

**UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN
TRINITY COLLEGE**

GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 9.00 a.m. on Thursday 18th February 2010
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 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
Professor Moray McGowan, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies
Dr Jeffrey Kallen, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
Dr Stefan Sint, School of Mathematics
Dr Thomas Connor, School of Medicine
Dr Paula Murphy, School of Natural Sciences
Dr Andrew Harkin, School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences
Dr Jonathan Coleman, School of Physics
Dr Kevin Tierney, School of Psychology

Mr Michael McGrath, Acting Manager of MIS (*Ex officio*)
Mr Ronan Hodson, Graduate Students' Union President (*Ex officio*)

Apologies: Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:
Dr Derek Nolan, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
Dr Stephen Connon, School of Chemistry
Dr Gillian Wylie, Aspirant School of Religions, Theology and Ecumenics
Dr Jim Levine, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy
Dr Fintan Sheerin, School of Nursing and Midwifery

Mr Trevor Peare, Keeper of Readers' Services (in attendance *Ex officio*)

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

GS/09-10/022 Minutes of 21st January 2010

The minutes of the meeting of 21st January 2010 were approved by the Committee as circulated.

GS/09-10/023 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

GS/09-10/024 M.Sc. in Development Practice

The Dean welcomed Dr Pdraig Carmody from the School of Natural Sciences, and invited him to speak to the circulated document.

Dr Carmody explained that an International Commission on Education for Sustainable Development recognised a need for Universities to more actively contribute to the development of practical and academic skills to help solve some of the greatest questions facing humankind: global poverty and climate change. It was recommended that a new trans-disciplinary Masters programme specifically focused on development

practice be established to provide intensive training across economics and social science, environment, global health and management.

Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin have received seed funding of US \$900,000 from the MacArthur Foundation (USA) to develop and deliver a Masters in Development Practice together with a number of other partners, including the National University of Rwanda. This will be a joint degree programme between TCD-UCD and the ultimate goal is that it will be the European hub for a worldwide consortium of similar masters programmes.

A fieldwork placement, possibly in Rwanda, forms part of the course and, for this, students will be expected to have local language skills. It is planned to hire someone from outside of College to teach Swahili. It was agreed that this should be discussed with the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies and the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences to ensure an appropriate language teacher is hired. It may be possible to open this module to students other than those on the MDP course.

Dr Paula Murphy, the Director of Teaching and Learning Postgraduate for the School of Natural Sciences, confirmed that the School are very supportive of this course and it was noted that there has already been a considerable amount of interest in the course.

The committee approved the course for submission to the University Council.

GS/09-10/025 Update on Working Group on Postgraduate Modularisation

The Dean spoke to the circulated document and reported that the Working Group on Postgraduate Modularisation has now met several times. A discussion has been held on Student Numbers and External Examiners and a number of draft recommendations have been drawn up, including:

- Several quality assurance mechanisms should be introduced for external examiners, in particular guidelines on their role and duties.
- A distinction between "course" and "strand" should be made; for example, the existing Master in Education is the course and within that are a number of specific strands such as the Aggression Studies Specialism. Quotas are to be implemented and it is advised that the aim should be to have an average of 20 students per course and a minimum of five students per strand. No course should run with less than seven students.
- Masters and PhD modules can be approved and may exist as a stand-alone option outside of an existing course.
- All Schools should be allowed to have a flexi option within their courses. Some Schools, including Computer Science and Nursing and Midwifery, are already utilizing this.
- The restrictions on the awarding of a second M.Phil. or taught M.Sc. is to be reviewed to allow this to be possible.
- A review of courses with low numbers or that do not run each year will take place immediately. Niche courses with low numbers could become a strand within a course.

A few queries were raised and clarifications made, including: how payment would be distributed for the stand-alone modules and whether offering these would cause internal competition or duplication; further discussion will take place on the role of the External Examiner before any definition is finalized; a review of courses will take place every three years within the Faculty rather than the School but this could be made compatible with the School Review; a case will be required to justify why a course should run with less than seven students and particularly where it is not possible for a course with low numbers to become a strand within an over-arching umbrella course.

The Dean confirmed that these recommendations will be brought to Council for approval this academic year.

GS/09-10/026 Joint USC/GSC Taskforce on International Student Recruitment

The Dean explained that the Vice Provost/Chief Academic Officer proposes, as per the Strategic Plan, that a joint USC / GSC taskforce on International Student Recruitment be set up. She asked for support from the Committee in establishing this and received unanimous approval for this endeavour.

GS/09-10/027 AOB

It was noted that research funding, in particular from SFI and other awarding bodies, are being cut dramatically this year and this may lead to a reduction in the number of Ph.D. students being offered funded positions. Schools are to be encouraged to create their own studentships and to find new and imaginative ways to generate alternative funding streams.

The Dean provided an update on the applications for the Innovation Bursaries. 40 applications have been received for the 10 PhD Studentships and 20 applications have been received for the 5 post-doctoral bursaries. The decisions will be announced on 11th March 2010.

Section B for noting and approval

- a) The Committee noted and approved the proposed restructuring of the Master course in Applied Behaviour Analysis.
- b) The Committee noted and approved the Master in Education (M.Ed.) *Calendar Part 2* change.
- c) The Committee also noted and approved the proposed *Calendar Part 2* changes for 2010 as listed in Section B on the agenda

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10.35 am.

Prof. Carol O'Sullivan

Date: 19th February 2010