James Garrett Donohoe; Sean Desmond Dunne; Trish Ferguson; Liyanage Anthony Jude Lal Fernando; Muireann Irish; Emma Kearney; Ewa Komorek; Kathryn MacCarthy; Arun Kumar Mankan; Rosaleen Antoinette McElvaney; Eoin Neil McNamee; Pierce Meagher; Frances Murphy; Rachel Mary O’Callaghan; Danielle O’Donovan; Erik O’Hanlon; Ifeanyi Ibeji Okechukwu; Kevin Radican; Marco Ruffini; Jang-Kun Song; Marianne Walsh; Marta Zieba.

MSc Adeshina Abdullah Baba; Ignacio Cobo; Daire Lennon; Clodagh Rossi; Riccardo Martin Veglianti.

MLitt Ronan Crowley; Peter Louis Malone; Kay Saunders.

CL/08-09/015 **Vacation Procedures 2008** The Council noted a memorandum from the Acting Secretary, circulated, dated 26 September 2008.

CL/08-09/016 **Course Director - Two-subject Moderatorship** The Council noted and approved the appointment of Professor J Gratton as Course Director for one year from 1 October 2008 (replacing Professor E Ní Chuilleanáin).

CL/08-09/017 **Student Case** The Council noted and approved the request of the Senior Lecturer that a named student may be permitted to repeat the JS year for a fourth and final time in the academic year 2008-2009.

CL/08-09/018 **Revised General Procedures and Protocol for the filling of Chairs** The Council noted and approved a memorandum from the Acting Secretary, circulated, dated 29 September 2008.

CL/08-09/019 **Senior Promotions - Personal Chairs Sub-Committee** The Council noted and approved the following membership for 2008-2009:

- Provost Chair
- Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer
- Senior Lecturer
- Ms A FitzGibbon
- Dr J Stewart
- Professor T Brown
- Professor J Nunn
- Professor C O’Farrelly
- Professor M Radomski

SECTION D

**In compliance with the Data Protection Acts this information is restricted.**

Signed .....

*Incorporating any amendments approved at subsequent Council meetings*

Date .....