

**UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN  
TRINITY COLLEGE**

**GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at 9.00 a.m. on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2011  
Boardroom, Provost's House

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**Present:** Professor Veronica Campbell, Dean of Graduate Studies (*Chair*),  
Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:  
Dr Martin Fellenz, School of Business  
Dr Siobhán Clarke, School of Computer Science and Statistics  
Dr Claire Healy, School of Dental Science  
Dr Paula Quigley, 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 Joseph Clarke, School of Histories & Humanities  
Dr Caitriona Leahy, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies  
Mr Alex Schuster, School of Law  
Dr Jeffrey Kallen, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences  
Dr Stefan Sint, School of Mathematics  
Dr John Gormley, School of Medicine  
Dr Robin Edwards, School of Natural Sciences  
Ms Anne-Marie Brady, School of Nursing and Midwifery  
Dr Mauro Ferreira, School of Physics  
Dr Kevin Tierney, School of Psychology  
Dr Gillian Wylie, Aspirant School of Religions, Theology and Ecumenics  
Dr Gail McElroy, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy  
Dr Eoin O'Sullivan, School of Social Work and Social Policy

Dr Patrick Geoghegan, Associate Dean of Research  
Ms Dearbhail Lawless, Graduate Students' Union President (*Ex officio*)  
Ms Alex Anderson, CAPSL Representative (*Ex officio*)  
Ms Simone Cameron-Coen, Graduate Students' Union Vice-President (*Ex officio*)  
Mr Trevor Peare, Keeper of Readers' Services (in attendance *Ex officio*)

**Apologies:** Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) as follows:  
Dr Derek Nolan, School of Biochemistry and Immunology  
Professor Tim Foster, School of Genetics and Microbiology  
Dr Andrew Harkin, School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences

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

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**GS/10-11/024 Minutes of 16<sup>th</sup> December 2010**

The minutes of the meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> December 2010 were approved by the Committee as circulated.

**GS/10-11/025 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **GS/10-11/026 M.Phil. Public History and Cultural Heritage**

The Dean introduced Professor Jane Ohlmeyer and asked her to speak to the item. Professor Ohlmeyer explained that this course is a new departure for the School of Histories and Humanities. It forms part of a wider strategic initiative in Creative Arts, Technologies and Culture (CATC).

College already has informal links with cultural institutions such as National Library of Ireland, the National Museum of Ireland, the Hugh Lane Gallery and the Chester Beatty Library and there is an appetite to bring these relationships together to provide a formal structure for postgraduate training. The M.Phil. aims to become a bridge between the academic disciplines of the university and the professional concerns of cultural agencies, public and private, and it seeks to offer professionals and prospective professionals a rich historical grounding in what constitutes public history as well as a unique preparation for the management of cultural heritage.

It is envisaged that the School's new lecturer in nineteenth-century history will be the Course Director. The School will be appointing to this post in the coming months and the Course Director will be in place by September 2011.

The course will primarily be aimed at EU, particularly local, students and there have already been a wealth of enquiries, particularly from cultural institutions.

All students taking the M.Phil. will undertake an unpaid internship of twenty-four hours over the course of eleven weeks in one of Dublin's cultural institutions during the second term of the academic year. This is intended to provide work experience as encountered by specialists in these institutions.

The content of the course comprises compulsory and optional modules, the internship and a dissertation which will build on work the student has already been doing in one of the cultural institutions.

In response to several questions it was confirmed that the minimum number of students required will be increased to seven to align with the Graduate Education Strategy; the assessment of the Generic Skills module will be amended to clarify that this is pass/fail; and the required number of credits for a part-time student to complete in their first year will be amended to bring in line with other M.Phil. courses in the School.

It was also confirmed that, further to a review by the Bologna Desk, any revisions to the learning outcomes will be included in the final document.

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

### **GS/10-11/027 M.Phil. Digital Humanities and Culture**

The Dean introduced Dr Susan Schreibman and asked her to speak to the item.

Dr Schreibman explained that while this course is attached to the School of English they will be working closely, and sharing modules, with the Schools of Histories and Humanities and Computer Science and Statistics. The initial target audience of the course will be students in Ireland; however with very few Masters courses in this area around the world it should also attract an international audience.

An internship will be a compulsory part of the course.

In response to several questions it was confirmed that the minimum number of students required will be increased to seven to align with the Graduate Education Strategy; the ECTS particularly for the core and optional modules will be amended; the paragraph regarding "Assessment" will be amended to bring in line with other taught masters courses in the School and avoid confusion; and the dissertation contact hours with the supervisor will be revised to be aligned with the School of English norm.

It was also confirmed that, following a recent review by the Bologna Desk, revised learning outcomes will be included in the final document.

The School of Computer Science and Statistics are supportive of the course but confirmed that some of the shared modules still need to be approved.

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

### **GS/10-11/028 Academic Year Structure**

The Dean explained that, following requests from a number of Schools and the Students' Union, Council has requested a review of the Academic Year structure. It was confirmed that the revised academic year structure provided is a draft and for discussion only.

The main issue for consideration is the end-of-term examinations. In considering this the following broad parameters should be noted: the existing start and end dates will not change; end of Michaelmas term examinations will be scheduled for after the Christmas break; results of these examinations will be provisional until after the Court of Examiners held in Trinity term; examinations held in Trinity term will be reduced to a two week period; the Supplemental examination period will remain at the end of August / early September; the time of the Foundation Scholarship examination will need to move.

A second issue for consideration is the moving of Study Week to either week 6 or week 7.

In the discussion that followed a number of comments were made, including: how the modularisation of postgraduate courses fits into this revised structure and whether the structure is more suitable for undergraduate students; how the provisional results of examinations taken at the end of Michaelmas term will work in practice if a student has failed but continues on to Hilary term.

