

**UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN
TRINITY COLLEGE**

GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

DRAFT Minutes of the meeting held at 9.00 am on Thursday 8 June, 2006
Boardroom, Provost's House

Present: Prof. Patrick Prendergast, Dean of Graduate Studies (*Chair*),
Prof. Eunan O'Halpin, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Histories & Humanities
Prof. J Saeed, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Linguistic, Speech & Communication Sciences
Dr Cormac Ó Cuilleaináin, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), Vice Deanery, Faculty of Arts & Humanities
Prof. Vincent Cahill, School of Computer Science & Statistics
Dr Richard Timoney, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Mathematics
Dr Stefano Sanvito, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Physics
Dr Richard Porter, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Biochemistry & Immunology
Prof. Kenneth Benoit, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Social Sciences & Philosophy
Dr Helen Buckley, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Social Work & Social Policy
Prof. Paul Coughlan, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Business
Dr Kenneth Irvine, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Natural Sciences
Prof. June Nunn, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Dental Science
Mr Gerard Tobin, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Nursing & Midwifery
Dr John Clancy, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences
Mr John Lawlor, MIS Manager (*Ex officio*)
Mr Trevor Peare, Keeper of Readers' Services (*Ex officio*)

Apologies: Prof. Ian Robertson, Dean of Research
Dr Kevin Tierney, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Psychology
Prof. Henry Rice, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Engineering
Prof. John Kelly, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Chemistry
Dr Andrew Loxley, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), Vice Deanery, Faculty of Social & Human Sciences
Prof. Mark Lawler, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Medicine
Prof. Seamus Martin, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), Vice Deanery of Genetics & Microbiology
Mr Charles Larkin, Graduate Students' Union Vice-President (*Ex officio*)
Mr Ryan Sheridan, Graduate Students' Union President (*Ex officio*)

In attendance: Ms Ewa Sadowska, Graduate Studies Office, (*Secretary Ex officio*)
Ms Helen Thornbury, Graduate Studies Office
Ms Ruth Palileo, GSU President-Elect (*Ex officio*)

The Dean welcomed Ms Ruth Palileo, GSU President-Elect as new member of the Committee in the academic year 06/07.

195.0 Minutes of 27 April 2006

The minutes of the meeting of 27 April 2006 were approved by the Committee as circulated.

195.1 Matters arising

a) Re. 194.1 (a, c): The Dean noted that a review the current ARAM arrangements for taught courses and part-time Research Students may be proposed, following a report by an ARAM sub-committee of the Heads' Committee to the ARAM task force.

b) Re. 194.2: The Dean noted that all four course proposals had been approved by Council.

c) Re. 194.5: Trevor Peare, Keeper of Readers' Services noted that the Library needs to store a copy of successfully examined theses that reflects the version that was examined and requires the text in a size that is clearly legible which applies also to any diagrams and figures. The A5 size would imply that the text would be a reduced version from A4, and that could be an issue as far as legibility of the text is concerned. The Library also requires that a deposited copy be durable and therefore is concerned to have references in the Calendar part 2 to the adequate quality of binding of any new format proposed and legible lettering. The Library would be happy however to accept the electronically submitted version as the "master" thesis and would only ask that "a bound printed copy be deposited in the Library" with arrangements to be made later regarding the size and binding of such theses.

195.2 P.Grad.Dip. in Cognitive Psychotherapy (a new course proposal: 1 yr, part-time)

The Dean welcomed Dr Brian Fitzmaurice (a proposed course director) and invited him to speak to the circulated course proposal. He also explained that the proposal is currently being reviewed by an external assessor whose comments would be incorporated into the final submission to the University Council. Dr Fitzmaurice explained that the new course proposal for a Postgraduate Diploma in Cognitive Psychotherapy has resulted out of a review of the former Masters/P.Grad.Dipl. (codes 609/612) course in Cognitive Psychotherapy undertaken this academic year after the course had been discontinued as of October 2005. The current proposal establishes the Diploma course as a stand-alone entity to commence in October 2006, *without* the option of progression to register for the MSc in Cognitive Psychotherapy by forfeiting the postgraduate diploma which was previously the case. The Postgraduate Diploma course will aim to meet the current and likely future academic requirements for accreditation as a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist. Upon completion of the Postgraduate Diploma course students will be required to undertake further clinical casework to meet the clinical experience requirements for accreditation as a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist. A partnership will be formed between the Department of Psychiatry, the Health Service Executive and St Patrick's Hospital to consolidate the financial structure of the course and provide protected time for key clinical staff teaching on the course. It is being proposed to base the course in 2006-2007 in Trinity's Medical Teaching Centre at St Patrick's Hospital. The Postgraduate Diploma class will meet every Friday in each of three academic terms. It is anticipated that a proposal for a restructured stand-alone M.Sc. Course in Cognitive Psychotherapy will be developed during the 2006-2007 academic year. Students who have completed the new Postgraduate Diploma will not automatically have the option of proceeding with the M.Sc. course as it will have a separate entry process with its taught component distinct to that of the Diploma.

