

**UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN
TRINITY COLLEGE**

GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 9.00 a.m. on Thursday 17th December, 2009
Boardroom, Provost's House

Present: Professor Carol O'Sullivan, Dean of Graduate Studies (*Chair*),
Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:
Dr Martin Fellenz, School of Business
Dr Stephen Connon, School of Chemistry
Dr Siobhan Clarke, School of Computer Science and Statistics
Dr Claire Healy, School of Dental Science
Dr Ruth Barton, School of Drama, Film & Music
Dr Carmel O'Sullivan, School of Education
Professor Brian Broderick, School of Engineering
Dr Sam Slote, School of English
Dr Hazel Dodge, School of Histories & Humanities
Dr Jeffrey Kallen, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
Dr Paula Murphy, School of Natural Sciences
Dr Fintan Sheerin, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Dr Gillian Wylie, Aspirant School of Religions, Theology and Ecumenics
Dr Jim Levine, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy
Dr Eoin O'Sullivan, School of Social Work and Social Policy
Mr Trevor Peare, Keeper of Readers' Services (in attendance *Ex officio*)
Mr Michael McGrath, Acting Manager of MIS (*Ex officio*)
Mr Ronan Hodson, Graduate Students' Union President (*Ex officio*)

Apologies: Dr David Lloyd, Dean of Research
Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:
Dr Derek Nolan, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
Dr Caitriona Leahy, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies
Dr Stefan Sint, School of Mathematics
Dr Thomas Connor, School of Medicine
Dr Andrew Harkin, School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences
Ms Alexandra Murphy, Graduate Students' Union Vice-President (*Ex officio*)

In attendance: Ms Jennifer Hill, Graduate Studies Office, Secretary to the meeting (*Ex officio*)
Ms Helen Thornbury, Graduate Studies Office

GS/09-10/011 Minutes of 22nd October 2009

The minutes of the meeting of 22nd October 2009 were approved by the Committee as circulated with one clarification made regarding point GS/09-10/009. It was confirmed that the supervisor will receive one email directly from PAC to notify him/her of a new research application. Following this, any further communication is made internally between the School and the Graduate Studies Office.

GS/09-10/012 Matters Arising

- The Dean updated the Committee on the working group that has been established to consider the implications of the strategy to increase modularisation and flexibility of taught courses. Two meetings have been held so far and their recommendations will be brought to the Graduate Studies Committee and then to Council in early 2010.
- The Dean also updated the Committee on PRTL as the meeting is currently being held to discuss research education programmes / structured PhD programmes. Plans are ongoing to run several Innovation Academy events from Dec'09, with full roll-out to PhD students in October 2010. Renovations have been made in Foster Place for the Innovation Academy in TCD.

- The Graduate Students Union President, Ronan Hodson, provided an update on the election of Postgraduate Representatives and explained that there had been some success in filling the vacancies for these positions. Many of the Course Representative positions have now been filled; however there are still 14 School Representative positions vacant. From a technical point of view, the online system is working, however it is understood that this election has taken place late in the year and so the Graduate Student's Union will undertake to do this in September next year.

GS/09-10/013 M.Sc. in International Politics

The Dean welcomed Dr William Phelan from the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy, and invited him to speak to the circulated document.

Dr Phelan explained that following the success of the M.Sc. in Comparative European Politics another course has been developed in the area of Political Science. The M.Sc. in International Politics will cover substantive modules on various aspects of international politics and research methods. The theme of the course is a mixture of domestic and international politics. The School expect a high demand for the course and believe this will then increase the number of qualified students applying for a PhD within the School.

A major concern was raised that there is a strong overlap between this proposed course and the existing M.Phil. in International Peace Studies in the Irish School of Ecumenics (and some overlap of content and staff on the existing M.Sc. in Environment and Development in the School of Natural Sciences). Many of the topics are the same and some of the proposed modules have the same names. This may cause internal competition and create duplication of efforts and teaching. It was agreed that before this course is approved, it would be advisable for individuals involved in both courses to discuss this further, with a view to bringing a revised proposal to the GSC once the issues have been resolved. It was noted that a positive review from the external reviewer, Prof. Gerhard Schneider from the University of Konstanz, had been received.

It was noted that, in general, consideration should be given to how programmes with overlap in disciplines are dealt with. Generally, any new courses/developments should sit comfortably alongside existing courses and that should not preclude duplication. Duplication may be necessary, but should be discussed. The Dean undertook to raise this issue with the aforementioned working group on taught postgraduate courses.