It was queried whether it would be defined when certain examinations must take place (for example would it be mandatory for a module taken in Michaelmas term to be examined in January or could the examination take place during the annual examination period, which would be more appropriate if the module relates to another module taken in the second semester).

Concern was raised that, under this revised structure, students will be under enormous pressure during the Christmas period which will reflect throughout the second semester. The reduced library hours over the Christmas period was also noted.

There was also major concern that the dissertation period would become further compressed. Also, if not all Schools opted for end of Michaelmas term examinations, then students would be idle until the start of teaching term at the end of January.

It was agreed that due to the diversity of the courses throughout College the academic year structure will never completely fit everyone.

The Graduate Student's Union agreed to survey postgraduate students to gain their opinion on this.

The Dean confirmed the Vice-Provost will be in contact with each School to look for feedback on this and further discussion will take place before coming to a decision as to whether the academic year structure should be changed or not.

### **GS/10-11/029 Structured Ph.D. Programmes**

The Dean updated the committee on the PRTL15 PhD programmes. There will be a shortfall in fees between what the students are charged and what PRTL15 and other funding bodies will provide. It will be for the School to decide how to approach this.

The Dean addressed the issue of a student obtaining a certain number of ECTS towards their structured Ph.D. programme and how this will be confirmed. The Calendar Part 2 confirms that "Research students are required to comply with requirements to attend generic

and discipline-specific courses as specified in local handbooks” (Page 37, Section 2.1) and “Students are required to attend such transferable and discipline-specific modules as are laid down by the graduate programme director or the supervisor in consultation with the appropriate programme director or Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate)” (Page 38, Section 2.7).

In addition to this, it is suggested that the Progress Report is amended to ensure students have complied with this regulation. The Examiners Nomination Form signed by the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) could also include a box to be ticked to indicate the student has met these requirements. Handbooks should also have detailed information on this and Thematic Ph.D. programmes will have their own handbook which will be approved at the Graduate Studies Committee.

The Dean undertook to bring the revised forms to the next meeting of GSC for discussion.

In answer to a related query it was confirmed that the regulations in the Calendar Part 2 of the current academic year are those which the student should abide by and they are required to sign a form during registration agreeing to this.

### **GS/10-11/030 Guidelines for Ph.D. Examination**

The Dean explained that a few issues have arisen recently in relation to the Ph.D. examination and in particular the viva.

It was clarified that the Supervisor can be present but should not participate in the viva.

There should be an independent chairperson to make sure the examiners know the regulations and make sure the viva proceeds in a courteous and professional manner. The role of the chairperson is to encourage the examiners to come to agreement / consensus but not to influence. The Dean confirmed she will be revising the guidelines to include a section on the role of the chairperson. The revised guidelines will also note that if a viva takes longer than two hours a comfort break may take place (but will not stipulate a recommended length for the viva).

In answer to a query it was confirmed that the internal examiner should not also act as the chairperson as their role is to examine and very often there may be two external examiners.

### **GS/10-11/031 Pre-Masters**

The Dean spoke to the circulated document which provides a sample of Pre-Masters Programmes currently offered by Study Group International. The Dean confirmed that Study Group International can be contacted, via the Graduate Studies Office; if anyone wished to explore this further to enhance international recruitment.

### **GS/10-11/032 GeneSIS**

The Dean updated the Committee on the GeneSIS project and confirmed that the tender is now complete and a preferred vendor has been chosen. The decision will be brought to the Board at the beginning of March.

In the analysing of College processes in anticipation of the new system it has become evident that a huge diversity exists across College and, where inconsistency arises from this, processes will need to be looked at with a view to harmonisation. Any changes to postgraduate courses made as a consequence of this would require approval by the GSC.

### **GS/10-11/033 IUA Deans of Graduate Studies Group**

The Dean confirmed that an Inter-Institutional Memorandum of Understanding has now been signed by the seven Universities under the 4<sup>th</sup> Level Network of the Irish Universities Association (IUA). This relates to mobility between institutions for specific graduate programmes and the recognition of quality and credit between the participating institutions. It

should be noted that this is only in place for institutionally approved collaborative programmes.

### **GS/10-11/034 Postgraduate Modules**

The Dean wished to draw attention to the level of modules that are being included in Postgraduate programmes.

It is clear that some programmes are including undergraduate modules as part of a postgraduate course and this is appropriate for areas where some conversion or upskilling is required. However, there may well be strong academic grounds to use a Level 8 module on a postgraduate course and have postgraduate students sharing some lectures with undergraduates, but it should be ensured that the assessment and learning outcomes are at a Level 9.

It may be necessary to stipulate an explicit maximum permissible amount of credits that are gained in this way as other universities have done.

Revised guidelines for new course proposals will also state that if lower level modules are to be employed on postgraduate courses then specific justification should be made for their inclusion.

### **Section B for noting and approval**

1. The Committee noted and approved the proposed part-time option of the M.Sc. in Applied Social Research.
2. The Committee noted and approved the proposed change of name for the M.Sc. in Comparative European Politics to the M.Sc. in Political Science.
3. The Committee noted and approved the introduction of the Dan Bradley Prize in the School of Physics.
4. The Committee noted and approved the introduction of the Heffernan Bursary in the School of Education.
5. The Committee noted and approved the revised modules in the M.Ed. in Guidance and Counselling.

### **Section C for noting**

The Committee was asked to note the circulated document regarding the Trinity Inclusive Curriculum (TIC) online teaching and learning self-evaluation tool ([www.tcd.ie/capsl/tic/evaluation](http://www.tcd.ie/capsl/tic/evaluation))

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10.47am.

Prof. Veronica Campbell

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> February 2011