In a discussion which followed a number of issues were raised and it was agreed a) to insert into the admissions criteria Section 7 part c) that holders of recognised professional qualifications meant they are nurses; b) to clarify that students will have to be employed not so much in mental health services but rather in a general health care setting; c) to clarify on the Financial Projections sheets that the item *re* the course coordinator means in fact the costs of course administration; d) to replace the number of places from 10 to 12-14 on page 6 in the Finances Section 6. It was confirmed that most staff contributing to the delivery of various aspects of the course would be from outside and will not be listed in the Calendar whereas the course leaders, examiners and clinical lecturers/tutors will be listed there to reflect the fact that Trinity will hold the institutional ownership of the course. The Committee was happy to approve the proposal subject to the above changes to be made to the version going to Council and any additional amendments as specified in the forthcoming assessor's report.

195.3 Procedures for students presenting for a second Masters degree

The Dean noted that the above issue had already been discussed by the Graduate Studies Committee at its meeting of 12 May 2005. According to the regulations governing the award of degrees, a student cannot be awarded a "second" M.Sc. This creates an unsatisfactory situation where a student who may have previously been awarded an MSc by the courses and dissertation route cannot be awarded another MSc degree if they present for one having submitted a thesis – thus they cannot be awarded the degree for which they have registered. The Dean advised that there are at least two solutions to this problem, both of which will involve the creation of a new degree:

- [1] to establish a Master in Science in Research award for students in the sciences who have successfully completed a masters thesis by research only, leaving the (undesigned) M.Sc. award for all other categories; or,
- [2] to leave the undesigned M.Sc. exclusively for students in the sciences who have successfully completed a masters thesis by research only, and establish a new degree award (designated, for example, M.Sc. (Dissert.) or similar title) for students who have completed the requirements for a masters in Science degree by following a taught course. The Registrar, who will bring any new proposal to the University Senate, favours the second option, insofar as the M.Sc. award on the basis of research alone is the older practice with a well established history, and therefore its title should not be changed and transferred to the (newer) taught Masters.

The Committee discussed both variants and was satisfied with neither. Alternative solutions were discussed, such as a) to set up specific awards for taught masters (e.g. MSc in Engineering [M.Sc.(Eng.)], MSc in Medical Sciences [M.Sc.(Med.)]; b) to award the degree of MPhil to graduands of taught masters in the sciences as well leaving the MSc award for research by thesis only; this proposal would have the benefit of bringing the Sciences into line with the Arts and Humanities. It was also suggested that each individual taught masters course should be designated with a separate degree award and that in addition a new degree award of Master in Science in Research be created. It was agreed to put this menu of options to the Registrar for his consideration.

195.4 E-theses

The Dean spoke to the circulated document submitted from Ms Niamh Brennan, Research Support System Administrator. College now has a prototype system for testing the submission and deposit of electronic theses and dissertations. The prototype system is a part of TARA (Trinity's Access to Research Archive), an open access institutional repository for scientific and scholarly publications in digital form. The system is currently being tested with depositing retrospective e-theses. The Committee agreed to test depositing through a 'live' thesis submission system, which would commence at an earlier stage in the process, and which would allow the deposit of e-theses as early in the process as possible (post-examiners' approval). The summer months will be used for thorough testing of the processes in preparation for piloting 'live' e-theses submission in September/October.

Mr John Lawlor, MIS Manager, raised a very significant issue of insecure funding for this project beyond end of September, and brought to the committee's attention the need to maintain the correct level of expectation about what can be achieved. The Committee agreed to strongly endorsed the efforts to establish the e-theses facility as an integral part of the College mainstream provision for graduate students and were strongly of the view that such facility should be centrally funded on a long-term basis.

195.5 Intercalated Masters for Medical Students

The Dean invited Dr Aideen Long to speak to the circulated memo on behalf of Prof. Dermot Kelleher and the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) from the School of Medicine, neither of whom were in a position to attend the meeting. The aim of the proposal is to establish the principle that medical students, following the completion of the third medical year (when they are eligible to be awarded B.A. degree) may enter a Master's programmes – initially the MSc in Molecular Medicine. However, it is anticipated that in the subsequent years this would be rolled out to include M.Sc. in Neuroscience, M.Sc. in Bioengineering and other Masters programmes which are currently in development including Imaging. The students would not be conferred with the MSc until the final conferring with their medical degree. Development of such an intercalated programme aims to produce a cohort of medical graduates who will be sufficiently qualified in science to begin a research career and pursue a Ph.D. after graduation. It will position TCD to the forefront of innovative university medical schools in Europe.