GS/09-10/014 M.Sc. in European Employment Studies

The Dean welcomed Dr Peter Muhlau from the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy, and invited him to speak to the circulated document.

Dr Muhlau explained that this course is in line with the strategic plan of the School and there is currently no course like this in Ireland or Europe. The idea behind the course is to develop students' knowledge of European employment studies with a strong focus on policy issues. This is particularly relevant because Irish employment policy has become increasingly interdependent with employment policies and structures in other European countries and the European Union as a whole.

The Dean explained that this course is a reincarnation of a course that was proposed last year.

In answer to a query on where people are employed following completion of this course it was confirmed that they would find policy related employment or in organisations such as FÁS or the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. These organisations have been contacted.

The committee approved the course for submission to the University Council subject to any additional amendments that may be required following the assessor's report.

GS/09-10/015 Bologna Progress Report

The Dean welcomed Professor John Scattergood from the Learning Outcomes Project, and invited him to speak to the circulated document.

For the last year and a half, a group coordinated by the Bologna Desk (Ms. Alex Anderson; Mr Dimitri Paraskevas and Professor John Scattergood) with assistance and support from CAPSL (Dr Jacqueline Potter; Dr Ciara O'Farrell and Dr Brian Foley) have been helping to write learning outcomes. This process is due to be completed by the end of this academic year.

Professor Scattergood explained that to assist with the writing of the learning outcomes, a number of events and support resources were put in place including: workshops; written resources being made available; and, most importantly, a triage group was created to provide direct support to those involved in producing learning outcomes.

While 80% of the material has now been obtained, there are still some learning outcomes outstanding. Professor Scattergood emphasised that once the learning outcomes are all in place, it will not be the end of the project as assessment must match the outcomes, which can be tricky at postgraduate level. The standard of the outcomes is now very good, but work will continue in a reduced advisory capacity.

A question was raised as to whether the Bologna process will require a change to the way course proposals are presented and it was explained that courses now have to be mapped onto the National Qualifications Framework and the awards offered need to be internationally recognised.

GS/09-10/016 Regulation Changes

The Dean spoke to this item and explained that as the year progresses there are certain areas that the Graduate Studies Committee should discuss and make Calendar changes where necessary.

- The first regulation under consideration relates to internal and external co-supervisors (currently listed in section 2.9 on page 38 of the Calendar Part 2). In particular, the eligibility and roles of principal, co-, assistant and adjunct supervisors should be formalised and promoted. Adjunct supervisors are currently not recognised, but there was support for introducing such a status. This would be an honorary appointment (no payment) and the adjunct supervisor would not necessarily need to be from a university background; e.g., they could be from a company (perhaps in a research role) or cultural agency. It was agreed that a new draft of the Calendar Part 2, Paragraph 2.9 (*Eligibility to Supervise Research Students*) would be brought to the Graduate Studies Committee for consideration.
- Issues relating to the eligibility of internal / external examiners for theses were considered. In some recent cases, ambiguity in the regulations have led to confusion. It was agreed that the relevant sections of the Calendar Part 2 will also be redrafted, emphasising the role of the Dean of Graduate studies as arbiter, and brought to the Graduate Studies Committee.
- The third issue related to the re-examination of theses. In some cases, e.g., as the outcome of an appeal or disagreement between examiners, an examination is declared void and the thesis is submitted to new examiners. The practice has always been that, if permission is given for re-examination, it should be of the work as originally submitted (or of the most recent examined version if revisions were carried out). Examiners can be informed of this situation and asked to examine the work based on the state of the field at the date of original submission. The question was raised as to whether, if revisions has already been made, the student could decide whether the original or revised version should be examined. It was agreed that the wishes of the student should be taken into account, but that the Dean or the relevant appeals committee (depending on the level of the appeal) would make this decision. Again, relevant Calendar changes will be brought to the Graduate Studies Committee for approval.

GS/09-10/017 Any Other Business

A query was raised on the final date for submission of taught course dissertations, due to the restructuring of the academic year. August 31st is the final date as students are only registered until September 1st. Concerns were raised that the examination period now continues into June so there is a very short time frame for students to complete their dissertation. While this is an inevitable outcome of academic year restructuring, the Dean undertook to bring these concerns to the attention of the relevant individuals.

Section B for noting and approval

- a) The Committee noted and approved the proposed name change to the M.Phil. in Reformation and Enlightenment Studies.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10.45 am.

Prof. Carol O'Sullivan

Date: 4th January 2010