In a discussion that followed a number of issues were raised. Dr Porter explained that there had been a well established practice among medical students to take an intercalated science degree after completing year 3 but that availability of this option is extremely restricted because of limited supervision capacity in some participating departments. By agreeing to open a designated masters programme to medical students College will address an already present strong need for such additional training in science amongst future medics. Dr Long explained that the Medical School aims to see more medical doctors to take an intercalated masters in order to train more Clinician Scientists via this route as an alternative to the dominant profile of a current medical graduates who are trained for a clinical career rather than a research career. Strong reservation was expressed amongst some members of the Committee that a masters course should be opened to students without a degree, even if they were eligible for some ordinary B.A. The proposal was however extremely strongly supported by the Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) from the Schools of Dental Science, Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Biochemistry and Immunology, who saw an overwhelming academic merit in allowing entry for selected medical students to the intercalated masters course. The majority of the Committee felt that, provided criteria for admissions are clearly defined and that only the top end of the Junior Sophister class achieving the highest 2.1 or 1st overall grade would be considered, then the proposal could be approved. The current entry criteria to the MSc in Molecular Medicine will be therefore amended accordingly. It was also confirmed that the Masters degree would be conferred to the successful students at the same ceremony when they will be awarded their final M.B.

195.6 Graduate Studies Committee Work programme 05/06

The Dean reviewed the work programme of the Committee which had been set up in October 2005 and expressed his thanks to the committee members that a lot of the issues identified have been successfully accomplished. He referred to graduate schools and reminded the committee that his paper on it had been approved by Council as a College official document and is now on the web. It was not possible however to advance this issue much further this year as the anticipated strategic innovation fund (SIF) has not been announced yet. With regard to modularisation, it has not yet been possible to tackle the issue of pooling all the existing courses in any given School on a modular basis, but all new course proposals were required to present their academic structures in a modular form which is the step in the right direction. The Senior Lecturer has set up a working party on modularisation which is expected to advance this issue significantly next year. The Dean emphasised that this year has seen a consolidation of the role of the DTLP with clearly established brief enabling the DTLPs to exercise effective local control over all major areas of graduate studies in their Schools. 8 new course proposals were approved by the Committee and they required a lot of additional assistance on the part of the Committee's secretary to bring their submissions to the level of presentation required. The Dean has also explained that a few course proposals were not permitted to be put before the Committee as their draft documentation was submitted too late to the Committee's secretary and it was not feasible to address all the issues to finalise the submission. The Committee agreed that in order to ensure that there is adequate time to iron out all the issues within the draft before it finds its way before the Committee notification of all new proposals must reach the Committee's secretary before Christmas for the whole academic year 2006/07. The issue of joint degrees was not developed at all in 05/06, though no doubt it will come back onto the agenda in the future. Finally, Masters-to-PhD transfer practices had been comprehensively reviewed and there is now an agreed transfer procedure in the Calendar part 2 to commence in October 2006.

The Dean thanked the Committee for their active and constructive participation in this year's meetings. On behalf of the Committee, Prof. Eunan O'Halpin, Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), School of Histories & Humanities thanked the Dean for driving the meetings, the administrative staff in the Graduate Studies Office, and the Committee's secretary for her commitment to providing efficient support for them.

195.7 AOB

a) Ms Ruth Palileo, GSU President-Elect raised an issue of the role of DTLP in informing students about sources of funding and research opportunities. After a brief discussion, the Committee agreed that this role should be discharged by the Research and Innovation Services Office, and locally through the Directors of Research.

b) The Committee approved to discontinue the Postgraduate Diploma in Quality Improvement as of October 2006 as per a document circulated under AOB from Prof. V Cahill, DTLP from the School of Computer Science and Statistics.

c) The Committee discussed a document tabled by Ms Patricia Callaghan, Academic Secretary (Acting) on on-line application for postgraduate admissions which is now accepted as a necessary facility to enable College to effectively deal with an ever-growing number of applications for graduate studies. A number of options in the past year, including commercial packages, an add-on facility to Quercus-Plus (the new student administration system), and joining the Postgraduate Applications Centre (PAC) in Galway have been considered. College policy, approved by the Information Policy Committee, is not to build bespoke systems as this is not cost effective. Commercial stand-alone packages represent a high risk, and College's management information systems will not be in a position to support a stand-alone option. The QuercusPlus system is development costs would be prohibitive. The Committee appreciated that the PAC appears to offer numerous advantages:

- i) It has been designed solely as an on-line facility for postgraduate applications specifically for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Ireland;
- ii) It is very well supported by and is continually being updated and developed to suit the needs of the participating HEIs;
- iii) It can be customised, within reason, to the requirements of individual HEIs;
- iv) It is already in operation in a number of HEIs in Ireland and it has been significantly tested.

The disadvantage of the PAC option is that College would have to forfeit the income from the postgraduate application fee (circa €130,000 annually), but it is expected that maintenance and development of any on-line facility will incur this level of annual investment. The Graduate Studies Committee was assured that no agreement will be reached with the PAC unless College is satisfied that the PAC online application facility meets its needs. The Committee approved further exploration of the PAC option as a provider of the on-line postgraduate applications facility for College and were informed that a subsequent proposal on this option will now be made to the Finance Committee, Council and Board.

d) The Committee noted and approved both items in Section B and noted the items in Section C.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11 am. The next meeting is scheduled for 19 October 2006.

Prof. Patrick J. Prendergast.

Date: 14 June 2006